

Sustainable South West Herts CIC
Health and Safety Policy

Part 1: Statement of intent

At Sustainable South West Herts CIC (SSWH), we are committed to providing a safe and healthy environment for all volunteers, visitors, and participants. We aim to minimise risks and hazards associated with all our events and activities while promoting a culture of safety and wellbeing.

This Health & Safety Policy outlines our commitment to ensuring the highest standards of health and safety across our events and activities.

The purpose of our health and safety policy is to:

- prevent accidents and cases of work-related ill health
- manage health and safety risks at our events
- provide clear instructions and information, and adequate training, to ensure volunteers are competent to perform their tasks
- provide personal protective equipment where required
- consult with our volunteers on matters affecting their health and safety
- provide and maintain safe equipment
- ensure safe handling and use of substances
- maintain safe and healthy working conditions
- implement emergency procedures, including evacuation in case of fire, or other significant incidents

We will review and revise this policy at least annually, or when conditions change.

Signed _____ **Date** 9th October 2025

Print Name Jess Griffin

Signed _____ **Date** 9th October 2025

Print Name Anna Addison

Review Date 30 September 2026

Part 2: Responsibilities for health and safety

1 Overall and final responsibility for health and safety:

The Directors of SSWH are responsible for creating a safe and healthy working environment and ensuring compliance with all relevant health and safety legislation, regulations, and standards.

Health and Safety Lead - Jess Griffin

2 Day-to-day responsibility for ensuring this policy is put into practice:

For each SSWH event or activity an Event Lead will be responsible for ensuring this policy is followed.

Every volunteer has a responsibility to adhere to this Health & Safety Policy; to follow safe work practices, to follow the Risk Assessment developed for the event and to report any hazards or concerns to the Event Lead, who in turn will report promptly to the SSWH Directors.

3 To ensure health and safety standards are maintained, the following people have responsibility in the following areas:

A Director will be identified as the owner of each event's Risk Assessment. This Director will also be responsible for the maintenance of relevant equipment; information; briefing, instruction, supervision and training.

The Event Lead will be responsible for the specific emergency procedures such as fire and evacuation at each event; this must be covered within the Risk Assessment for that event.

The Health and Safety Lead is responsible for monitoring, accident and ill-health investigation.

4 All volunteers should:

- co-operate with the Event Lead and Directors on health and safety matters;
- take reasonable care of their own health and safety;
- use equipment correctly in accordance with training and instructions;
- follow the Risk Assessment developed for the event; and
- report all health and safety concerns to an appropriate person (as detailed above).

Persistent refusal to comply with the Health and Safety Policy or the instructions of the Health and Safety Lead/ Event Lead will result in the volunteer being barred from volunteering at future events.

Part 3: Arrangements for health and safety

1. Risk assessment

- SSWH will complete a Risk Assessment for each event and take the appropriate action.
- SSWH will review these Risk Assessments when working habits or conditions change.
- Hazards Identification: Regular assessments will be conducted to identify potential hazards associated with activities such as electrical safety, sharp objects, lifting heavy items, and hazardous materials.
- Risk Evaluation: Each identified hazard will be evaluated for the likelihood and severity of potential harm to determine the level of risk.
- Control Measures: Appropriate control measures will be implemented to eliminate or minimise identified risks, such as providing personal protective equipment (PPE), conducting training programs, and ensuring proper equipment maintenance.

Training

- Induction Training: All volunteers will receive induction training, including health and safety procedures, safe work practices, and emergency response protocols.
- Volunteer training: All volunteer training will be recorded in the SSWH training log (both formal and informal).
- Where necessary, volunteers will be given manual handling training with employees/ volunteers signing to confirm they have received it.

- Awareness Campaigns: We will promote health and safety awareness through regular briefings and updates to encourage responsible behaviour and prevent accidents.

Safe working

- Assessment: new volunteers will be teamed with experienced volunteers with proven ability to assess their competencies.
- Working environment:
 - SSWH will ensure there is a safe working environment at its events, i.e. sufficient space and lighting/ appropriate equipment and PPE (as needed), to allow repairs to be undertaken safely.
 - PPE (i.e. gloves, eye protection, face masks, high-visibility clothing) will be provided if required. This will be mandatory, and volunteers will be briefed on how to use it and will sign to confirm receipt.
- Manual handling:
 - Events will be planned to avoid excessive manual handling by assessing tasks in advance.
 - When lifting heavy objects, equipment or assistance will be provided (i.e. trolleys), or the load will be split into multiple lighter loads.
 - Volunteers will be advised to lift equipment by bending their legs and keeping their back straight. They will be advised not to twist and to keep the load close to the body.
- A trained First Aider will be on duty at all events.

Emergency preparedness

- Emergency Response Plan: An emergency response plan will be developed and communicated to all volunteers, detailing procedures to follow in case of emergencies, such as fire, injury, or medical incidents. These will be provided by the venue of the activity/ event.
- First Aid and Medical Assistance: A well-stocked first aid kit will be readily available at each activity/ event. Trained first aiders will be designated, and emergency contact numbers will be displayed prominently.

Reporting and investigation:

- Incident Reporting: All incidents, accidents, near misses, and hazardous situations must be reported to the event Lead immediately and an Incident Report Form completed and returned to the Health and Safety Lead.
- Incident Investigation: The Health and Safety Lead will investigate all incidents promptly to identify root causes and take corrective actions to prevent similar incidents in the future.

Consultation and communication:

- Communication channels: Open lines of communication will be maintained between Directors and volunteers to ensure the exchange of health and safety information and address concerns promptly.
- Consultation: Volunteers will be encouraged to participate in health and safety discussions, providing input and suggestions to continually improve health and safety practices.
- Regular review: This Health & Safety Policy will be reviewed regularly to ensure its ongoing suitability and effectiveness. Changes in legislation, best practice, or organisational structure will be considered, and necessary updates will be made accordingly.