

Masham Town Hall Community Charity Ltd

Health and Safety Policy Statement

It is the duty of Masham Town Hall Community Charity Ltd, as for every employer, to ensure, so far as is reasonably practicable, the health, safety and welfare at work of all its employees.¹

This duty extends to:

- Safe plant and systems of work;
- Safe use, handling, storage and transport of articles and substances;
- Provision of necessary information, training and supervision;
- Provision of a safe workplace with safe means of access and exit.

It is the duty of every employee while at work to:

- Take reasonable care of their own health and safety;
- Take reasonable care of the health and safety of anyone who may be affected by their actions;
- Co-operate with their supervisor or any other authorised person to ensure that legal obligations are met.

The common duties are enforceable by law. In effect, any employee or employer who endangers the health and safety of any other person is liable to prosecution, irrespective of whether their conduct is in breach of any specific rule.

The effective implementation of Masham Town Hall Community Charity Ltd²'s Health and Safety Policy requires the participation of all levels of management, staff and volunteers. The overall responsibility lies with the Chair of Trustees, and both the Chair and the Board of Trustees accept that this accountability forms an integral and essential part of their responsibilities, ranking equally with all other commitments and objectives.

¹ For the purposes of this document, and under Section 2(3) of the Health and Safety at Work Act 1974, volunteers, trainees, placements and people on work experience count as, and have the same rights and responsibilities as, employees.

² Masham Town Hall Community Charity Ltd shall be known as 'MTHCC' throughout this document.

General Duties of MTHCC Employees

All employees must be fully aware of MTHCC's Health and Safety Policy, and in particular:

- Observe and promote all safety rules at all times;
- Be aware of the evacuation procedure and emergency exit sites;
- Follow any health and safety instruction given to them by the Trustees, or their supervisor;
- Report to the Administrator all accidents and potential hazards in their area of work, and recommend where necessary action to prevent an incident, or the recurrence of an incident;
- Ensure that any new items of equipment or substances meet acceptable safety standards prior to and after installation;
- Ensure that potential hazards from harmful substances are controlled in accordance with COSHH regulations;
- Ensure that hirers, performers, etc are aware of and abide by this policy while at the Town Hall or on MTHCC business;
- Ensure that any safety devices used are in position, properly maintained and used;
- Comply with all hazard warning signs and notices on display;
- Report to the Administrator any medical condition which could affect the safety of themselves or others;
- Identify areas where they require training in order to fulfil the above responsibilities.

Employees must not:

- Use equipment that they are not familiar with or trained to use;
- Carry out repair or maintenance work unless authorised;
- Obstruct any fire escape route, fire equipment or fire doors.

All other people on MTHCC premises, including hirers, performers and members of the public:

- Shall observe this policy and instructions given by persons enforcing the policy, particularly the Administrator and Caretaker;
- Shall not work at MTHCC until the relevant safety rules are read, understood and accepted;
- Shall inform the Administrator or Caretaker of any practices which may cause a hazard in the course of their work;
- Shall not work within the building unless and until covered by public liability insurance.

Responsibilities

Trustees

The Trustees shall be responsible for the effective dissemination and implementation of this policy, and keep under review the necessity for further measures and training to ensure the safety and welfare of employees and the public while on the premises.

Administrator

The Administrator shall be responsible for the effective implementation of this policy within the building, and will ensure through regular inspection that Health and Safety measures are being maintained and followed. This extends to implementing additional safety measures, repairs or remedial measures deemed necessary as a result of these inspections, or external inspections by officials from Harrogate Council or any other appropriate statutory body.

The Administrator shall be readily available to discuss Health and Safety issues with hirers, performers, tutors and Town Hall users.

The Administrator will liaise with statutory and licensing bodies and user groups to ensure that this policy is implemented throughout the building.

The Administrator shall be responsible for the effective implementation of this policy within the building, in particular by ensuring the availability of first aid materials in public areas, the upkeep of the incident book, and the regular testing of fire alarms.

Code of Practice for Employees

1. Be aware of your means of escape from wherever you are in the Town Hall building.
2. Be aware of the position and nature (wet/dry/blanket) of your nearest fire appliance.
3. Be aware of the position of your nearest first aid box.
4. Keep the office and public areas clear of waste paper and unnecessary storage.
5. While carrying equipment, boxes of paper, etc., ensure that the load is within your physical limits and the route is clear.
6. Make sure that your chair is comfortable and you can use your desk or computer without discomfort.
7. All technical equipment must be used in accordance with the manufacturer's instructions to avoid misuse, overloading, etc.
9. Any employee using tools should ensure that they have relevant training before proceeding. Do not be afraid to ask for a demonstration or training.
10. Any employee using their own tools should ensure that they are in a safe condition.
11. Only authorised employees or contractors may work on MTHCC's electrical system or boiler. The relevant department of Harrogate Council should be made aware of any major electrical or gas supply work within MTHCC, and that work should be subject to their inspection if necessary.

Control of Substances Hazardous to Health (COSHH)

MTHCC has a legal requirement to produce evidence of risk assessment for every substance that enters the building. These risk assessments are to be supervised by, and be the responsibility of, the Administrator.

All employees are to be aware of the risk assessment of any substance used by them in the course of their work.

The method for COSHH assessment will be as follows:

1. Suppliers of any substance for which there is any potential of hazard are asked to send the relevant COSHH form to MTHCC.
2. Once this has arrived, a substance risk assessment is prepared, detailing: hazards to the person using the substance and people working near to the substance; where the substance is to be stored; and what if any safety measures are to be taken with it, including steps to be taken in the event of an accident and medical advice.
3. Even substances found to be utterly harmless must be recorded as such.
4. If a substance is found to be inevitably hazardous to health, it should be replaced wherever possible with an equivalent non-harmful substance or a safer form of the same substance. If it is necessary to use the harmful substance, suitable controls should be made. These could include enclosure, investing in extraction equipment, minimising the possibility of spills, and provision of protective clothing.
5. COSHH assessments must be updated whenever a new substance comes into MTHCC

Electrical Safety and Testing of Equipment

Electrical equipment within the building, and emergency lighting, is to be PAT tested annually.

The following checks are to be made daily: they are the responsibility of all employees, particularly the Administrator and Caretaker.

- Boiler in working order (daily when boiler in use);
- No electrical hazards or loose wires in public areas;
- Any trailing cables or wires in public or office spaces to be taped down securely;
- All electrical items, especially computers, switched off after use;
- Rig and electrical safety on stage checked when theatre lighting in use.

Manual Handling of Loads

While handling of loads is not an integral part of the work of MTHCC, there are inevitably times when employees are involved in lifting. The risks from incorrect lifting, poor posture and excessive repetition of movement are serious. Hazardous manual handling operations should be avoided as far as possible; unavoidable operations should be assessed and the assessment used to reduce the risk of injury as far as is practicable.

Employees should be aware that:

1. Good posture and holding the body straight are essential, and the load should be held as near as possible to the body. Avoid twisting the body while carrying a load.
2. The safe handling capacity of a load is reduced if it is carried a distance of over 10 metres. Loads being carried for longer distances should be lowered and lifted regularly if possible.
3. Frequent or prolonged handling of modest loads can create as great a risk of injury as the singular handling of a large load.
4. Pushing and pulling loads can be as hazardous as lifting them. The risk of injury is increased if the hands have to be held below waist height or over shoulder height.
5. Each employee will have different handling abilities, depending on their health, fitness, strength, size and motivation. Always consider team handling as a safer option if in doubt.

Visual Display Units (VDUs)

VDUs have been blamed, often wrongly, for a variety of health problems. If health problems do occur they are usually due to not using the VDUs themselves but from the way they are used. All VDUs used at MTHCC will have anti-glare screens as standard, and any employee using a VDU for more than 15 hours per week on a regular basis will be entitled to regular eye tests at MTHCC's expense.

Employees should follow these guidelines for good usage:

1. Change your posture as often as possible, and remove obstacles under desks so your legs can move freely.
2. Take a break of 10 minutes per hour of continuous VDU work. Regular short breaks are more effective than a single longer break.
3. Arrange your screen to avoid reflections from bright light. Ideally the screen should be at right angles to the nearest window.

Fire and Evacuation Procedures

To be observed by everybody within the building – Trustees, Employees and Users

ON DISCOVERING A FIRE (no matter how small):

1. Raise the alarm by operating the nearest fire alarm call point
2. Try to extinguish the fire using the nearest appropriate fire extinguisher
– but **ONLY** if it is safe and you have been trained to do so.
3. Ensure the fire service has been called via the 999 system

ON HEARING THE FIRE ALARM:

1. Act calmly
2. Leave the building by the nearest available exit.
3. Offer any necessary assistance to people who need it
4. Close all doors to slow spread of fire
5. Proceed to the assembly point (Little Market Place by bus shelter)

CALLING THE FIRE SERVICE

*THE FIRE SERVICE SHOULD BE CALLED IMMEDIATELY TO EVERY FIRE
– EVEN IF SUCCESSFULLY EXTINGUISHED – OR ON SUSPICION OF FIRE*

1. Dial 999
2. Give operator your telephone number and ask for 'FIRE'
3. When the Fire Service Replies say "fire at Masham Town Hall" – post code HG4 4DY
4. Do not hang up until this information is repeated back to you correctly

Public Health and Safety Policy Statement

The following statement shall be displayed in the Foyer:

Masham Town Hall Community Charity Ltd General Policy on Health and Safety

The aim of Masham Town Hall Community Charity Ltd (MTHCC) aim is to ensure the Health and Safety within this building of all its employees and patrons. MTHCC recognises its responsibility for the provision and maintenance of plant and systems of work, as far as is reasonably safe and without risks to the Health and Safety of its employees and users.

MTHCC will train its employees in every aspect relating to the Health and Safety of themselves and their customers. Employees (including Trustees, volunteers, trainees and placements) have the responsibility to carry out and comply with MTHCC's Health and Safety regulations. It is their responsibility to bring to the attention of MTHCC Administrator and/or trustees any problems or matters relating to health and safety.

The overall responsibility for the implementation of the Health and Safety Policy lies with the Chair of Trustees and the Board of Trustees. The day-to-day responsibility lies with MTHCC Administrator, Nick Reed. Any comments or queries about health and safety at MTHCC should be addressed to him c/o the Town Hall building in the first instance.