Berryfields Parish Council

Health & Safety Policy

1. Policy Statement

Berryfields Parish Council (BPC) recognises its responsibilities under the **Health and Safety at Work etc. Act 1974** and associated regulations and will take all reasonably practicable steps to ensure the health, safety and welfare of its employees, councillors, contractors, volunteers and members of the public who may be affected by its activities.

The Council will:

- Provide and maintain safe premises, systems of work, plant, and equipment
- Identify and assess risks, implementing appropriate control measures
- Provide information, instruction, training, and supervision to enable all to work safely
- Consult employees on matters relating to health and safety
- Ensure the safe use, handling, storage, and transport of substances and equipment
- Provide adequate welfare facilities and emergency arrangements
- Review and update this policy annually or when legislation or operations change.

2. Responsibilities

2.1 The Council

BPC has **overall responsibility** for health and safety, ensuring appropriate arrangements, policies, and resources are in place.

2.2 The Clerk

The Clerk is the **Responsible Officer for Health and Safety**, with delegated authority to:

- Implement this policy and associated procedures
- Ensure risk assessments are completed and reviewed
- Maintain records of training, incidents, and safety inspections
- Ensure contractors and third parties comply with council health and safety standards
- Report incidents, near misses, and notifiable occurrences under **RIDDOR 2013**.
- Ensure appropriate hall access and safeguarding arrangements are implemented in accordance with the Council's adopted policies and procedures.

2.3 Employees

All employees must:

- Take reasonable care for their own health and safety and that of others
- Follow safe systems of work and report hazards or incidents promptly
- Use personal protective equipment (PPE) correctly
- Co-operate fully with the Council to enable compliance with legal duties.

2.4 Councillors, Contractors, and Volunteers

- Councillors must promote a positive safety culture in all council activities
- Contractors and volunteers must work in accordance with BPC policies and procedures
- Contractors must supply evidence of competence and current public liability insurance

- Councillors, contractors and volunteers must comply with the Council's Hall Access and Safeguarding Protocol when attending or carrying out activities at Roman Park Hall.

3. Health and Safety Duties

Under the **Health and Safety at Work etc. Act 1974**, the Council's general duties include:

- Providing and maintaining a safe place of work and access/egress
- Ensuring work equipment is safe, properly maintained, and suitable for purpose
- Controlling risks associated with hazardous substances (COSHH)
- Providing training and supervision appropriate to tasks undertaken
- Maintaining a working environment that is safe and without risk to health.

Employees must take reasonable care and co-operate with the Council to enable these duties to be met.

4. Consultation and Communication

BPC will consult directly with employees and their representatives on all health and safety matters.

The **Health and Safety Law Poster** will be displayed in council premises and digital copies provided to remote staff.

5. Risk Assessment

BPC will conduct **risk assessments** for all significant activities, premises, and equipment in line with the **Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999**.

Assessments will:

- Identify hazards
- Evaluate who might be harmed and how
- Assess existing control measures
- Implement additional controls where necessary
- Record and review findings

Risk assessments will be reviewed:

- Annually
- Following any incident or near miss
- When new equipment, premises, or work processes are introduced

6. Safe Equipment and Plant

- All tools, machinery, and equipment will be properly maintained and inspected
- Defective items will be reported immediately to the Clerk and taken out of service
- New equipment will be checked for compliance with safety standards before purchase or use.

7. Safe Handling and Use of Substances (COSHH)

In line with the **Control of Substances Hazardous to Health Regulations (COSHH) 2002**, the Council will:

- Maintain an up-to-date register of hazardous substances
- Ensure **Safety Data Sheets** are available and stored securely
- Provide PPE and training for employees handling such materials
- Review assessments annually or when substances or working conditions change.

8. Display Screen Equipment (DSE)

BPC will comply with the **Display Screen Equipment Regulations 1992** by:

- Conducting DSE assessments for all relevant staff (office and home-based)
- Providing guidance on posture, breaks, and screen setup
- Offering eye tests for employees using screens regularly.

9. Manual Handling

The Council will assess all manual handling operations in accordance with the Manual Handling Operations Regulations 1992 and provide training and aids (e.g., trolleys, lifting equipment) where necessary.

10. Fire Safety and Emergencies

BPC will:

- Carry out Fire Risk Assessments for all premises and review them annually
- Ensure fire detection and alarm systems, extinguishers, and exits are regularly tested
- Conduct fire drills at least annually
- Display evacuation procedures clearly
- Provide fire-safety training to staff.

11. First Aid and Accidents

- First-aid kits will be maintained at all council premises
- The Clerk will act as the appointed first-aid coordinator and maintain an Accident Book
- Accidents, incidents, and near misses will be recorded and investigated
- Notifiable incidents will be reported to the enforcing authority under **RIDDOR 2013**.

12. Health Surveillance and Welfare

Where required by law or risk assessment, health surveillance will be arranged (e.g. for cleaning or maintenance roles).

Welfare facilities, including toilets, washing areas, rest spaces, and drinking water, will be maintained in accordance with **Workplace (Health, Safety and Welfare) Regulations 1992**.

13. Training and Competence

All staff will receive:

- Induction training covering health and safety, fire safety, and emergency arrangements
- Task-specific training where required

- Refresher training annually or when new risks arise.

Training records will be maintained by the Clerk.

14. Home and Lone Working

The Council acknowledges that some employees and councillors may work remotely or alone.

In accordance with the Lone Working Policy, BPC will:

- Carry out lone working and home working risk assessments
- Provide guidance and appropriate monitoring arrangements
- Ensure communication methods and emergency contacts are in place.

15. Contractors and Visitors

All contractors must comply with relevant legislation and BPC's safety rules.

Visitors will be informed of emergency procedures and supervised where appropriate.

Access to privately hired or safeguarding-controlled areas at Roman Park Hall must comply with the Council's Hall Access and Safeguarding Protocol.

16. Insurance

BPC maintains:

- **Employers' Liability Insurance** (minimum legal requirement £5 million).
- **Public Liability Insurance** to protect members of the public and contractors.

Certificates are displayed in council offices and updated annually.

17. Monitoring, Auditing and Review

The Council will:

- Review this policy **annually** or following significant change or incident.
- Carry out periodic safety inspections and audits.
- Analyse accident data and identify trends for improvement.

The Clerk will present an annual Health and Safety Report to the Council summarising activity, incidents, and recommendations.

18. Supporting Documents

This policy should be read alongside:

- Risk Assessment Register
- Lone Working Policy
- DSE Assessment Form
- Equality and Diversity Policy
- Safeguarding Policy
- Emergency and Fire Procedures
- Hall Access and Safeguarding Protocol

Document History

Version	Date Approved	Changes/Action	Approved By	Minute Ref
1.0	March 2022	Approved and adopted	Full Council	
1.0	June 2023	Reviewed		
2.0	January 2026	Reviewed and amended (ST)	Full Council	26.9
3.0	18/11/2026	Reviewed and amended (ST)	Full Council	26.10