

TAUNTON HERITAGE TRUST

HEALTH & SAFETY POLICY STATEMENT

&

SUPPORTING PROCEDURES

Updated April 2025

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HEALTH AND SAFETY POLICY STATEMENT

1. INTRODUCTION

This is a statement of policy by the Taunton Heritage Trust about its intentions, organisation and arrangements for ensuring the health and safety of its employees, residents, volunteers, visitors and contractors, whilst on Trust property or acting on behalf of the Trust

Supplementary to this general policy statement, there will be specific policies and procedures describing in detail health and safety provisions in each part of the organisation.

2. STATEMENT OF INTENT

It is the policy of the Trust to ensure, so far as is reasonably practicable, the health, safety and welfare of its employees while they are at work, and of others who may be affected by the Trust's undertakings, and to comply with the Health and Safety at Work etc. Act 1974 and all other relevant legislation, as appropriate.

3. OBJECTIVES

In order to achieve compliance with the statement of policy the Trust has the following objectives:

- To set and maintain high standards for health, safety and the protection of the environment at its locations
- To identify risks and set in place programmes to remove or reduce these risks
- To ensure that these standards are communicated to all employees, residents and visitors
- To ensure that all personnel are given the appropriate equipment, necessary information, instruction, training and supervision to enable them to work in a safe manner
- To ensure that the appropriate resources are made available to enable the policy to be implemented.

4. RESPONSIBILITIES

To ensure the prevention of ill health, the avoidance of accidents and the promotion of safe and healthy workplaces, the following responsibilities have been established:

4.1 Board of Trustees

The Trustees are responsible for establishing the overall Health and Safety Policy for the Trust and have ultimate responsibility for all health and safety matters.

This involves:

- The promotion of good practice within health and safety
- The allocation of necessary resources
- The monitoring of the implementation of health and safety practice.

The **Lead/Link Trustee for Health and Safety** will link with the Staff Team and report to Board

4.2 The Chief Officer, authorised through the Board of Trustees, has responsibility for implementing and monitoring the policy and will:

- Keep the Health and Safety Policy under review, bringing to the Trustees' attention any faults or areas of weakness in the policy and ensuring that it is revised as and when necessary
- Monitor the Policy's implementation, set targets or objectives where appropriate and report progress to the Board
- Ensure the dissemination and discussion of relevant information on health and safety
- Report details to the Board of Trustees where an accident/incident has occurred which may result in prosecution
- Make annual reports to the Board of Trustees on the management of health and safety at the Trust.

4.3 The Properties Manager

Is responsible for:

- The practical implementation of the Health and Safety Policy, the Health and Safety at Work etc. Act 1974 and other relevant legislation
- Ensuring that the operations under their control, so far as is reasonably practical, are conducted without detriment to the health and safety of employees or others who may be affected by their activities
- Ensuring that their area of responsibility is subject to risk assessment, regular inspections and audits
- Ensuring that all accidents, incidents and near misses, within their area of responsibility, are reported to the Trustees reviewing all such reports and ensuring, where appropriate, that a full investigation is carried out and appropriate remedial action taken, where necessary.

4.4 Individual Responsibilities

All employees are required to:

- Co-operate in implementing the requirements of the Health and Safety Policy, legislation, related codes of practice and safety instructions
- Refrain from doing anything which constitutes a danger to themselves or others
- Bring to the immediate attention of their line manager/supervisor any situations or practices that are noted which might lead to injuries or ill health
- Ensure that any equipment issued to them, or for which they are responsible, is correctly used and properly stored
- Be responsible for good housekeeping in the area in which they are working
- Report all accidents, incidents, dangerous occurrences and near misses, in accordance with the Trust's guidance.

5. Contractors

All contractors working in the Trust's property are required to comply with appropriate rules and regulations governing their work activities. Contractors are legally responsible for their own workforce and for ensuring that their work is carried out in a safe manner.

6. Communication

The name of the person designated with the responsibility for health and safety is to be prominently displayed for the information of all employees. The policy statement will also be prominently displayed in the THT Offices for access by all visitors, and will be made available to Residents and other parties upon request.

7. Consultation and Training

The Board of Trustees and the Chief Officer are committed to involving employees at all levels in the maintenance of health and safety standards and to provide them with adequate information, instruction and training. External health and safety consultants will be used to provide professional health, safety, environmental and occupational advice, as required.

8. Policy Review

The effectiveness of this general policy statement and other specific policies in use throughout the Trust will be subject to review by the Trust ~~a~~nnually.

POLICY APPROVED DATE: _____2025_____

NEXT REVIEW DATE: _____2026_____

This policy is reviewed annually.

Note - In this document any reference to Resident Lead is deemed to mean the Resident Lead or any other staff member who the CO appoints or requires to undertake a duty usually performed by the Resident Lead

April 2025

H&S ORGANISATIONAL RESPONSIBILITY TREE

Overall Responsibility for establishing the Health & Safety Policy

TRUSTEES

Reporting role

HEALTH AND SAFETY LEAD/LINK TRUSTEE

Responsibility for implementing and monitoring the Health & Safety Policy

Ros Moreton
CHIEF OFFICER

NAMED HEALTH & SAFETY OFFICER

Steve Cavill
PROPERTIES MANAGER
Responsible for the practical implementation of the Health & Safety Policy and named responsible person re fire procedures

RESPONSIBLE FOR OFFICE H&S

Laura Harrisson
OFFICE MANAGER
Responsible for day to day implementation of H&S within the THT offices

CONTACT: 01823 335348

Schedule 1

Fire Precautions

1. Up to date Fire Action signage will be displayed next to each fire alarm panel and at each designated final exit point. Where there are flat specific fire escape instructions (namely St James Close), these specific instructions will be provided to the Resident, who will be encouraged to display them on the back of their door. The Properties Manager will review contents regularly.

2. All audible fire alarms will be tested weekly by Resident Lead or any other individual as determined by the Chief Officer. They will test a manual call point during working hours to check that the control panel and alarm sounders operate satisfactorily. Each week a different manual call point will be tested and this will be recorded

3. All smoke detectors are hardwired into the communal fire alarm system. All communal alarms are tested **6 monthly** by a specialist Contractor and a record kept.

4. All fire extinguishers will be checked **annually** by a specialist Contractor and records kept. Fire blankets will be visually inspected for evidence of use or tampering at least annually and replaced if necessary.

<u>The Properties Manager will keep records of 1-4 above on file</u>

5. The Resident Lead will advise the Properties Manager should any fire blanket be used and the Resident will be issued with a replacement.

6. The Resident Lead will maintain, in the Residents' Support Plans, an up to date record of all Residents with specific needs. This record will be reviewed and updated annually.

7. Residents are expected to inform the Resident Lead if they are to be away from their homes overnight or have any overnight guests.

8. All electrical goods supplied to the Residents or in staff provided accommodation by the Trust will conform to current regulations and where required will be tested annually (see Schedule 6, Electrical Safety).

9. Where a smoke detector activates the fire alarm and the call is routed direct to Somerset Lifeline rather than the Resident Lead house, The Helpline has been asked to inform the appropriate Resident Lead as soon as possible even if the Fire Brigade is not required as this could indicate that a Resident is not coping very well and may need additional support.

10. Any Resident who may have difficulty evacuating a building will have personal emergency evacuation plan (PEEP) prepared and will receive an induction as to how they apply in each case. The PEEP will be reviewed annually by the Resident Lead.

Please also refer to separate Staff Fire Safety Procedure document.

Schedule 2

Electrical Safety

1. The electrical supplies will be maintained professionally to ensure that all current legislation is adhered to.

2. All electrical equipment supplied by the Trust will conform to current legislation and maintenance will be undertaken by a qualified individual.

3. An annual portable appliance test will be completed to equipment supplied by the Trust by a qualified individual and records kept.

4. Contractors and all staff visiting Residents are required to be alert to the condition of electrical equipment supplied by the Trust or owned by the Resident, and to report any potential hazards to the Properties manager, e.g. broken plugs, frayed or discoloured flexes etc.

5. Any employee visiting a Residents flat will mindful of overloaded sockets. Where this occurs, the Properties Manager should be informed so that additional power points can be considered.

6. Employees and Contractors are empowered to withdraw defective or unsuitable equipment from service, whether it belongs to the Trust or the Resident, until it is either repaired or destroyed.

Schedule 3

Maintenance, Cleaning and Heating

1. General

1.1 The Properties Manager will prepare a costed planned maintenance schedule annually for approval by the Trustees.

1.2 Schedules will be prepared annually by the Properties Manager for all regular maintenance and cleaning and, as required, for specific items. These will include standards of health & safety required.

1.3. Standards of work will be reviewed quarterly for regular maintenance and on completion for specific items. Any problems or defects will be resolved with the Contractor prior to payment.

1.4. Requests for non-scheduled items of maintenance will be referred to the Properties Manager for prioritising and implementation against a priority schedule. Emergencies will be responded to within 24 hours; urgent requests within 5 days and the remainder as quickly as reasonably practical to ensure cost effective working methods. A record of all requests will be maintained and the outcome monitored.

1.5 Each Tunstall Call system will be tested by the Wardens weekly at the time the fire alarm is tested and on occasions when the system is activated by Residents. Any defects will be reported direct to the manufacturer and the Properties Manager informed.

2. Central heating and hot water systems

2.1 The gas-fired boilers will be serviced once per year by a registered Engineer and a record held by the Properties Manager.

2.2 Water distribution systems will be risk assessed by a qualified contractor. Recommendations for the management of water in accordance with ACoP L8 will be implemented.

2.3 Procedures will be put in place to flush little used outlets weekly, and a record kept. Little used outlets will include guest rooms, outside taps and outlets in vacant properties.

2.5 The central heating systems will be set to maintain a minimum temperature of 20 celcius during the winter months. They will normally be switched off between 01 June and 30 September but may be turned on again if the outside temperature is unacceptably low.

Schedule 4

Staff Security

1. All Staff should be vigilant when carrying out their duties especially when visiting Residents unaccompanied or when carrying cash. Staff should inform each other of any potentially violent or dangerous situations they identify so that appropriate steps can be taken to prevent or minimise the risk involved.

2. If Staff feel intimidated or threatened in any way whilst visiting a Resident they should not venture into the flat but remain close to the door until they can assess the situation or leave immediately. They should not deal with any confrontational or intimidating situation alone but ask for help from a colleague, or if necessary, call the Police. If responding to an emergency out of normal hours, Staff should ensure that they inform someone where they are going and take their alarm and mobile phone with them. Whenever working alone in the office, Staff should feel free to lock the door if they feel it appropriate.

3. Any incidence of violence or verbally abusive/threatening behaviour towards a member of Staff (whether or not it leads to damage or injury) must be reported immediately to the Chief Officer who will decide upon the course of action required to deal with it, or instigate preventative measures, to prevent it re-occurring. All such incidents should be formally recorded using the form in the appendix to this Schedule. When preventative measures are introduced they should be formally logged and reviewed at an appropriate interval.

4. The Trustees must be informed as soon as possible of any incident; if necessary, the Chief Officer should contact the Chair or Vice Chair immediately.

5. The Resident Lead should carry their personal alarm at all times and they should not hesitate to use them if they feel threatened in any way. In addition, the Resident Lead must carry their mobile phones at all times when on duty. The phones must be fully charged and switched ON while on duty. They must use them to summon help whenever they feel the situation warrants it.

6. Cash handling should be kept to a minimum.

7. See Schedule 11 CCTV.

7.1 **Weekly Charges**: All new Residents will be asked to pay their charges fortnightly by direct debit in line with existing Residents. In exceptional one-off circumstances the Resident Lead can collect the WMC payment directly from a Resident subject to the Resident and Resident Lead both signing and agreeing the relevant WMC payment form.

7.2 **Banking:** Although WMCs are collected by direct debit, a small amount of cash and cheques still need to be banked. It is important that when doing this, Staff should vary the routine. Whilst Staff normally do this on their own, they should be accompanied from time to time by each other. A personal alarm should be carried whenever cash is being moved.

Please also refer to separate Lone Workers Policy, Checklist and Risk Assessment.

Schedule 5

Incident Report Form

Date and time of incident: .....

Location of incident: .....

Name of employee: .....

What activity were you engaged in when the incident took place?

What happened?
Give an account of the incident plus any relevant event leading to the incident

What was the outcome?
Violence? Injury? Verbal Abuse? Anti Social Behaviour? Damage to Staff's, Resident's or Trust property?

Details of Assailants (Give name, address, age etc if known).

_____

Action by Chief Officer:

_____

Schedule 6

Office furnishings, equipment and environment

1. The Office Manager has day-to-day responsibility for aspects of Health and Safety within the Office. In order to achieve this she/he will:

   - Identify any defects in furniture and equipment, call in the appropriate mechanic or, where repair is not possible, agree a suitable replacement with Colleagues.

   - Report any deficiencies in cleaning standards or the fabric of the office building to the Properties Manager.

   - Ensure that work stations are properly set up and maintained and that all users of IT equipment are familiar with the requirements of the Display Screen Equipment Regulations 1992 and 2002 amendment. This amendment covers all users of IT Equipment, not just specialist and the requirements are as shown below and remain unchanged.

   - Ensure that all Staff who use the IT equipment have their eyes tested when appropriate and if special glasses are required solely for use with this equipment arrange for them to be reimbursed the cost up to an agreed maximum.

2. All staff working from home have a responsibility to ensure that they have appropriate desk/chair arrangements and should contact the Chief Officer if they feel they need any further equipment etc. The Office Manager will support staff to complete the Display Screen Assessment which helps identify this. https://www.hse.gov.uk/msd/dse/assessment.htm

Schedule 7

Accident Reporting

1. The Office holds an official Health and Safety Executive (HSE) Accident Book (B1 510) and all accidents as described in (2) below, will be recorded in the format required in this book, which has numbered pages.

2. All accidents to Staff or visitors on any Trust property or to Residents in communal areas only (including outside communal spaces), will be recorded as soon as possible after they occur, in the official HSE Accident Book.

3. As required by the "Reporting of Injuries, Diseases and Dangerous Occurrences Regulations 1995 (RIDDOR)" any accident, which results in a member of Staff being off sick for over 7 days (not counting the day on which the accident happened), must be reported to the Trustees and the Health and Safety Executive.

4. The accident book will be checked annually by the Chief Officer to identify any pattern of accidents and whether further preventative action is required.

5. When a Resident has an accident or incident including a fall in their own flat or when out and about but not in a Taunton Heritage Trust communal area the Warden completes the internal form entitled Resident Accident/Incident Recording Sheet and a copy is retained in the office.

Schedule 8

Control of Substances Hazardous to Health (COSHH) Policy

1. Introduction

The Control of Substances Hazardous to Health (COSHH) Regulations 2002 (as amended) applies to any substance or material that may cause harm to the user or anyone else exposed to it.

All businesses that use potentially hazardous materials or substances are required to have a set of procedures setting out the precautions to be in place for the safe storage, use and handling before and after using it.

he Trust will ensure that it meets its statutory obligations with regards to COSHH 2002, the Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999 and any other relevant legislation.

2. Aims of the Policy

This policy is intended to set out the values, principles and policies underpinning the Trust's approach to COSHH management. By implementing COSHH guidelines thoroughly and fully the organisation aims to protect Staff who come into contact with hazardous substances as part of their work.

Such 'hazardous substances' include:

substances or mixtures of substances classified as dangerous to health under the current CHIP Regulations, including chemicals classified as very toxic, toxic, harmful, irritant or corrosive etc.

substantial concentrations of airborne dust.

harmful micro-organisms.

3. The COSHH Policy

To comply with the Regulations the Trust will:

- Ensure that the exposure to hazardous substances is minimised and adequately controlled in all cases

- Follow the hierarchy of controls:

  Avoid exposure;

  Substitute the substance or change the process;

  Total enclosure of the process;

  The use of LEV (Local Exhaust Ventilation);

  Limiting the number of personnel exposed;

  Reducing the period of exposure;

  Providing suitable Personal Protective Equipment.

- Ensure that a COSHH risk assessment is carried out for all work carried out by the Trust that involves exposure to hazardous substances.
- A copy of the Material Safety Data Sheet (MSDS) will be held for every product on site which is identified as harmful. These will be obtained from the supplier or manufacturer.

- The Properties Manager will review the MSDS to ensure they remain current, usually at the same time as reviewing the main COSHH assessments.

- Ensure that all personnel who are exposed to hazardous substances in their work receive adequate training and information and are issued with appropriate protective clothing or equipment.

- Ensure that COSHH assessments are reviewed regularly and whenever there are modifications to a work process that involves a change in the use of a hazardous substance.

- All COSHH assessments will use information from the MSDS and will be relevant to the task to be carried out. Completed COSHH assessments will be kept on file at the Huish Homes Office.

- The Properties Manager will be responsible for ensuring that COSHH assessments are carried out.

4. Health Surveillance

In accordance with Regulation 6 of the Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999 the Trust will ensure that all employees are provided with such health surveillance as is appropriate having regard to the risks to their health and safety which are identified by the COSHH assessment.

The need for health surveillance will be assessed on a case by case basis.

All personal details will be kept securely.

All Staff should be encouraged to read the policy on COSHH as part of their induction process.

All Staff will be encouraged to approach the Chief Officer if they feel their health is being adversely affected.

5. Training

The Trust will ensure that Staff expected to perform COSHH assessments as part of their job will undergo suitable training.

The Trust will ensure that all employees are given suitable training in the storage and use of all substances they will use in the course of their work.

The training will be done during normal working hours.

No hazardous substance will be introduced into the work process without employees being given adequate training.

The Chief Officer is responsible for keeping a record of any COSHH training.

COSHH training should include demonstrations on safe use and handling to ensure that hazardous substances are used according to the manufacturer's instructions and that all employees fully understand these instructions.

6. Personal Protective Equipment (PPE)

The Trust will ensure that PPE suitable for exposure to/contact with the substance and task is available for use at all workstations, and that all employees have been properly trained in its use.

The Properties Manager is responsible for ensuring that an adequate supply of PPE is always available.

7. Incidents and emergencies

The Trust will ensure that employees receive training on emergency procedures relating to spillages or accidental exposure to any hazardous substances that the Trust uses in the running of its business.

A fully stocked first aid kit and trained first-aider will be available at all times wherever hazardous materials are used.

The personnel responsible and procedures for dealing with accidents and emergencies will be prominently displayed at appropriate locations and each employee will be obliged to familiarise themselves with this information.

The Properties Manager will be informed immediately of any hazardous substances incident or emergency.

8. Storage

The Trust will ensure that safe storage (lockable where appropriate) is provided for hazardous materials and chemicals used in the business.

All materials/substances will be stored as per the manufacturers' recommendations, including bunded stores/tanks where needed.

The Properties Manager will be responsible for carrying out regular reviews of storage arrangements.

9. Disposal

The Trust will ensure that all chemicals or hazardous substances are disposed of in accordance with local environmental requirements and MSDS information.

Clean-up equipment and PPE shall be made available when necessary.

10. Employees duties

All employees will be given a copy of this Policy and will be required to comply with requirements herein at all times.

All employees are obliged to report any accident, misuse or risk from use, handling, contact or storage of hazardous materials to the Properties Manager.

Any employee who feels unwell or ill after having been exposed to any hazardous substance is required to report this to the Chief Officer or the Properties Manager.

11. Monitoring and Review

It will be the responsibility of the Properties Manager to monitor the implementation of and compliance with this Policy and to carry out regular audits of:

use of chemicals/substances;

maintenance of control systems;

observance of safe working practices by all employees;

distribution of COSHH related information and updates to all relevant employees;

storage of hazardous substances;

safe working procedures of contractors (if appropriate).

Schedule 9

Storage of Battery-Operated Mobility Scooters, Wheelchairs, Bicycles & E-Scooters

1. Purpose built scooter storage facilities are provided at Leycroft, the Bernard Taylor / Huish complex and St James Close. There are no facilities at Grays.

   Each scooter store has separate spaces, each with a dedicated electric socket for recharging the battery.

   Leycroft Close has two stores, adjacent to blocks A and B which between them provide **6 spaces,** these will be allocated on a first come, first served basis.

   Bernard Taylor / Huish has two stores providing a total of **10 storage spaces**. These are situated at either end of the car park for ease of access. Again, allocation will be on a first come, first served basis.

   St James Close has one store which is located at the bottom end of the Close to the rear of the property. It has provision for **4 spaces** which will also be allocated on a first come, first served basis.

2. Residents at these sites who wish to buy a scooter / wheelchair will need to apply in advance to the Chief Officer for a storage space. Once granted, an addendum to their License Agreement will be prepared covering this.

3. A weekly charge will be levied for use of these additional facilities and will be reviewed annually.

4. Each Resident will be responsible for insuring their scooter against damage or theft and for use on the highways. Parking will be at the owner's risk. No liability will apply to the Trust or the Trustees. Residents are asked to bring a copy of their insurance document to the office annually and this is recorded on a schedule and the document then returned to the Resident.

5. Each Resident will be responsible for ensuring that their own scooter is maintained to a safe condition. In the event that it comes apparent that a scooter is not in a good condition or may have an electrical problem, the Trust reserves the right to remove the right to use the scooter storage and charging area until the Resident can demonstrate that their scooter is in safe condition by having it checked by a reputable qualified individual.

9. The Trust will review the provision of additional facilities should demand exceed supply.

10. Residents will not be permitted to store or keep an electric scooter, wheelchair or electric bicycle on any of the Trust's premises other than in the designated storage areas, which includes individual flats or in corridors and communal areas.

11 For fire safety reasons Residents are not permitted to store any other belongings other than those being directly associated with their scooters, in the designated stores.

11. This information is included in the Resident's Handbook that was updated in 2019 and a copy issued to all Residents.

12. Please also refer to separate Car, Mobility Scooter, Motorbike and Bicycle Parking Policy.

Schedule 10

Food Preparation and Hygiene

The Trustees have a duty of care to provide safe food and drink in all circumstances and to meet the requirements of the Food Safety Act 1990 (Amended Regulations) 2004 and Food Safety and Hygiene (England) Regulations 2013.

The Trust are not registered as a food business with Environmental Health and are therefore not legally able to be involved with the preparation or distribution of food to Residents or others.
On site kitchens can be used by Residents to prepare food for their own consumption or for gatherings of residents or family members where they consent. Food prepared in communal kitchens will not be sold or distributed to the Public, as this would require the Trust to register as a food business.

Schedule 11

CCTV

CCTV cameras have been installed across the almshouse sites for the purpose of monitoring and deterring damage to property and to improve security for the Trust's Residents and Staff.

The Trust is registered with the Information Commissioner's Office (ICO) as operators of CCTV. This is a legal requirement. Images of people and any information captured about them, eg vehicle registration numbers, are covered by the Data Protection Act 1998 (DPA) and fall within the definition of personal data.

The named individuals responsible for the operation of the CCTV are:
Steve Cavill – Properties Manager
Ros Moreton – Chief Officer

Please refer to the Trust's CCTV Usage Policy document for full details of the usage of CCTV.

Schedule 12

Covid-19, Influenza or other pandemic

In the event of another Covid 19, influenza, or similar pandemic, the Trust will follow all Government edicts, and will review the implementation of Government advice in order to best safeguard Residents, Staff and visitors, and the operation of the Trust as a whole.

Schedule 13

Monitoring

1. Informal meetings are held regularly between all colleagues.

2. Regular meetings are held between the Chief Officer and all the Staff at which any issues relating to the Health, Safety and Welfare of Residents and Staff will be raised.

3. Board and Lead Trustee meetings are held at regular intervals consisting of Trustees, Associates, and the Chief Officer, where any Resident issues are aired.

4. The Chief Officer, or otherwise the designated Lead Trustee for H&S will undertake a formal review of the procedures annually laid out in the preceding schedules. This will take the form of:

    - Checking that records of all fire tests and inspections are complete
    - Checking that electrical equipment has been inspected and recorded.
    - Reviewing the Resident Lead's records of Residents to ensure they comply with the guidelines in Schedule 4.
    - Checking the accident books.
    - Checking the maintenance records for outcomes.
    - Plus any other procedures as necessary.

5. A record will be maintained of the monitoring activities, any shortfall identified in procedures, and remedial action taken.

6. The Chief Officer or otherwise the designated Lead Trustee for H&S reports to the Trustees regarding issues identified. Any proposed amendments to the policy or procedures will be presented to Trustees as they arise.