### Policy 30: Health and Safety at work Policy

Last updated by: SH, RD, RS

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1. Overview

a) Age UK York, (AUKY), acknowledges and works within current legislative requirements and standards concerned with health and safety in the workplace;

b) This policy:
   - provides definitions;
   - explains the existence of relevant legislation and AUKY’s own policies;
   - sets out the responsibilities of AUKY’s Trustees, staff and volunteers;
   - explains the requirements of process of risk assessment; and
   - states the requirements and actions necessary to ensure a healthy and safe working environment including action to be taken in cases of emergency;

c) The Trustees of AUKY acknowledge its responsibility to provide and maintain, so far as is reasonably practicable, a working environment that is conducive to the health, safety and welfare of its employees and any other people who may be affected by the operations and activities it undertakes;

d) In particular, AUKY seeks to provide and maintain:
   - a culture in which all workers are alert to health and safety requirements and situations and supportive of each other within that culture;
   - a safe place of work, free from harm, including safe access and egress;
   - necessary information, instruction, training and supervision;
   - safe equipment and systems;
   - training and practices in the safe handling, storage, maintenance and transport of individuals, articles and substances;
   - mechanisms for the immediate reporting of hazardous situations.

2. Definitions

'Health and safety' is defined as all those actions and safeguards carried out and undertaken by all employees and volunteers, including trustees, connected with AUKY;

'Workplace' includes all places where AUKY’s staff and volunteers carry out tasks connected with the work and services of AUKY. This includes:
   - all offices in whatever building they are housed, whether or not owned by the AUKY;
   - all shops and clubs; and
   - transport between any such locations when carrying out the work and services of AUKY.

3. Legislation

a) The Trustees acknowledge and work within all legislation concerned with health and safety in the workplace takes the form of Acts, also known as Statutes, and Regulations. The principal statute is the Health and Safety at Work, Act, 1974. Regulations include those covering lifting and handling, traffic and travel, dangerous and hazardous substances, fire safety and use of electrical and electronic equipment;

b) Copies of all relevant legislation and regulations are held in the Walmgate and Priory Street offices;

c) The principles behind the Health and Safety Act, 1974 and other relevant legislation include that:
   - Such steps are taken as are reasonably practicable to secure the health, safety and welfare of people at work in an AUKY and to protect all those involved in the activities and services of that AUKY against risk to health or safety arising from such activities and services;
• Everybody in that AUKY is involved and made aware of health and safety requirements and implications.

d) The Health and Safety Act, 1974 lists five particular duties as an employer:

• The provision and maintenance of safe equipment and systems in the workplace;
• Arrangement for safety when using, handling, storing and transporting all personnel, articles and substances;
• The provision of information, instruction and training;
• Maintaining any safe place of work under the employer's control in a safe condition and without risk to health;
• The provision and maintenance of a safe working environment without risk to health and of adequate welfare facilities;

e) All the AUKY’s workers have duties under health and safety legislation and regulations.

4. Insurance

The AUKY carries up to date appropriate insurance and displays copies of its insurance policy certificates in appropriate areas and makes them available for inspection as required.

5. Related policies of the AUKY

a) All staff and volunteers have duties within this policy, as set out below in the 'Responsibilities' paragraphs of this policy;

b) Health and safety considerations are an intrinsic feature of all the AUKY’s activities and services;

c) At induction, the trainer(s) draw the attention of all new staff and volunteers to:

• relevant specific policies;
• the existence of the policies handbook, online and paper, which will be made clear to all new staff and volunteers;

6. Responsibilities

a) The Board of Trustees of AUKY have overall responsibility for the management and services of AUKY and have devolved day to day responsibility on the Chief Officer (CO);

b) It is the responsibility of the CO to ensure that the legal provisions of the Health and Safety Act, 1974 and other relevant legislation and regulations are implemented within AUKY;

c) All managers/line managers and project managers are responsible for maintaining an overview of how the policy is put into practice within their areas of responsibility and for reporting to their own line managers.

7) Health and Safety Sub-committee Responsibilities

The Health and Safety Sub-committee (H & S Sc) consists of a designated Trustee and two members of staff. It has the following duties:

• To meet every two months to ensure that the AUKY's holding of such legislation and regulations is up to date;
• To invite and consider comments and suggestions on health and safety matters generally that it receives from staff and volunteers including line managers;
• To work in association with senior managers to ensure that all relevant insurance policies, legislative requirements and certification are up to date;
• From time to time to carry out unannounced spot checks on premises, acknowledging that AUKY's main premises poses particular problems as regards health and safety and seeking to support staff and volunteers in their use of these premises;
• Receive comments and reports of any concerns about the health and safety of any piece of equipment, building, service or activity;
• Receive comments and reports of any 'near misses' regarding any piece of equipment, building, service or activity;
• Inspect the accidents book and taking any action necessary;
• Require the immediate cessation of use of any piece of equipment, building, service or activity where a risk is identified as unacceptably high in terms of an agreed risk assessment programme;
• To carry out risk assessments, a requirement under the Management of Health and Safety Regulations, 1992 and subsequent amendments, as follows:
  • Liaise with the Chief Officer and Deputy Chief Officers;
  • Carry out an annual risk assessment of all buildings, equipment and services and activities of the AUKY including those which are rented, hired or loaned for any period of time;
  • Carry out a risk assessment of any new equipment, building, service or activity before it is put into operation or comes into use;
  • Maintain records of such risk assessments, using an agreed risk assessment programme;
  • Report its activities and findings to the Board of Trustees from time to time via the Sub-committee’s trustee and make recommendations.

8. Staff responsibilities

a) All staff will familiarise themselves with relevant policies and will also bring to their line manager's attention instances where any such policies do not cover all eventualities of which they become aware.

b) All supervisors, line and project managers are responsible for maintaining an overview of the policy's working in practice and for ensuring that:
  • there are appropriate procedures;
  • there is allocated time for training;
  • there is allocated time for informing staff of their responsibilities.

c) Staff have a duty, in terms of their contract of employment, to co-operate in the operation of this policy, in particular by:
  • working safely and efficiently;
  • using any protective equipment provided and not misusing equipment or engaging in unsafe procedures;
  • meeting statutory obligations;
  • reporting what has led or may lead to injury or damage to individuals, equipment or property;
  • adhering to the AUKY’s procedures for securing a safe working environment;
  • attending training sessions provided and reading relevant health and safety literature set out in posters and leaflets provided by the AUKY;
  • ensuring that members of the public are aware of responsible health and safety practices when making use of the AUKY’s facilities.
  • Ensuring that any personal electronic equipment such as mobile phone chargers, laptop machines and chargers etc. are reported to a Deputy Chief Officer or Finance Manager or Administration Admin Officer, and P.A.T testing must be organised before their use. The DCO or relevant senior officer may reasonably refuse permission for any specific piece of personal equipment to be brought into or used in any work area.
9. Volunteer responsibilities

a) AUKY recognises a special responsibility towards its volunteers since they do not have the protection of employment legislation. At the same time, they carry out many roles which appear to equate with those of paid staff;

b) Health and safety legislation places an equal duty on all workers as regards health and safety. Consequently, volunteers have an equal duty with staff as regards health and safety as set out in the 'Staff responsibilities' paragraph, above;

c) Volunteers have an equal right with staff to voice their concerns and have those concerns attended to.

d) Volunteers must also ensure that any personal electronic equipment such as mobile phone chargers, laptops and chargers, recording equipment etc. are reported to a Deputy Chief Officer, Finance Manager and Administration Admin Officer or the Clubs Manager as appropriate, and P.A.T testing must be organised by the relevant worker before they are brought into any work area. The DCO or relevant senior officer may reasonably refuse permission for any specific piece of personal equipment to be brought into or used in any work area.

10. Necessary health and safety requirements and actions

All AUKY's workers must seek to maintain a culture of health and safety within a healthy working environment. They are encouraged to draw the attention of their line managers/project supervisors to problems that they identify and to familiarise themselves with health and safety requirements.

a) Hygiene and Infectious Diseases

- All workers must recognise that good hygiene is intrinsic to any health and safety programme;
- Information regarding action to be taken in cases of infectious disease is set out in Policy 2.
- All workers must recognise that the AUKY provides services and activities for an especially vulnerable section of society and take care not to endanger service users through their own actions if, for example, they are unwell themselves;
- Washing and toilet facilities are regularly maintained but if any worker is concerned about aspects of cleanliness in the washing and toilet facilities they should immediately inform their line manager/project supervisor;
- It is understood that all workers will make appropriate use of soap, nail brushes, drying facilities and sanitary provision;

b) First Aid

- The Health and Safety (First Aid) Regulation 1981 requires the provision of adequate and appropriate equipment, facilities and personnel to enable first aid to be carried out when anyone involved in the services and activities of the AUKY becomes ill or is injured;
- First Aid boxes and copies of the Accident Book are located appropriately throughout the AUKY's workplace locations;
- Designated First Aid workers, trained and certificated, are located in all workplace locations;
- First aid certificates are displayed as appropriate;

c) Fire

- Trainers will include, at the first induction session, information about the location of fire alarms, fire exits, fire extinguishers and the action to be taken in case of fire, as set out in
the following paragraph;

- The AUKY will arrange for training in the use of the fire extinguishers from time to time, ensuring that all workers have the opportunity to participate in the training at least every three years;
- The fire extinguishers will be serviced in accordance with the servicing agreement and the servicing records will be attached to each extinguisher and noted by the Health and Safety Sub-committee;
- A designated Fire Safety Officer will be on duty at all times and their identity noted on the signing in board in the main premises;
- All workers and visitors will sign in and out of the building to ensure their presence is known to the Fire Safety Officer;
- Workers in other locations will make sure their presence is known to the responsible person in those locations.

**Action to be taken in case of a fire**

- If a fire is detected by the fire alarm system, the fire bell will automatically sound continuously;
- The fire bell can be activated manually by any person detecting a fire within the building;
- To activate the fire bell manually, press back the glass section of the red 'Break Glass Boxes';
- Instructions on dealing with fires and the appropriate extinguishers to use are displayed in locations throughout the AUKY's locations;
- The Fire Safety Officer or responsible person will, in case of a fire, ensure that everyone is out of the building and will summon the fire brigade;
- Any worker dealing with a disabled person will assist that person to leave the building and can call on other workers to help, if necessary;
- Any worker who notices the absence of anyone believed to be still in a location must alert the Fire Safety Officer. No one should re-enter the location to search for anyone else.

d) Accident Reporting

- The reporting of Injuries, Diseases and Dangerous Occurrences Regulations, 1995 (RIDDOR) imposes specific duties as regards work-related accidents, injuries or dangerous occurrences;
- Instances of death, major injury and 'over three-day injury' in connection with AUKY’s services and activities must be dealt with as follows:
  - Line managers/project supervisors, the Chief Officer or Deputy Chief Officers must be informed immediately;
  - Medical assistance including an ambulance must be summoned;
  - The City of York Council (CYC), as enforcing authority, must be telephoned immediately (tel. 551550), giving brief details;
  - Form F2508 must be completed within 10 days and sent to the CYC;
  - Minor injuries, where a worker is off sick for more than three days, not counting the day of the injury itself, also require completion and sending of Form F2508;
  - Reportable work related diseases must be reported via form F2508A which must be sent to the CYC.
  - 'Near misses' must be recorded via arrangements set out by the Health and Safety Sub-committee. Dangerous occurrences where a near miss could have resulted in a reportable injury must be reported to the CYC as above;

Accident records will be kept for three years;

Accidents will be investigated by the Chief Officer or Deputy Chief Officer in liaison with the H & S Sc and appropriate preventative measures will be taken.
e) Accident prevention

Accidents can occur and can be prevented in a variety of ways. All workers have a duty to report accidents and 'near misses' and must also take whatever actions they can to prevent accidents. These include:

- Keeping all areas clean and tidy;
- Keeping all floors and stairs free from obstruction to allow vacuuming and washing to take place on a regular basis;
- Ensuring that all floor coverings, including stair coverings are secure, and reporting any faults immediately;
- Making use of a hazard board in cases of spillage and wiping spills immediately;
- Keeping any wires clear of floors and stairs and making use of wiring wraps and grips where appropriate;
- Keeping all doors, fire exits, fire alarms, fire equipment and electric sockets free from all obstructions at all times;
- Emptying rubbish bins regularly and disposing of the contents appropriately, taking note of confidentiality considerations;
- Storing all rubbish off the premises, including bags of shredded paper awaiting recycling collection.

e) A Healthy Environment

- It is a statutory requirement that smoking is not permitted anywhere within any location used by the AUKY. Smoking is not permitted in any vehicle being used for any of the AUKY's services or activities;
- The air temperature will be maintained at no less than 16 degrees centigrade, 60.9 degrees Fahrenheit. A thermometer is provided for each room and placed appropriately;
- Supplementary electric fires will be provided where the temperature cannot be maintained at 16 degrees centigrade. They will be serviced regularly and the service record maintained by the Health and Safety Sub-committee;
- Adequate ventilation will be provided;
- Noise levels will be kept at practicable levels and in any circumstances where the use of noise equipment or work in a noisy environment has to be carried out, ear defenders will be provided;
- Adequate lighting will be provided in all areas including on stairs. Light bulbs, if they are reasonably accessible, may be replaced by a member of staff. Otherwise an electrical maintenance worker will be called;
- VDUs and other electronic equipment requiring sustained visual working will not be operated for more than 20 minutes at any time. Visual and postural fatigue are regarded as hazards and training will be provided in the correct positioning, posture and use of any such equipment;
- All workers will have a minimum of 37 square metres and 11 cubic metres of air space in any room in which they regularly or habitually work.

f) Access and Egress

- All exits will be clearly marked, free from obstruction and unlocked at all times when premises are in use;
- Fire doors will be clearly marked, free from obstruction and capable of being opened from the inside only at all times when premises are in use;
- Routes to fire exits will be clearly sited and emergency lighting for them provided;
- Windows will be sound and secure. Broken locks, latches and glass will be replaced immediately. Windows will be kept clean on both sides and free from obstruction.

g) Utilities

- Servicing of gas, electricity and water supplies and equipment will be carried out on a regular basis by qualified maintenance workers. Service records will be maintained by the
Health and Safety Sub-committee and housed in a location agreed with the Chief Officer;
- All workers should familiarise themselves with the locations of the off switches, levers and handles of the utilities, should not attempt any other action as regards these supplies and should summon assistance from their line managers/project supervisors immediately;
- Instructions as to where to turn off these service supplies are clearly exhibited as appropriate in agreement with the Chief Officer.

h) Storage
- All shelving, racks and cabinets must be strong enough for their intended use and must never be overloaded or have additional items 'jammed' onto them;
- The trustees recognise that the main premises pose particular storage problems but the use of step ladders must be kept to a minimum and should never be used by volunteers, nor should staff be required to use them if they request for whatever reason not to do so. Step stools, also known as kick stools, are provided and should be used in preference to step ladders;
- Maintenance equipment including sharp tools will be kept in a designated, safe cupboard and must not be used by volunteers. Tools must only be used for the purpose for which they were designed;
- All filing cabinets and drawers and cabinets containing confidential and private materials are provided with locks and keys;
- Lockers or other appropriate storage are provided for all staff and volunteers. Coats on the backs of chairs and cases and bags of floors can cause trip hazards and should be avoided wherever possible.

i) Paper
- The AUKY is working towards a 'paper-less' office environment. This is not the same as a 'paper-free' environment but staff are encouraged to record information electronically where possible and only to print where essential;
- Scanning equipment exists and staff are encouraged to make as much use of this as possible;
- Confidentiality is paramount. All waste paper should be shredded and, in keeping with the environmental policy, will be disposed of for recycling;
- Paper must never be stored or left near electrical equipment.

j) Suspicious packages and bomb alerts
- Do not touch or attempt to move the suspicious package;
- Warn other people in the same room of your suspicion;
- Evacuate the building (as for Fire evacuation), by pressing Red Break Glass on exit route;
- Exit building in an orderly manner - **DO NOT DELAY TO COLLECT POSSESSIONS**;
- Congregate at Fire Assembly Point, at the top of Melrose Yard (Walmgate end);
- Duty Officer to contact Police;
- Do not re-enter the building until you are told it is safe to do so;
- The above action should also be followed in the event of any verbal, written or phoned threat to the AUKY or its premises.