



The Parish of Thriplow & Heathfield

THRIPLLOW & HEATHFIELD PARISH COUNCIL

HEALTH AND SAFETY POLICY

Document Control

Item	Detail
Policy Title	Health and Safety Policy
Organisation	Thriplow & Heathfield Parish Council
Approved By	Full Council
Responsible Officer	Parish Clerk
Policy Owner	Parish Council
Review Frequency	Annually
Next Review Due	12 months after adoption
Version	1.0

1. HEALTH AND SAFETY POLICY STATEMENT

Thriplow & Heathfield Parish Council recognises and accepts its responsibilities under the Health and Safety at Work etc. Act 1974 and associated legislation to protect the health, safety and welfare of:

- Councillors
- Employees
- Contractors
- Volunteers
- Visitors
- Members of the public who may be affected by Council activities

The Council will:

- Comply with all relevant health and safety legislation.
- Identify hazards and reduce risks so far as is reasonably practicable.
- Provide and maintain safe premises, equipment and systems of work.
- Ensure suitable risk assessments are undertaken and reviewed.
- Provide appropriate information, instruction and training.
- Monitor Health and Safety performance and investigate incidents.
- Consult with employees and others affected by Council activities.
- Ensure the safety of residents and visitors using Council-owned or managed facilities.

The Council expects all councillors, employees, volunteers and contractors to work safely and co-operate fully in achieving the aims of this policy.

2. ORGANISATION AND RESPONSIBILITIES

2.1 The Parish Council

The Parish Council has overall responsibility for health and safety.

Overall legal responsibility, decision-making and resourcing for health and safety remain with the Parish Council as a corporate body. The Parish Clerk supports the Council by administering and co-ordinating health and safety arrangements, but this does not transfer the Council's overall responsibility to the Clerk personally.

The Council will:

- Approve and review this policy.
- Ensure sufficient resources are available.
- Monitor compliance.
- Review accident and incident reports.
- Ensure risks are appropriately managed.

2.2 Parish Clerk

The Parish Clerk is the Council's principal Health and Safety Co-ordinator and will administer, co-ordinate and report on health and safety arrangements on behalf of the Council. The Clerk is not expected to undertake specialist inspections, technical assessments or professional safety judgments unless suitably trained, competent and authorised to do so.

- Maintain this policy.
- Maintain accident and incident records.
- Arrange risk assessments.
- Co-ordinate inspections.
- Maintain training records.
- Monitor contractor compliance.
- Report significant issues to Council.
- Escalate urgent or significant safety concerns to the Chair, Vice-Chair, relevant asset lead or Full Council as appropriate.

2.2A Support, Competence and Limits of the Parish Clerk's Role



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The Council will ensure that health and safety responsibilities allocated to the Parish Clerk are reasonable, proportionate to contracted hours, and supported by appropriate training, resources and councillor involvement.

Where specialist knowledge is required, including but not limited to playground safety, fire safety, tree safety, building safety, electrical safety, asbestos, events or other higher-risk matters, the Council will appoint or seek advice from a suitably competent person, contractor or professional adviser.

Where an urgent safety concern is identified, the Parish Clerk may refer the matter to the Chair, Vice-Chair or relevant asset lead and may arrange temporary measures to reduce immediate risk, subject to subsequent reporting to the Council.

Employees, councillors and volunteers acting in good faith, within their authority and in accordance with this policy, will be supported by the Council.

Significant health and safety matters reported to the Council, and decisions taken in response, will be recorded in minutes or an appropriate action log.

2.3 Councillors

Councillors with responsibility for particular assets, facilities or locations must ensure that visual inspections are completed, hazards are reported promptly, defects are followed up, and agreed corrective actions are progressed. These responsibilities support the Clerk's co-ordination role and help ensure that operational responsibility is shared appropriately across the Council.

Councillors Shall:

- Undertake periodic visual inspections.
- Report hazards promptly.
- Ensure defects are reported and addressed.
- Assist with risk assessment and monitoring activities.
- Confirm to the Parish Clerk or Council when inspections have been completed and when defects have been resolved or require further Council decision.

2.4 Employees and Volunteers

Employees and volunteers shall:

- Take reasonable care of themselves and others.
- Follow safety instructions.
- Report hazards, accidents and near misses.

- Use equipment safely.
- Not misuse safety equipment.

2.5 Contractors

All contractors working on behalf of the Council shall:

- Be competent for the work undertaken.
- Hold appropriate insurance.
- Provide risk assessments and method statements where required.
- Comply with all relevant legislation.
- Take appropriate steps to protect members of the public.

3. RISK ASSESSMENT

The Council will undertake suitable and sufficient risk assessments covering:

- Council premises
- Play areas
- Open spaces
- Recreation facilities
- Street furniture
- Public events
- Maintenance activities
- Volunteer activities
- Lone working activities

Risk assessments shall:

- Identify hazards.
- Evaluate risks.
- Specify control measures.
- Be reviewed annually or after significant change, incident or near miss.

4. PUBLIC SPACES AND ASSET INSPECTIONS



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The Council owns or manages a range of public assets including:

- Playgrounds
- Recreation grounds
- Open spaces
- Bus shelters
- Benches
- Noticeboards
- Litter and dog bins
- War memorials
- Street furniture
- Public rights of way under Council responsibility

The Council will implement inspection arrangements appropriate to the risk associated with each asset.

Defects presenting immediate risk shall be made safe without delay.

Inspection records shall be retained by the Parish Clerk.

Inspection arrangements should identify the asset, inspection frequency, responsible councillor or competent person, reporting route, and location of records so that the Clerk is not treated as the sole operational inspector or technical assessor.

5. PLAYGROUND SAFETY

The Council recognises its duty to ensure playgrounds are maintained in a safe condition.

The Council shall:

- Arrange routine visual inspections.
- Arrange periodic operational inspections.
- Arrange an independent annual inspection by a suitably qualified inspector.
- Maintain records of inspections and corrective actions.

6. CONTRACTOR MANAGEMENT

Before appointing contractors, the Council will seek evidence of:

- Public Liability Insurance.
- Employer's Liability Insurance (where applicable).
- Competence and qualifications.
- Risk assessments.
- Method statements where appropriate.

Contractors shall be monitored to ensure compliance with agreed safety requirements.

7. ACCIDENTS, INCIDENTS AND RIDDOR

The Council will maintain an accident and incident reporting system.

All accidents, dangerous occurrences and near misses shall be reported to the Parish Clerk as soon as practicable.

Where required, incidents shall be reported under the Reporting of Injuries, Diseases and Dangerous Occurrences Regulations (RIDDOR).

The Parish Clerk may assist with reporting and record keeping, but responsibility for determining and implementing corrective action rests with the Council, supported by competent advice where required.

Following any significant incident, the Council shall investigate:

- Causes.
- Corrective actions.
- Lessons learned.

8. FIRST AID

Suitable first aid arrangements shall be maintained for Council employees and activities.

For Council events or volunteer activities, the need for additional first aid provision shall be determined through risk assessment.

9. FIRE SAFETY

Where the Council controls premises or buildings it will:

- Assess fire risks.
- Maintain emergency procedures.
- Ensure escape routes are kept clear.



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- Maintain appropriate fire safety equipment where required.

10. CONTROL OF SUBSTANCES HAZARDOUS TO HEALTH (COSHH)

Where hazardous substances are used, stored or managed:

- COSHH assessments shall be completed.
- Safety Data Sheets shall be retained.
- Appropriate storage arrangements shall be maintained.
- Necessary PPE shall be provided.
- Users shall receive suitable instruction.

11. EQUIPMENT AND MACHINERY

Council-owned equipment shall:

- Be suitable for intended use.
- Be inspected and maintained appropriately.
- Be removed from service if defects are identified.

Users shall only operate equipment for which they are competent and authorised.

12. MANUAL HANDLING

The Council will avoid hazardous manual handling where practicable.

Where manual handling cannot be avoided:

- Risks shall be assessed.
- Appropriate equipment shall be used.
- Suitable instruction shall be provided.

13. LONE WORKING

Where councillors, employees or volunteers work alone undertaking inspections or Council business:

- Risks shall be assessed.

- Contact arrangements shall be established.
- Individuals shall not undertake activities beyond their competence.

14. DISPLAY SCREEN EQUIPMENT (DSE)

The Council will assess workstation risks for employees who regularly use computers.

Appropriate adjustments and support shall be provided where necessary.

15. STRESS, WELLBEING AND MENTAL HEALTH

The Council recognises that mental wellbeing is an important component of health and safety.

The Council will:

- Promote a respectful working environment.
- Take concerns seriously.
- Seek to identify and reduce workplace stressors.

16. TRAINING

Training requirements shall be identified and reviewed regularly.

Records shall be maintained by the Parish Clerk.

The Council will ensure that the Parish Clerk receives appropriate information, training and support for any health and safety administration or co-ordination duties assigned to the role.

17. EVENTS

For Council-organised events, suitable event risk assessments shall be undertaken covering:

- Public safety
- Traffic management
- Emergency arrangements
- Temporary structures
- Contractors and suppliers
- Volunteers

Specific event safety plans shall be prepared where appropriate.



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18. MONITORING AND REVIEW

The Council shall monitor health and safety performance through:

- Asset inspections.
- Accident and incident reviews.
- Risk assessment reviews.
- Contractor monitoring.
- Annual policy review.

This policy shall be reviewed annually or sooner following:

- Legislative change.
- Significant incident.
- Organisational change.
- Introduction of new activities or facilities.

APPENDIX A – PARISH ASSET RESPONSIBILITIES

The Council shall maintain a separate schedule of:

- Thriplow assets
- Heathfield assets
- Councillor inspection responsibilities
- Inspection frequencies

This schedule may be amended without requiring formal amendment of this Policy.

The schedule should be maintained by the Council and reviewed at least annually, or sooner following changes to assets, responsibilities or inspection requirements. The current version should be retained with the Council's health and safety records and made available to councillors responsible for inspections.

CHAIR SIGN-OFF

This Health and Safety Policy was approved by Thriplow & Heathfield Parish Council and is signed on behalf of the Council by the Chair.

Signed:  _____

Name: LWS CLIFFORD _____

Role: Chair of the Council

Date: 14/9/26 _____