

Health, safety and welfare policy

Section A: General statement of policy

Our policy, so far as is reasonably practicable, is to provide and maintain a safe building for those who volunteer or work in it, or who visit it or use it.

We also aim, so far as is reasonably practicable, to provide and maintain safe and healthy working conditions, equipment and safe systems of work for all our voluntary helpers and to provide such information, training and supervision as they need for this purpose.

The allocation of duties for safety matters and the particular arrangements which we will make to implement the policy are set out below.

The policy will be kept up to date, particularly in the light of any changes to our building or the activities within it. To ensure this, the policy and the way in which it has operated will be reviewed by Trustees at least once a year and appropriate changes made. Volunteers and representatives from our lessees will be consulted in order to seek their views on health and safety matters.

Section B: Organisation and responsibilities

Overall responsibility for health, safety and welfare is that of the Trustees.

Responsibility for the safe operation of activities undertaken by lessees rests with those lessees. In particular, responsibility for the safe operation of the cafe and gift shop rests with The Kirkwood and responsibility for the safe operation of activities undertaken by paid members of library staff rests with Kirklees Metropolitan Council.

The responsibility of the Trustees shall be to:

1. be familiar with the Health & Safety Regulations as far as they concern community buildings;
2. be familiar with the health, safety & welfare policy and arrangements and ensure they are observed;
3. ensure so far as is reasonably practicable, that safe systems of work are in place for DDCL volunteers;
4. ensure the community building is well maintained and kept clean and tidy;
5. ensure the car park is well maintained;
6. ensure that adequate access and egress is maintained;
7. ensure that adequate fire fighting equipment is available and maintained.

Responsibility of DDCL volunteers and of staff and volunteers of lessees

All volunteers and any staff of lessees have a responsibility to co-operate in the implementation of this health, safety and welfare policy and to take reasonable care of themselves and others whilst on DDCL business or premises.

Volunteers and any staff of lessees must therefore:

- comply with safety rules, operating instructions and working procedures;
- use protective clothing and equipment when it is required;
- report any fault or defect in equipment immediately to a Trustee;
- report all accidents (however minor), injuries, near misses or other potential safety hazards as soon as possible;
- not misuse anything provided in the interest of health & safety.

Section C: Arrangements

This section sets out our arrangement to minimise, as far as is reasonably practicable, risks to the health, safety and welfare of our volunteers, the staff and volunteers of our lessees, users of the building, visitors and contractors.

Building

1. State of the building

Our policy is to ensure that our building is safe and without risks to the health, safety and welfare of all who work in and use it. In order to achieve this, the building is checked weekly by one of the Caretaker Team. Any defects or concerns are recorded on the Building Checklist for immediate or subsequent action.

Other concerns or defects are to be reported via the Building User Group (BUGS) meeting or noted in the Day Book for follow up. One of the Caretakers will check the Day Book weekly.

Where necessary, temporary measures are taken to ensure there is no risk of accident or injury until permanent repairs can be carried out.

2. Accidents and First Aid

A First Aid box is located in the Plant Room.

Kirklees Library Services and The Kirkwood have their own processes for recording and reporting accidents, incidents or near misses. These are all shared at the BUGS meeting.

The DDCL Accident Book forms one section of the Health, Safety & Welfare folder, which is kept on the shelf in the Plant Room. All accidents and incidents not reported via KLS or TK must be recorded in the Accident Book.

3. Fire Safety

The Fire Safety Policy exists and is attached to this overall Health, Safety & Welfare Policy.

4. Electrical Safety

Plugs, cables and sockets will be inspected regularly to ensure there are no loose connections, worn flexes or trailing leads. Any repairs needed will be carried out by a competent electrician.

Every 5 years the fixed electrical system will be inspected and tested by a competent contractor. Any necessary remedial work will be carried out by a competent electrician.

Misuse and abuse of electricity is a significant cause of fire and injury. Faulty electrical equipment can kill. All DDCL volunteers and staff of lessees must observe the following:

- Visually check all electrical equipment before use;
- Report all faults immediately to one of the Trustees and note in the Day Book;
- Do not attempt to use or repair faulty equipment;
- Electrical equipment should be switched off and disconnected when not in use for long periods;
- Flexible cables should be so positioned and so protected that they do not constitute a tripping hazard and are not subject to damage.

5. Hazardous substances

Where at all possible, the use of hazardous substances has been eliminated. Where this is not possible, hazardous substances are locked away and only used by persons with appropriate experience. Personal Protective Equipment is used where appropriate.

Appropriate warning signs are used and details of contacts and hazards are maintained. Chemicals must not be stored in unmarked containers.

6. Water

The risk of exposure to legionella is considered to be low. An annual risk assessment will be done by Trustees to determine whether, and if so when, a test is required.

7. Slips, trips and falls

Inside the building

Good housekeeping is important within the building in order to reduce, as far as reasonably practicable, the risk of slips, trips and falls. The Caretaker team will inspect the building regularly but day to day it will be volunteers who need to look out for, and remedy if possible, any trip hazards.

Any hazards or defects that can't be dealt with at the time should be reported immediately to one of the Trustees and noted in the Day Book, and should be remedied as soon as practicable. In the meantime, a warning sign should be put in place.

A warning sign should be erected when the floor is being, or has just been mopped as it is likely to be slippery.

Outside steps and ramp

The Caretaker team will inspect the steps and ramp regularly for trip hazards. Grit and salt will be provided for icy conditions.

In snowy or icy conditions, a path will be cleared and salted from the pavement to the steps/ramp when the building is open. If the building is closed, the steps and ramp will not be cleared and should not be used.

Outside car park

Use of the car park is at the user's risk. Trustees will make reasonable efforts to clear any trip hazards during the hours the building is open.

In snowy or icy conditions the car park will not be gritted or salted, other than for pedestrians. A sign to this effect will be provided.

8. Lighting

In order to ensure the building is adequately lit, the Trustees will carry out regular inspections of the lights. The necessary safety precautions will be followed for replacing bulbs at high levels.

9. Equipment

Only qualified electricians or plumbers should work on the boiler or electric installation.

Only Kirklees Metropolitan Council ICT staff should work on the ICT servers and cabling.

The only equipment provided in the building specifically covered in the risk assessment is the electric shutter. Instructions for its use are available and it should only be operated by volunteers who have been shown how to operate it safely or who have read the risk assessment and the instructions.

DDCL Volunteers

(Note: Lessees will have their own health, safety and welfare policies for their own volunteers and staff)

10. Welfare of volunteers

We will provide clean toilets and hand washing facilities for volunteers.

We will provide access to clear and uncontaminated drinking water for volunteers in the kitchen. We will provide safe and clean space for volunteers to leave their outdoor clothes and personal possessions. The cafe area forms a clean and hygienic seating area for volunteers to use during meal breaks.

Our policy is that, wherever possible, volunteers should not be alone in the building. If they are, the magnetic lock should be switched on.

11. Working at heights

Only approved contractors or competent volunteers may work at high levels, subject to the necessary safety provisions being in place.

12. Manual handling

Manual handling relates to the moving of items either by lifting, lowering, carrying, pushing or pulling. The weight of the item is an important factor, but many other factors can create a risk of injury, for example the number of times you have to pick up or carry an item, the distance you are carrying it, where you are picking it up from or putting it down (picking it up from the floor, putting it on a shelf above shoulder level) and any twisting, bending, stretching or other awkward posture you may adopt while doing a task.

Our policy is to eliminate the need for hazardous manual handling as far as reasonably practicable. Where this is not possible, we will carry out risk assessments and make use of lifting aids including trolleys, lifts and hoists as far as possible. Only those persons who have received the appropriate training are authorised to undertake hazardous manual handling tasks.

Manual handling more generally can still result in injury. All volunteers will be reminded as part of their induction about the need to take care when moving items.

13. Contractors

Anyone entering the DDCL building for the purpose of carrying out work, other than a volunteer or employee of DDCL or one of its lessees, will be regarded as a contractor. All contractors, including the self-employed, must abide by the following:

- Have their own health & safety policy (where required by law) and be able to provide a copy of the same;
- Produce evidence that they have appropriate public and employers' liability insurance in place;
- Comply with the requirements of this health & safety policy and co-operate with DDCL volunteers and lessees in providing a safe place of work and a safe system of operation;
- Where plant and machinery is brought into DDCL premises by contractors, they must be able to show where necessary that the equipment has been inspected and tested to ensure its safe operation;
- Contractors using sub-contractors or other persons other than their direct employees remain responsible for health, safety and welfare matters.