

Date Reviewed	Jan 2022	Next Review Date	Jan 2023
Consultation	Executive Team, Health and Safety Panel	Reviewed By	Adrian Egginton
EIA		Responsible Officer	Deputy Chief Executive
DPIA		Approval By	BCHG Board

HEALTH AND SAFETY POLICY

1. Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to:

- Inform staff about how health and safety in the workplace is managed and what is expected of staff
- Ensure that BCHG complies with the Health and Safety at Work Act 1974, the Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999 and the Health and Safety Information for Employees (Amendment) 2009
- Ensure that residents are protected from any associated Health and Safety hazards in line with associated health and safety policies and that BCHG meets its duty of care to residents and colleagues.

2. Scope

This policy applies to all BCHG colleagues, volunteers, contractors and visitors including BCHG Care and Homeforce colleagues.

3. Related or relevant policy/procedures or other documents

- Accident Reporting Policy
- Training and Development Policy
- Risk Management Procedure
- Lone Worker Policy
- First Aid Policy
- Legionella Policy
- Fire Safety Policy
- Gas Safety Policy
- Electrical Safety Policy
- Asbestos Management Policy
- Accident Reporting Policy
- Dignity and Respect at Work Policy
- Manual Handling Policy
- Vehicle Use Policy

- Display screen equipment Policy
- Noise and Vibration Policy
- Agile Working Policy
- Serious and Untoward Incident Policy

4. Definitions

The following is a statement of the organisation's health and safety policy in accordance with Section 2 of the Health and Safety at Work etc. Act 1974.

It is the policy of Black Country to ensure so far as is reasonably practicable, the health, safety and welfare of all employees working for the company and other persons who may be affected by our undertakings.

Associated activities in relation to residents Health and Safety can be covered under this policy as well as specific policies in relation to building safety compliance and the general duty of care BCHG has to residents.

Black Country acknowledges that the key to successful health and safety management requires an effective policy, organisation and arrangements, which reflect the commitment of senior management. To maintain that commitment, we will continually measure, monitor and revise where necessary, an annual plan to ensure that health and safety standards are adequately maintained.

The Deputy Chief Executive will implement the company's health and safety policy and recommend any changes to meet new circumstances.

Black Country recognises that successful health and safety management contributes to successful business performance and will allocate adequate finances and resources to meet these needs. The management of Black Country looks upon the promotion of health and safety measures as a mutual objective for themselves and employees.

It is therefore, the policy of management to do all that is reasonably practicable to prevent personal injury and damage to property. Also, the organisation aims to protect everyone, including visitors and members of the public, insofar as they come into contact with our activities, from any foreseeable hazard or danger. All employees have duties under the Health and Safety at Work etc. Act 1974 and are informed of their personal responsibilities to take due care of the health and safety of themselves and to ensure that they do not endanger other persons by their acts or omissions.

Employees are also informed that they must co-operate with the organisation in order that it can comply with the legal requirements placed upon it and in the implementation of this policy. Black Country will ensure continued consultation with the workforce to enable all viewpoints and recommendations to be discussed at regular intervals. The organisation will ensure a systematic approach to identifying hazards, assessing the risks, determining suitable and sufficient control measures and informing employees of the correct procedures needed to maintain a safe working environment.

We will provide, so far as is reasonably practicable, safe places and systems of work, safe plant and machinery,

safe handling of materials and substances, the provision of adequate safety equipment and ensure that appropriate information, instruction, training and supervision is given. We regard all health and safety legislation as the minimum standard and expect management to achieve their targets without compromising health and safety.

We will maintain both a business continuity plan and a crisis management plan to manage exceptional health and safety situations. Coronavirus (CV19) is an example of this and we will react as appropriate to this and keep our approach under review.

5. Responsibilities

Board of Management

The Board is responsible for leadership on health and safety matters and in particular for:

1. Ensuring that a member of the Executive Team oversees health and safety on behalf of the Board.
2. Providing sufficient resources to implement the health and safety policy.
3. Reviewing health and safety performance from reports arising from inspections, audits, accident investigations, ill-health etc.
4. Ensuring that the company has access to competent advice on health, safety and fire safety matters.
5. Keeping themselves up to date on health and safety requirements and developments, by arranging for regular briefings as necessary.

BCHG Board will receive assurance in this area by:

- Management information on compliance on Fire Legionella Asbestos, Gas and Electrical safety
- Quarterly reports on all other Health and Safety incidents and near misses
- Agreeing priorities for Health and Safety
- When required seeking external review of health and safety practice at BCHG

Business updates on the organisation's response to Coronavirus as required.

The Director Responsible for Health and Safety

While all Directors at BCHG have corporate responsibility for matters of Health and Safety the nominated Director for the overall responsibility for implementing the Health and Safety Policy is the Deputy Chief Executive.

Key duties of this role include:

1. Ensuring that the Board implements their responsibilities as detailed above.
2. Investigating, or ensuring that others investigate accidents and work-related ill-health and ensuring that statutory reports are made for serious incidents in accordance with the Reporting of Injuries,

- Diseases and Dangerous Occurrences Regulations (RIDDOR).
3. Continuously reviewing health and safety practices.
 4. Ensuring that appropriate training is provided to staff and volunteers.
 5. Chairing the Health and Safety Panel and ensuring that staff are consulted on health and safety matters through the Staff Forum and team meetings.
 6. Ensuring that Employers' Liability insurance is maintained and that the details are publicised to employees.
 7. Being the Accountable Person under Building a Safer Future Legislation

Leaders, Managers and Supervisors

Leaders, Managers and Supervisors lead by example in matters of health and safety and are responsible for:

1. Ensuring that staff reporting to them understand their health and safety responsibilities. Monitoring the health and safety performance of staff and volunteers.
2. Ensuring special care is taken for new employees, agency staff and visitors ensuring their welfare is maintained at all times. Ensuring that risk assessments cover all employee activities, that any actions arising from them are implemented and that the findings are shared with employees.
3. Consulting employees on health and safety matters during team meetings and via the Health and Safety Panel.
4. Providing appropriate training for employees, including induction training and training in job skills, general health and safety matters and other specific safety issues, as required.
5. Ensuring that work equipment is suitable for purpose.
6. Providing suitable personal protective equipment and ensuring it is properly maintained. Reporting to the Director responsible for Health and Safety any concerns which they are not able to resolve.
7. Ensuring all incidents and near misses are reported to the Health and Safety Panel.
8. Ensuring all their staff work safely following the latest advice with regard to Coronavirus
9. The Asset Manager is the "Building Safety Manager" under Building a Safer Future Legislation.

Health and Safety Panel

The Health and Safety Panel will take an overview of BCHG's health & safety measures. It will consider whether there are any gaps in policies and procedures by reviewing and periodically checking:

- Safety reports
- Reports from the Health & Safety Executive
- Accident and incident reports
- Fire alarm and fire evacuation drill records
- Resident feedback

Where gaps exist the Health and Safety Panel will make recommendations to the Executive Team and the Board of Management to rectify. The H&S Panel will also provide support to managers in order that they may deal effectively with health and safety issues in their area of the business. The Health and Safety Panel will oversee an annual programme of health and safety audits and activities- and a linked learning and development plan for

BCHG Colleagues.

The Health and Safety Panel will ensure that BCHG has staffed training in accident investigation and reporting and that lessons learnt are reported to executive team and BCHG Board and disseminated across the organisation.

The Health and Safety Co-ordinates the approach of the Health and Safety Panel across BCHG.

Fire Wardens

Fire Wardens will be trained to respond to emergencies by:

- Ensuring fire prevention/fighting equipment, procedures and notices are readily available, visible, operational and current.
- Ensuring fire exits, fire doors, escape routes and assembly points are clearly indicated and kept clear.
- Executing and recording details of fire drills and evacuations at least twice a year.
- Managing and monitoring evacuation in the event of an emergency.
- Undertaking fire risk assessments where necessary.

First Aiders

First aiders will be trained to certificate level to ensure adequate emergency cover for BCHG's employees. Their main responsibilities will be to:

- Administer appropriate first aid.
- Ensure they hold a current certificate.
- Publish their name, telephone number and location, and the location of the first aid box, on relevant notice boards and on the first aid box itself.
- Ensure the first aid boxes are correctly stocked.
- Ensure that an accident form is completed for all accidents/incidents reported to them, however slight, as soon as possible.

All employees

All employees must take care of themselves, and others affected by their work and in particular are expected to:

1. Behave in a professional manner, follow health and safety rules and not act in a way which would deliberately endanger others.
2. Familiarise themselves with the health and safety policy, risk assessments and any other instructions relating to their work and comply with the requirements set out.
3. Report unsafe working practices and shortcomings in safety procedures, accidents and near-misses to their manager.

4. Stop work and liaise with their manager in the event that a procedure appears unsafe. Know the emergency procedures for the location at which they are working.
5. Use vehicles, equipment, materials or substances in accordance with information, instruction and training provided.
6. Ensure that equipment and materials are stored safely when not in use.
7. Keep their work area clean and tidy, avoid the creation of tripping hazards and clean up any spillages immediately.
8. Wear personal protective equipment (PPE) as instructed and store it so as to avoid damage.
9. Keep PPE cleaned and maintained and report loss or damage.
10. Dispose of waste materials in the manner instructed so that a hazard is not created to other workers.
11. Not work under the influence of alcohol, drugs or any other substance that can impair judgement or performance.
12. Work safely and not put themselves or residents at risk by not following good practice in relation to Coronavirus

No employee of the Company may carry out or authorise practices which place staff or others in danger, or which are in direct breach of legal requirements.

Contractors

All contractors are expected to comply with the contents of BCHG's Health and Safety Policy as a minimum. In addition, before awarding any contract staff should gain evidence of competence such as safety policies, training, equipment maintenance records and accreditation.

A contractor is anyone who is undertaking work on our behalf but is not a direct employee. Contractors may be employed to undertake maintenance, repairs, installation, construction, window cleaning, engineering and many other jobs. Work undertaken for a client by a contractor is usually covered by a civil contract. Whilst it is good practice for health and safety requirements to be written into such contracts, health and safety responsibilities are defined by criminal law and cannot be passed on to another by a contract. Thus, in any client/contractor relationship, both parties will have duties under health and safety law.

All sub-contractors undertaking work on our behalf: -

- Must accept responsibility for complying with the provisions of the Health and Safety at Work etc. Act 1974 and all other relevant statutory provisions in respect of the work comprising the contract.
- Must provide suitable and appropriate supervision to plan, control and monitor their operations having carried out risk assessments for the work.
- Must agree risk assessments and any method statements with the client before work commences.
- Must inform the client of any unforeseen hazards arising from the work to enable the necessary precautions to be put in place.
- Shall undertake electrical work and work involving the use of electrical tools and equipment in accordance with the appropriate regulations.
- Must ensure plant and machinery brought on site is fully guarded and complies with the

- requirements of the Provision and Use of Work Equipment Regulations (PUWER).
- Must make available for inspection, test certificates issued by a competent person for equipment such as lifting equipment, air compressors and pressure plant.
 - Must report all accidents to the client immediately so that they can record the incident in the accident book.
 - Work safely following all good practice in relation to Coronavirus not putting themselves or residents at harm

Requirements of the policy Incident reporting and investigation

It is our policy that all injury accidents, however minor, are recorded on an accident form. All accidents, near misses and incidents of work-related ill-health are investigated in order to identify root causes and prevent a recurrence. The Director responsible for Health and Safety is responsible for reporting incidents which fall within the reporting requirements of the Reporting of Injuries, Diseases and Dangerous Occurrences Regulations 2013 (RIDDOR). This includes CV19 where the colleague exposure may have been caused by work-based activity.

The Procedure for Reporting Accidents outlines our reporting and investigation arrangements.

Where required BCHG will use its Serious and Untoward Incidents Policy to investigate and manage serious health and safety concerns.

Monitoring

Health and safety standards are monitored via routine inspections and by the Health and Safety Panel.

BCHG Board will receive an annual report on Health and Safety at BCHG as well as notification of all risk events within the organisation.

Training and induction

All employees are expected to undertake training in safe working practices and procedures; their responsibilities under this policy and any specific skills required. In particular, employees are given training when they start work with the company. The Training and Development Policy outlines our arrangements in more detail.

Hazards and Assessing Risk

Hazard' means anything that can cause harm. 'Risk' is the chance, great or small, that someone will be harmed by the hazard. A risk assessment is a careful examination of what hazards exist so that, in the case of a significant hazard, the level of risk can be evaluated, and precautions taken to prevent harm. A common approach to this will be taken as follows:

Identify the hazard and assess the degree of risk it contains

1. Where the risk is at an unacceptable level, to investigate whether the hazard can be totally removed e.g., by replacing it with a safe alternative.
2. If total elimination is not possible, to investigate the means of minimising the problem for example by control and reduction measures.
3. If the hazard cannot be sufficiently reduced, to investigate the provision of protective equipment, clothing or procedures for personal protection.

Electrical Safety maintenance - Inspection and Testing of Equipment

BCHG will ensure that all electrical equipment, including portable appliances and fixed installations under our control are subject to periodic inspection and testing by a competent person (qualified electrician). The following inspection regime will be applied as a minimum for a portable appliance used in:

- Offices every 2 years
- Fixed installations in offices and communal areas are inspected at least every 5 years.
- Mobile equipment will be inspected every year

Note: Equipment taken to work by employees e.g., radios, kettles etc. must also apply to the above testing and failure to do so will result in the equipment being removed.

No electrical equipment e.g., computers, visual aids or printing equipment should be opened or dismantled without the plug being completely removed from the socket.

Particular care should be taken to ensure that trailing leads are covered, and electrical sockets are not overloaded.

For further details please see the Risk Management Procedure.

Employees at special risk

From time to time, some workers may be at increased risk of injury or ill-health as a result of having a medical condition, permanent or temporary disability, taking medication or being pregnant. BCHG therefore requires that all employees advise their line manager if they become aware of any change in their personal circumstances which could result in them being at increased risk.

Risk assessments will then be carried out accordingly and action taken as necessary to control the risks as outlined in the Risk Management Procedure.

We also recognise that some of our staff are potentially at increased risk because they work away from our offices. The Lone Working Policy outlines our arrangements in more detail.

Our Coronavirus Policies set out how we will protect employees at special risk from CV19.

Consultation

We recognise that the involvement of staff in their own health and safety arrangements is essential to the success of this policy. We will therefore consult with staff at team meetings, through the Health and Safety Panel and through the Staff Forum.

Occupational health

All employees are encouraged to report any health concerns which they feel are associated with or made worse by their work. Such reports will be treated confidentially, and occupational health assistance will be sought as needed.

First aid

We have carried out an assessment of first aid needs, and as a result have provided first aid equipment and ensured that there are nominated trained persons to deliver it. Further details are explained within our First Aid Policy.

Personal protective equipment (PPE)

We provide PPE without charge to our employees as required. The type of equipment is selected with regard to the risks of each work activity, the level of protection required and the needs of individuals.

All colleagues will be issued with the appropriate PPE to enable service delivery while minimizing any potential infection risk from Covid 19.

Signs and notices

Statutory health and safety notices are displayed including the Health and Safety Law poster and the current Employers' Liability Compulsory Insurance certificate. Signage is also displayed to indicate fire escape routes and fire extinguisher locations, and to highlight particular hazards or precautions required.

Working environment

It is our intention to always maintain high standards of housekeeping at our premises for both the safety and health of our staff and any visitors. We will ensure trained first aiders; fire marshals and mental health support are available at all sites.

We will have risk assessments in place for any activity or event that effects the general public and extend our duty of care to all that we work with.

Agile Working

Under the Health and Safety at Work Act 1974, the Group is responsible for ensuring a safe work environment. Employees also have a responsibility to ensure that their workspace is a safe environment, and all risks are minimised. Failure to adhere to the policy may result in the instigation of the Group's disciplinary procedure.

Agile working may include lone working and managers are responsible for ensuring that colleagues adhere to the lone working policy and that their training is up to date.

The health and wellbeing of our employees is important to us and managers will work closely with colleagues to ensure that they are appropriately supported. We are aware that agile working can present challenges in terms of IT and accessibility, resources, presenteeism and isolation and it is the responsibility of all colleagues to manage their time and resources effectively and to raise any concerns with their manager promptly so that issues can be resolved.

Work equipment

All work equipment supplied by the company is assessed for suitability. Employees are encouraged to report defects to their supervisor or manager, at which point the equipment is repaired or replaced. Equipment is maintained in accordance with manufacturers' instructions. Staff are instructed in the correct use of power tools. Portable electrical equipment including tools and office equipment is subject to an annual programme of portable appliance testing. Operators should inspect all non-electrical equipment on a weekly basis.

Visitor compliance with regulations

It is the responsibility of all staff entertaining visitors to the Company's premises to ensure that the visitors are aware of relevant health and safety procedures and that they comply with them.

Signed:

Name: Adrian Eggington

Position: Deputy Chief Executive

And Director Responsible for Health and Safety