

HEALTH AND SAFETY POLICY TEMPLATE

Overview and How to Use This Template

Who is this for?

This template is designed to help unincorporated groups develop a comprehensive health and safety policy. Its primary goal is to ensure the safety and wellbeing of all volunteers, participants, and visitors.

Why do you need this policy?

1. **Clarity:** It clarifies the specific steps your group takes to keep everyone safe.
2. **Funding:** Having a written policy is often a requirement when applying for grants or funding.
3. **Liability:** It demonstrates that your group has taken "reasonable steps" to prevent harm, which is important for insurance and liability purposes.

How to Adapt This Template

This document provides a basic framework, but it is not a "one-size-fits-all" solution. You must adapt it to suit your specific activities and risks.

1. **Review:** Read through the entire document.
2. **Edit:** Look for text in **[Square Brackets]**. These are placeholders where you need to insert your own details (e.g., Group Name, specific procedures). Add your own branding if you have it.
3. **Delete:** If a section does not apply to you (e.g., if you don't serve food, remove "Food Safety"), delete it entirely.

More Information and Resources

For additional support on developing your policy or understanding your legal obligations, please consult the following:

Official Guidance

- [Health and Safety Executive \(HSE\) – Community Groups and Volunteering](#)
This page offers specific guidance on health and safety obligations and risk management for voluntary and community groups.

- [Resource Centre – Health and Safety Guidelines for Community Groups](#)
A guide specifically designed to help community groups set up health and safety policies.

Activity-Specific Resources

- **Food Safety:**
 - [Food Standards Agency – Providing food at community and charity events](#): This guide clarifies that you do not usually need a food hygiene certificate for small community events, but you must handle food safely. It covers allergen information and safe preparation methods.
- **Serious Accidents (RIDDOR):**
 - [HSE – Reporting of Injuries, Diseases and Dangerous Occurrences Regulations \(RIDDOR\)](#):
 - *Note:* While minor accidents (cuts, bruises) should be recorded in your group's internal Accident Log, serious incidents (such as broken bones, hospitalisations, or work-related illnesses) must be reported formally to the HSE.
 - Visit the HSE RIDDOR website to understand which incidents constitute a reportable emergency.

Related Policies & Checks

Your group may require additional policies depending on your work. Consider if you need a:

- **Safeguarding Policy:** Essential if working with children or vulnerable adults. DBS checks are also essential.
- **Lone Working Policy:** If volunteers work in isolation.
- **Food Hygiene & Event Safety:** For pop-up kitchens or large gatherings.
- **Data Protection Policy:** Essential if you are collecting and processing personal data (e.g. names, addresses, emails, phone numbers, photographs etc.).

Insurance

Make sure you have the relevant insurance (e.g., Public Liability Insurance) in place to cover your activities.

Support

If you need further guidance, please reach out to The Social Change Nest at hello@thesocialchangenest.org.

[TEMPLATE] Health and Safety Policy

1. Key Contacts and Emergency Information

To ensure quick action in an emergency, this table must be kept up to date and accessible to all volunteers/group members

Role	Name	Contact Number	Email
Group Organiser / Lead	[Name]	[Phone]	[Email]
Designated Safety Officer	[Name]	[Phone]	[Email]
First Aider(s)	[Name]	[Phone]	[Email]
Nearest Hospital (A&E)	[Hospital Name]	[Address]	[Phone]
Venue Address / Postcode	[Insert Address]		

2. Policy Statement

The policy of [Group Name] is to prioritise the health, safety, and wellbeing (both physical and mental) of all volunteers, participants, and visitors involved in our activities.

[Group Name] is committed to minimising the risks of accidents, injuries, and illnesses by following relevant health and safety guidelines, including the principles of the Health and Safety at Work Act 1974, where applicable.

3. Responsibilities

- **Leadership:** The overall responsibility for health and safety lies with the group organisers or designated leaders listed in Section 1.
- **Individuals:** All volunteers, participants, and visitors are responsible for taking reasonable care of their own health and safety and that of others.
- **Reporting:** Any hazards or risks must be reported to the group organiser or leader immediately.

4. Risk Assessments and Venue Safety

- **Planned Activities:** For higher-risk activities (e.g., cooking, physical exercise), [Group Name] will conduct risk assessments to identify hazards and outline measures to minimise risks.

- **Dynamic Checks (Venue Safety):** Before any event begins, the lead volunteer will perform a quick visual check of the venue to ensure:
 - Fire exits are unlocked and unblocked.
 - There are no trip hazards (cables, wet floors).
 - Lighting and ventilation are adequate.

5. Accident Reporting and Data Protection

- **Reporting:** Any accident, incident, or near miss, no matter how minor, must be reported to a group organiser immediately, or no later than 24 hours after the incident.
- **Procedure:** Reports should be made by [Insert Method, e.g., email to the Safety Officer].
- **The Accident Log:** A designated group member will maintain an accident log.
- **Data Protection (GDPR):** As accident logs contain sensitive personal data (medical information), the log will be stored securely [e.g., in a locked cabinet or password-protected file]. Access is restricted to the Group Organiser and Safety Officer.

6. Manual Handling (Lifting and Moving)

To prevent back injuries, [Group Name] advises the following:

- Volunteers should not lift heavy items alone. Always ask for assistance.
- Use trolleys or equipment where possible to move heavy boxes or furniture.
- Do not attempt to lift objects that are too heavy or awkward for you.

7. Fire Safety and Emergency Procedures

- [Group Name] will ensure that all venues used have clear fire exits and that participants are informed of emergency procedures at the start of each event.
- In an emergency, a designated responsible person will ensure all participants evacuate safely to the predetermined assembly point.

8. First Aid

- A first aid kit will be available at all group events.
- At least one member (or the appropriate number based on group size) will be responsible for administering basic first aid.
- **Training Costs:** [Group Name] encourages volunteers to complete first aid training.
 - *[Option A: Costs for pre-approved First Aid training will be reimbursed by the Group.]*
 - *[Option B: Volunteers are expected to cover the cost of their own training, unless otherwise agreed.]*

9. Mental Wellbeing and Code of Conduct

[Group Name] is committed to a safe and supportive environment. We operate a zero-tolerance policy towards harassment, bullying, or discrimination. If a volunteer feels unsafe or distressed, they should speak to [Insert Role, e.g., the Group Organiser] in confidence.

10. Food Safety (If Applicable)

- When food is prepared or served, [Group Name] will comply with food safety laws, including the Food Safety Act 1990.
- Volunteers handling food are encouraged to hold basic food hygiene certificates.
- Food storage and preparation will follow guidelines set by the Food Standards Agency.

11. Lone Working (If Applicable)

- Volunteers working alone (e.g., opening up a venue) must inform a designated contact of their start and finish times.
- **Failure to Report Protocol:** If the lone worker does not check in within [e.g., 30 minutes] of their expected finish time, the designated contact will:
 1. Attempt to contact the volunteer by phone.
 2. Call the volunteer's emergency contact.
 3. If necessary, contact the police/emergency services.

12. Safeguarding (If Applicable)

- [Group Name] is committed to ensuring the safety of children and vulnerable adults.
- Please refer to our separate **Safeguarding Policy** for procedures on reporting concerns. Special attention will be given to supervision ratios during activities.

13. Policy Review

This policy will be reviewed regularly to ensure it remains up to date. Reviews will also occur following any significant incidents or near misses.

Signed:

[Group Organiser's Name]

[Position/Role]

[Date]

APPENDIX: RISK ASSESSMENT TEMPLATE

How to use this form:

Use this table before holding a new activity or event. It helps you identify potential dangers and list the steps you have taken to stop them from happening. This demonstrates that you are acting responsibly and following the procedure outlined in Section 4 of your Health and Safety Policy.

Part 1: Example (How to fill it in)

Activity: Community Coffee Morning

Hazard (What could cause harm?)	Who is at risk? (Volunteers, visitors, children?)	Risk Level (Low / Med / High)	Control Measures (What are you doing to prevent this?)	Action by Who?
Hot Water Urn (Risk of scalding/burns)	Volunteers making tea; Children running nearby.	High	1. Urn placed on a stable, back counter away from public reach. 2. Only adults allowed to pour hot water. 3. Spills mopped up immediately.	Group Leader

<p>Trailing Cables</p> <p>(Trip hazard from kettle/speaker)</p>	<p>All attendees, especially elderly or mobility impaired.</p>	<p>Medium</p>	<p>1. Cables taped down to the floor using gaffer tape.</p> <p>2. Walkways kept clear of equipment.</p>	<p>Setup Team</p>
<p>Food Allergies</p> <p>(Allergic reaction)</p>	<p>Visitors eating cake.</p>	<p>Med/High</p>	<p>1. All home-baked goods labelled with "Contains Nuts/Dairy/Gluten".</p> <p>2. Store-bought items served with original packaging visible.</p>	<p>Food Volunteer</p>

Part 2: Risk Assessment Form (Blank)

Event/Activity Name: _____

Date: _____

Assessed By: _____

Hazard (What could cause harm?)	Who is at risk? (Volunteers, visitors, children?)	Risk Level (Low / Med / High)	Control Measures (What are you doing to prevent this?)	Action by Who?

Review:

- Checks completed before the event starts.
- All volunteers briefed on these risks.

Signed: _____ (Safety Officer / Lead)