

# Health and Safety Policy

## 1. General statement of policy

The About with Friend's Health and Safety policy is to provide a safe and healthy workplace for all staff, members, volunteers and visitors in any capacity to any of our worksites. Information, training and supervision will be provided as necessary for this purpose by About with Friends.

We also accept Health and safety responsibilities for other people that may be affected by our activities taking place in the community.

All staff, volunteers and others working on behalf of About with Friends will be expected to co-operate and communicate effectively throughout the organisation.

Everyone at About with Friends has a duty of care towards themselves and others involved in the organisation. Failure to follow this will be investigated following relevant policies and guidelines.

About with Friends will take all practical steps and precautions to ensure Health and safety of all participant members taking part in our activities.

The allocation of responsibilities for health and safety related matters, and the particular arrangements which we will make to implement the policy are set out in this document. Neglect of health and safety requirements will be regarded as serious and will be fully investigated by senior management and if necessary passed onto the relevant safety bodies.

The policy will be kept up to date, particularly as About With Friends changes in nature and size and to take account of changes in health and safety law, and legislation current at the time of review. To ensure this, the policy and the way in which it has operated will be reviewed, when necessary and at least yearly.

About with Friends is fully committed to following the Health and Safety at work act 1974 and Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999

## 2. Policy objectives

The purpose of this policy is to:

- a) Minimise risks to the health and safety and welfare of its employees, members, volunteers and n others affected by AWF activities
- b) Ensure all reasonable measures are taken to ensure that a safe working environment is created
- c) To reduce accidents, injuries and ill health within the company

## 3. Roles and responsibilities

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- 3.1. The **Chair** of the Board of Trustees assumes overall responsibility for health and safety for AWF
- 3.2. The **CEO**
  - 3.2.1. is answerable to the Trustees regarding all day to day running of the organisation.
  - 3.2.2. delegates day to day responsibilities to the managers of each department
  - 3.2.3. Is responsible for ensuring arrangements are in place to share information with all staff, volunteers and members
- 3.3. The **manager for each service** is responsible for
  - 3.3.1. health and safety within their service area
  - 3.3.2. ensuring arrangements are in place to share information with staff, volunteers and members
  - 3.3.3. ensuring that staff being designated work / activities are competent in the activity they are asked to do
  - 3.3.4. risk assessments are completed for task / activities
  - 3.3.5. day to day staffing levels are sufficient for the safety of staff/volunteers and members in line with policies
  - 3.3.6. regular inspections of any equipment, as required by statute, are carried out and necessary records kept;
  - 3.3.7. Ensuring that any enforcing officer who visits the premises has the necessary information required;
  - 3.3.8. plant, equipment and welfare facilities are maintained in a safe and clean condition;
  - 3.3.9. the interior of the Company premises is in a good state of repair;
  - 3.3.10. no employee shall be engaged in any work activity where technical knowledge or experience is necessary to prevent danger or injury unless they are adequately trained
  - 3.3.11. all employees and self-employed staff fully understand the safe operation of any machinery, or equipment before being authorised to use it and safe methods of work are adopted;
  - 3.3.12. access and egress to their premises are maintained in a safe condition and that fire escape doors are kept clear of obstruction and are identified;
  - 3.3.13. all suppliers comply with Section 6 of the Health & Safety at Work Act (HASAWA) in supplying articles and substances that are safe and without risk to health and to provide information to enable them to be properly used;
  - 3.3.14. any accidents arising out of work activity are recorded, reported and investigated, as detailed in the accident reporting procedure
  - 3.3.15. regular inspections of any equipment, as required by statute, are carried out and necessary records kept;
  - 3.3.16. any enforcing officer who visits the premises has the necessary information required;
  - 3.3.17. plant, equipment and welfare facilities are maintained in a safe and clean condition;
  - 3.3.18. the interior of the Company premises is in a good state of repair;

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- 3.3.19. fire procedures are implemented to meet the requirements of the Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order;
- 3.3.20. they report any external defects to the landlord for their attention;
- 3.4. The **Lead** on each **activity** assumes responsibility for health and safety on the activity they are leading
- 3.5. Office area responsibility lies with the most senior staff member on duty
- 3.6. Everyone is responsible for promoting a pro-active approach to health and safety at work
- 3.7. **Staff and volunteers** are responsible for
  - 3.7.1. Ensuring they are aware of health and safety matters and arrangements prior to any task / activity
  - 3.7.2. Attend any health and safety training organised by AWF
  - 3.7.3. Read updates that are sent electronically or by other means
  - 3.7.4. Be aware and comply with the requirements of the relevant health and safety procedures and regulations in place
  - 3.7.5. Know and comply with the correct fire or other emergency procedures
  - 3.7.6. Be aware of first aid arrangements
  - 3.7.7. Be aware of the recording and reporting accidents procedure
  - 3.7.8. Report hazards promptly to the senior member of staff on duty

## 4. Roles and responsibilities at external venues

- 4.1. The service manager (Work Skills, Adult Social, Youth & Bespoke, Development, Supported Living) must ensure that all venues, holiday settings and activities used for member activities are assessed for health and safety aspects if possible before being approved, but otherwise dynamically on arrival.
- 4.2. The service manager must ensure risk assessments are completed for all activities
- 4.3. The activity lead must ensure all staff, volunteers and trustees are made aware of health and safety matters relevant to the venue, including:
  - 4.3.1. Emergency, evacuation plans and risk assessments
  - 4.3.2. The location of emergency exits
  - 4.3.3. First aid arrangements, the identity and location of any first aiders
  - 4.3.4. Accident reporting procedures
  - 4.3.5. Any specifically identified local risks
  - 4.3.6. Fire alarm / evacuation procedures
- 4.4. If there are any doubts that a venue is not suitable for the activity / task it is being used for then staff are responsible for reporting this to the activity lead

## 5. Roles and responsibilities AWF vehicles

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- 5.1. The support worker assigned as 'fleet maintenance coordinator' as part of their job role will ensure all AWF motor vehicles:
  - 5.1.1. are fully serviceable
  - 5.1.2. have the appropriate and adequate insurance cover
  - 5.1.3. have a MOT
  - 5.1.4. are taxed
  - 5.1.5. maintenance is carried out as per manufacturer's recommendations
- 5.2. **All staff** are responsible for reporting any concerns to a senior manager regarding motor vehicles
- 5.3. The **driver** of a vehicle is responsible for ensuring the vehicle checklist is complete before taking a vehicle
- 5.4. Employees must drive at all times within Road Traffic Legislation. Special care should be taken on temporary access roads or roads under construction.
- 5.5. Employees must report all accidents, however minor, to the CEO.
- 5.6. AWF Drivers will not drink alcohol or take non-prescription drugs before driving. If any prescribed medication is being taken which could affect driving ability DO NOT DRIVE.
- 5.7. Ensure that any traffic violation that you are involved in, which may lead to prosecution, is reported to your immediate manager.
- 5.8. Employees shall ensure that their vehicles are loaded safely and do not contravene weight restrictions.
- 5.9. Vehicles are equipped with First Aid kits and Fire Extinguishers.
- 5.10. While driving on Charity business regular rest breaks should be taken. It is suggested every 2 hours or within 3 hours. Rest breaks involve another driver driving or the driver must physically leave the vehicle.
- 5.11. Mobile phones may not be used whilst driving
- 5.12. Staff must present their driving licence (both photo-card and paper licence) and insurance documents for inspection by the Finance Manager on an annual basis. Business mileage will not be reimbursed unless employees have complied with the above procedure.

## 6. In the event of serious incident<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Examples include work / task or activity related fatality or serious injury, dangerous occurrence that has (or could have) affected a significant number of people, fire, chemical/ gas leak, explosion.

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- 6.1. In the event of a serious incident the senior manager onsite should be informed immediately. Accident forms must be completed and returned
- 6.2. The senior manager will then inform the CEO and Health and Safety Officer Liam Davies & Elliott Large (IOSH trained)
- 6.3. It is the responsibility of the manager of the service to ensure control measures are instigated
- 6.4. Any serious accidents or incident could result in a criminal investigation by the Health and Safety Executive (HSE), Police or Fire Service. It is therefore important that:
  - 6.4.1. The scene of a serious incident is made safe and preserved for investigation (It is potentially a crime scene).
  - 6.4.2. The names and contact details of witnesses are noted
- 6.5. If the incident has resulted in a work related injury the accident must be reported by the CEO or other responsible officer, who will decide whether it is a 'reportable accident'
- 6.6. Guidance on reporting requirements can be accessed by clicking on the following link [Reporting of Injuries, Diseases and Dangerous Occurrences Regulations 2013 \(RIDDOR\)](#).
- 6.7. Members, family members, carers, guardians and all staff will be informed by the relevant manager and get up to date with proceedings
- 6.8. The CEO or finance manager will contact the AWF insurance company to inform them of the accident
- 6.9. It is the CEO's or Senior Managers responsibility to maintain contact with external authorities during the investigation process
- 6.10. WHAT FORM NEEDS TO BE COMPLETED BY STAFF

## 7. Arrangements

### 7.1 Risk Assessments

At About with Friends believe that the risk assessment process is not about creating huge amounts of paperwork; it is about identifying and taking sensible and proportionate measures to control the risks.

- a) AWF sites are carried out by our H&S officer with assistance from the staff team as necessary. Any risk assessment carried out will be recorded, reviewed and

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- monitored as recommended. If any immediate action is required, the H&S officer will liaise with the appropriate employee and the CEO will be informed accordingly.
- b) Activities at external venues – About with Friends recognises its responsibility under the Health and Safety at Work Act 1974, for ensuring, so far as is reasonably practicable, the health, safety and welfare of all persons involved in any external event. All risks will be considered (by using the venue risk assessment as well as our own) prior to the commencement of every external event and safety precautions and procedures will be put into place to minimise the likely cause of accidents. We always ask to see the venue risk assessment
  - c) Individual member risk assessments - when considering the individual risks for particular people using our service, usually the health and safety risks identified for the individual will be recorded as part of a 'care assessment', 'support plan' or membership sign up form. At About with Friends we believe the provision of care and support should be tailored to meet the needs of the individual and should encourage them to do what they can for themselves. Often when assessing the care and support needs of an individual, everyday activities are identified that will benefit their lives, but also put them at some level of risk. This requires a balanced decision to be made between the needs, freedom and dignity of the individual and their safety. Individual risk assessments should enable members to live fulfilled lives safely, rather than be a mechanism for restricting their reasonable freedoms.

Risk assessment forms and procedural notes can be found on the shared drive

### 7.3 Training

The H&S Manager is responsible for maintaining training records and ensuring that appropriate training is provided for employees, these records are kept in personal files. Training needs may be identified in the risk assessment process i.e. manual handling training, fire and first aid etc. If employees feel they need training in a specific area they should make a request to their immediate manager.

### 7.4 Accidents Away from the Office

The employee is responsible for following the Accident and Incident process as detailed 2.6

### 7.5 First Aid

The Company does have First Aid Appointed Persons who will assist in the event of an accident or sudden illness on AWF premises.

### 7.6 Fire prevention

All employees have a duty to conduct their operations in such a way as to minimise the risk of fire. This involves keeping combustible materials separate from sources of ignition and avoiding unnecessary accumulation of combustible materials. Any potential fire hazards should be reported to the H&S Officer/CEO immediately when they are recognised.

While working on clients premises it is important that the fire procedure of the premises is adhered to.

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Under no circumstances should personal electrical equipment be brought into to the workplace i.e. equipment chargers. If staff/members require personal electrical equipment to be used in the work place it should be PAT tested by a trained competent person.

### 7.7 Emergency Action Plan

- In the event of fire or other emergency e.g. bomb alert etc, the member of staff discovering the emergency shall immediately alert other employees and visitors to the emergency.
- The appropriate emergency service to be called is 999. The senior manager on duty is responsible for undertaking the call and follow up. Evacuation must take place; do not stop to collect belongings. Assist any disabled person to evacuate the area.
- Assemble away from the building, via the main exit at the normal rendezvous place. No person shall return to the site until told that it is safe to do so by the fire officer or a senior person. Do not leave the area unless told to do so.
- In the event of a minor fire, employees trained in the use of fire extinguishers may attempt to put out the fire, using the correct type of extinguisher. Providing they do not block their escape route or put themselves at risk.
- Emergency drills will take place annually and a record kept by the H&S Coordinator.
- Fire extinguishers are serviced annually. Reports of inspections are kept by the H&S Coordinator.
- Escape routes and emergency exits must never be locked, blocked or used as storage space.
- Fire procedure –evacuation procedure is reviewed annually or when necessary.

### 7.8 Asbestos

Asbestos is likely to be present in buildings constructed or refurbished between 1950-1980, particularly if it also has a steel frame and/or boilers with thermal insulation. The Landlord marks and manages the ASBESTOS which is present in the boiler room this area is out of bounds for staff.

### 7.9 COSHH

A hazardous substance can be defined as materials or substances, which are toxic, very toxic, corrosive or irritant. Staff must familiarise themselves with the information on any substances they use. Any new substances will have a COSHH assessment issued and, where possible, a less hazardous substance will be used. A folder of COSHH assessments is located by the First Aid box. Health and safety folder in each building

### 7.10 Display Screen Equipment (DSE)

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Office staff employed to use display screen equipment shall be made aware of the Health & Safety (Display Screen Equipment) Regulations, and the About with Friends policy. All employees will complete a self assessment as and when required.

### 7.11 Electrical Safety

All portable electrical appliances including site equipment will be tested at least once a year (as specified in the relevant portable electrical testing regulations) to ensure that they are in good condition. Users will check leads and plugs. A record will be kept of all PAT testing.

All faulty electrical equipment will be immediately withdrawn from use and referred to Senior manager for repair by competent person or replaced as necessary.

Fixed installation testing is the responsibility of the Landlord.

End of day checklists need to be completed daily to ensure all electrical equipment such as heaters are turned off at the end of every day to reduce the risk of fire.

### 7.12 Manual handling operations

Staff will be trained on a those that need it basis in manual handling as in the Manual Handling Operations Regulation.

### 7.13 Personal Protective Equipment (PPE)

PPE equipment supplied to employees, including catering polo shirts, shall be kept in a clean condition; any defects must be reported to your manager who will arrange for immediate replacement. Should the defects be due to gross negligence on the part of the employee, or be lost, AWF will expect the employee to pay for replacements at net cost. PPE is issued for the personal safety of employees and should be available for use at all times. Employees will sign a document stating that they have been issued with general PPE.

### 7.14 Provision and Use of Work Equipment

If equipment provided by AWF is damaged or faulty the employee is responsible for the immediate return of such equipment to the employer for replacement, (Provision and use of Work Equipment Regulations). If the equipment is lost or damaged through negligence, there is an onus on the employee to report such loss or damage immediately.

### 7.15 Violence/Personal Safety

So as to avoid violence and aggression from members, families, the public, other contractors or fellow employees, all staff should avoid getting into a confrontational situation. Always remain polite, but back off from situations that are potentially dangerous. Report any incidents to a Manager who may call the police, if it is considered necessary. Violence at work is reportable under RIDDOR.

### 7.15 Lone Working

There is a separate [lone working policy](#)

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### Linked Policies;

[Infection prevention 2016 v1.docx](#)

[Covid 19 Staff copy.docx](#)

[Serious Viral Epidemic or Pandemic Policy 2020.docx](#)

### End of policy

Version	Change	Author	Date
1	Draft to CEO, Managers and Andy Lee	Andy Lee / Verity Pelton	27/04/15
2	Comments from CEO included	Andy Lee / Verity Pelton	09/05/2015
3	Presented to Trustees -	Andy Lee / Verity Pelton	21/05/2015
4	Trustee comments incorporated re risk assessment	Andy Lee / Verity Pelton	10/07/2015
4	No change – looked over JM DH	Sam Harwood	11/2/2018
4	Linked Policies	Sam Harwood	1/6/2020
4	No Changes – Still relevant	Sam Harwood	1/7/2022
4	Changes to 6.2	Sam Harwood	28/11/2024
4	Changes to 6.2	Martin Higgins	24/10/2025
4	Changes to 7.6 and 7.11	Liam Davies	07/01/2026

