



Policy: Health and Safety

Date of adoption by PC: 1 December 2025

POLICY STATEMENT

Brenchley and Matfield Parish Council is aware of its responsibilities under the 'Health & Safety At Work Act 1974', the 'Management of Health and Safety At Work Regulations 1999' and other relevant statutory legislation. The Council will meet its responsibilities by incorporating good health and safety management within all its functions.

The objective of this policy is to raise awareness of the duties and responsibilities of those in and around the Council, and to minimise risks to health, safety and welfare of employees, volunteers, contractors, members of the public and others affected by its activities. Measures will be taken to ensure that a safe working and community environment is created.

The Parish Councillors are jointly responsible for the implementation of this Health and Safety Policy. They will ensure that health and safety considerations are always given priority in planning and day-to-day supervision of work.

ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

Parish Councillors

- The Parish Council will ensure that a copy of this policy is circulated to all employees and volunteers on appointment. Individuals will be given the opportunity to discuss this policy with councillors to ensure that it is fully understood and implemented.
- The Parish Council has the responsibility to oversee, implement and monitor the policy and prepare risk assessments.
- Contracts of employment will include compliance with statutory health and safety and environmental requirements.
- All employees should have adequate competence and training for carrying out their specific jobs and for ensuring health, safety and welfare of themselves and those around them.
- Sufficient information, instruction, training and supervision should be provided to employees and volunteers to enable the identification and avoidance of hazards.
- If required, the Council will seek expert technical advice on Health and Safety to help in fulfilling its responsibilities.
- All suppliers are asked to provide full information on any hazards associated with the equipment or materials supplied and any precautions required.
- The Parish Council will ensure that regular inspections of equipment are carried out and necessary records kept.
- Copies of all risk assessments, method statements and H&S documents should be kept in a secure location.

Employees and Volunteers

- Employees and volunteers must conform to the Parish Council Health & Safety Policy, and all health and safety legislation.
- Employees and volunteers have a statutory duty to take reasonable care of the safety and health of



themselves and others who may be affected by their acts or omissions.

- Employees and volunteers will not recklessly interfere with or misuse anything provided in the interests of health, safety and welfare.
- Volunteers may carry out less hazardous work and will be covered by the PC's insurance but only if they are working at the sole request of and under the sole control of the PC.
- Volunteers using their own tools should have the PC's consent to use them.
- Employees and volunteers should avoid manual lifting where at all possible and should not put themselves at risk by attempting to lift heavy loads.
- Employees and volunteers must not work at height using long ladders.
- Employees and volunteers must request assistance or advice about any area of work that they are not familiar with.

Contractors

- Contractors will be responsible for conducting themselves safely at all times and comply with the requirements of the Health and Safety at Work Policy, Codes of Practice and the Council's Health & Safety Policy.
- Contractors must provide evidence of their own public liability and accident cover, including insurer, policy number and expiry date.
- Contractors must provide written risk assessment and method statements before commencing work for or on behalf of the Parish Council.
- Contractors must ensure the health and safety of their own employees and others on and off site.
- Protective clothing and safety equipment must be used if required.
- All tools and equipment that are brought onto the site must comply with the latest British Standards for industrial use and be in sound working order.
- All necessary guards and safety devices must be in place and necessary certificates must be available for checking.
- Electrical equipment must have a valid Portable Appliance Test certificate.
- The Safety Officer, or other appropriate person, will make the contractor aware of any hazards that might be present.
- Any injury sustained on site or hazardous incidents must be reported to the Safety Officer, or other appropriate person, immediately.

The Safety Officer

- The Safety Officer will be the contact and liaison point for the Health and Safety inspectorate.
- The Safety Officer will ensure that the requirements of 'Reporting of Injuries, Diseases and Dangerous Occurrences 1995' are complied with by the submission of a formal accident report.
- Where necessary, accidents and near misses will be investigated by the Safety Officer and remedial actions recommended to the Parish Council where necessary.
- An appropriate First Aid Box will be provided, held in Matfield Pavilion.
- The Safety Officer will identify any risks related to hazardous substances under the 'Control of Substances Hazardous to Health Regulations 1992' and provide a written record of any assessment.
- Adequate fire prevention measures and fire and other emergency procedures are made clear to staff, councillors and service users.
- The Safety Officer is responsible for maintaining records of any safety information or training undertaken by employees or volunteers.



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- **Accidents and Emergencies**

- All incidents which result or nearly result in personal injury to themselves or others must be reported to the Safety Officer.
- Any accident must be recorded in the Accident Book, which is kept in Matfield Pavilion.
- Details of the accident should include the circumstances, time, date, location and the nature and severity of any injury. Relevant photographs and diagrams should be included and any eye witness accounts, which should be collected as near to the time of the accident as possible.

Visitors

Brenchley & Matfield Parish Council has a duty of care to visitors to areas of the village under the responsibility of the Parish Council. Councillors will ensure that safe access and egress is available and that areas are maintained in a safe condition.

GENERAL PROVISIONS

1. Risk assessments will be undertaken by the Councillors for all public areas and village assets controlled by the Parish Council. These assessments will be recorded, monitored and reviewed at set intervals.
2. Parish Councillors are responsible for ensuring that appropriate training is provided for employees and volunteers.
3. If any equipment provided by the Council is damaged or faulty, the user is responsible for the immediate return or report of such equipment to the Council for repair or replacement. If the equipment is lost or damaged through negligence, there is an onus on the user to report such loss or damage immediately.
4. Anyone who purchases or hires materials, equipment or contractors on behalf of the Council must ensure that they have read and fully understood this Health and Safety Policy
5. So as to avoid violence or aggression from members of the public or contractors, all employees and volunteers should avoid getting into a confrontational situation. Always remain polite and back off from situations that are potentially dangerous. Any incidents should be reported to the Clerk who may call the police, if considered necessary.

Provisions related to Covid-19 or similar public health matters

- The Parish Council will maintain awareness of the government's legislation and guidance related to coronavirus or other public health issues to ensure its compliance at all times.
- Where appropriate or as may be required by legislation or guidance, the Parish Council will carry out and maintain a Risk Assessment that details the controls in place for the use of the pavilion.
- Whenever coronavirus or other similar public health legislation or guidance applies, hirers and any other users of the premises must read and sign the relevant Special Conditions.



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Annex: Fire Safety Arrangements at Matfield Pavilion

The Council has robust systems in place to assess and monitor the risk of Fire at Matfield Pavilion. There are quarterly and annual arrangements for testing the safety of the electrical systems including the lighting marking the emergency exits. Staff maintain a log recording when these checks were undertaken.

The Council has a contract with a specialist company for the maintenance of the Fire alarm, including checking the smoke detectors and fire extinguishers.

Management of Fire Safety at Matfield Pavilion is via the Parish Councillor responsible for the Pavilion, who is also the nominated Health and Safety Officer, who liaises with the Clerk when any issues become apparent.

Risk of fire at the Pavilion is addressed in the Risk Management Policy Assessment Schedule with mitigation listed.

There are Fire Evacuation Routes posted in five locations in the building and Fire Exit signs on the outside of the building to ensure escape routes are clear.

The Hire Agreement for individual users of the building includes a copy of this Annex.