



Health and Safety Policy

Bittern Meadow CIC is committed to ensuring the health, safety and welfare of its employees and it will, so far as is reasonably practicable, establish procedures and systems necessary to implement this commitment and to comply with its statutory obligations on health and safety. It is the responsibility of each employee to familiarise themselves and comply with the Bittern Meadow CIC procedures and systems on health and safety.

While Bittern Meadow CIC will take all reasonable steps to ensure the health and safety of its employees, health and safety at work is also the responsibility of the employees themselves. It is the duty of each employee to take reasonable care of their own and other people's health, safety and welfare and to report any situation which may pose a serious or imminent threat to the well being of themselves or of any other person.

Bittern Meadow CIC is committed to;

1. Maintaining the workplace in a safe condition and providing adequate facilities and arrangements for welfare at work.
2. The provision and maintenance of equipment and systems of work that are safe.
3. Arrangements for ensuring safety to health in connection with the use, handling, storage and transport of articles and substances.
4. The provision of such information, instructions, training and supervision as is necessary to ensure the health and safety at work of its employees and other persons.

Bittern Meadow CIC also recognises its duty to protect the health and safety of all contractors and temporary workers, as well as any members of the public who might be affected by work operations.

The Directors of Bittern Meadow CIC have overall responsibility for Health and Safety in the company. The Directors will regularly inspect the workplace, maintain safety records and investigate and report on any accidents at work, and liaise with third party venue providers to ensure adequate Health and Safety measures are in place.

Training

Safety training is an integral part of an effective health and safety programme, every employee will be trained to perform their job safely. All employees will be trained in safe working practices and procedures. Training will include instruction on the safe use of any equipment provided.

First aid and reporting accidents at work

First aid equipment must be available at all times. First aid boxes will be checked and maintained regularly. There must be one or more trained first aiders present when service users are using the Bittern Meadow CIC service. First aid refresher courses are essential.

All incidents, whether injury is sustained or not, must be reported to the Directors and recorded in the accident book. Incidents may include the reporting of a significant hazard, a 'near miss' (where an incident occurred but no injury was sustained) which can include aggressive or threatening behaviour of a service user, minor injury, major injury or fatality.

If the incident involves an injury that results in lost time in excess of three days or a fatality it must be reported to RIDDOR.

Equipment, tools and materials

- All equipment, tools and materials must be properly and safely used and when not in use properly and safely secured
- Work should be well-planned to avoid injuries in the handling of heavy materials and while using equipment
- Employees should take care to ensure that all protective guards and other safety devices are properly fitted and in good working order and must immediately report any defects to the Directors.
- Suitable clothing and footwear must be worn at all times. Personal protective equipment (PPE) must be worn where appropriate
- Persons using tools or machinery must not wear clothing, jewellery or long hair in such a way as might pose a risk to their own or anyone else's safety
- Flammable or toxic materials must be stored and used in accordance with relevant guidance, utilising PPE where appropriate
- Employees and service users must receive thorough guidance, instruction and supervision regarding the use of tools, equipment and materials, including clear information about potential risks
- Unqualified persons must not operate machinery
- Tools and equipment will be inspected regularly (before each use) to ensure its safe condition
- Ensure a safe working distance around employees/service users using tools and equipment
- Carry tools, equipment and materials safely, e.g. tools face downwards, not misused or swung. Be aware of slippery and wet surfaces when using tools or equipment
- Always use tools away from the body
- All tools, equipment and materials to be returned at end of sessions

Manual handling

Staff members should not put themselves at risk of injury. The following guidelines should be followed when lifting or moving items:

- The load to be lifted or moved must be inspected for sharp edges and wet patches.
- When lifting or moving a load with sharp or splintered edges, gloves must be worn.
- The route over which the load is to be lifted should be inspected to ensure it is free of obstructions.
- Employees should not attempt to lift or move a load which is too heavy to manage comfortably. Employees should ask for assistance if there is any danger of strain.
- When lifting an object off the ground, employees should assume a squatting position, keeping the back straight. The load should be lifted by straightening the knees, not the back

Fire

Activities run by Bittern Meadow CIC include lighting and cooking on fires with service users. Adherence to simple practice guidance can minimise the risks associated with fire.

- A distance of 1.5 metres is maintained between the fire and seated service users
- Fire circle rules are clearly communicated prior to lighting
- Fires are lit within designated fire circles
- Move around the fire circle not through it
- Service users are supervised around the fire at all times
- Ensure availability of adequate supply of water/sand for fire extinguishing within easy reach of the fire circle at all times (Minimum 5 litres)
- Consider weather conditions and wind direction before lighting fires
- Store means to light fires securely away from service users when not in use
- Never leave fires unattended
- Do not allow throwing anything into the fire
- Ensure flammable liquids/gases are kept well away from fires

Risk Assessment

Bittern Meadow CIC is committed to conducting full risk assessment of each area and activity and where necessary, of a group or individual. Identifying possible hazards and acting to minimise risk as soon as it is identified, is key to Health and Safety with Bittern Meadow CIC. In addition to preparatory risk assessments, employees should continually dynamically risk assess and communicate potential Health and Safety hazards appropriately.