

CHEARSLEY PARISH COUNCIL: HEALTH AND SAFETY POLICY

1. Introduction & Scope

This policy sets out the general principles and approach that Chearsley Parish Council will follow regarding health and safety legislation for all premises, assets, and activities for which the Council is responsible.

It is the statutory responsibility of all Councillors, employees, and volunteers to be fully aware of these policy statements and the organizational arrangements established to implement them.

2. Legal Framework & General Statement

Chearsley Parish Council, in accordance with the requirements of the Health and Safety at Work etc. Act 1974 and the Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999, accepts its legal duty to provide and maintain safe and healthy working conditions for all employees.

The Council also recognizes and accepts its duty of care to other persons, including residents, visitors, volunteers, and contractors who interact with or work on behalf of the Council.

The Parish Council will take all reasonable, proactive steps to ensure compliance with relevant regulations, Approved Codes of Practice, and official health and safety guidance. It will ensure that adequate resources are provided to meet these safety requirements.

3. Core Council Obligations

The Parish Council will take all reasonable steps to ensure:

- **Information & Training:** Provide information, instruction, training, and supervision to guarantee a safe environment for employees, members of the public, contractors, and volunteers.
- **Public Safety:** Manage all civic activities, community events, and public assets so that members of the public are not exposed to health and safety risks.
- **Substance Safety:** Maintain safe arrangements for the use, handling, storage, transport, and disposal of all tools, materials, and substances that may endanger health.
- **Policy Awareness:** Ensure this policy is brought to the attention of all staff, Councillors, and volunteers, and is reviewed formally on an annual basis.

- **Psychological Wellbeing:** Provide a workplace free from excessive stress and protect staff and Councillors from workplace harassment or bullying as a fundamental component of physical and mental safety at work.

4. Statutory Reporting & Incident Recording (RIDDOR)

All accidents, near-misses, and occupational health issues must be recorded immediately in the Council's Accident Book.

In accordance with the Reporting of Injuries, Diseases and Dangerous Occurrences Regulations 2013 (RIDDOR), the Parish Clerk holds the designated responsibility to formally report any specified workplace injuries, occupational diseases, or dangerous occurrences directly to the Health and Safety Executive (HSE).

5. Maintenance and Inspection of Parish Assets

Chearsley Parish Council acknowledges its specific responsibilities for the structural integrity and safety of its physical village assets, which include two bus stops/shelters, designated street and community signs, and the Chearsley War Memorial. To ensure ongoing public safety, the Council will maintain the following protocols:

- **Routine Inspections:** The Council will ensure that scheduled visual inspections of all structures (bus stops, signs, and the memorial) are conducted at regular intervals by the Clerk or designated Councillors to identify structural degradation, vandalism, or environmental wear.
- **Listed Asset Compliance:** Maintenance and repairs conducted on the Chearsley War Memorial will be carried out in consultation with relevant historic building guidelines to ensure structural work does not create environmental or safety hazards.
- **Roadside Safety:** Any routine cleaning, vegetation clearing, or maintenance executed near village highways (such as street signs and bus stops) will be strictly risk-assessed, ensuring appropriate high-visibility clothing is worn and adequate safety clearance is given from traffic.

6. Risk Assessments & Public Security (Martyn's Law)

The Parish Council will carry out suitable and sufficient risk assessments of its activities and assets annually, or sooner if a significant operational change occurs.

In line with the Terrorism (Protection of Premises) Act 2025 (Martyn's Law), the Council's risk assessment framework formally extends to evaluating public safety, emergency readiness, and security awareness across all publicly accessible council-managed assets or public community events.

For events directly organised or hosted by the Parish Council at village sites—such as community gatherings or commemorative events at the Chearsley War Memorial—the Council will incorporate

public safety, crowd logistics, and emergency route awareness into its formal event risk assessments. The Council will implement proportionate measures to mitigate any physical, environmental, or security risks identified.

7. Contractor Management & Asset Works

The Parish Council requires all third-party contractors appointed to perform repairs, structural updates, maintenance, or deep cleans on Council assets to supply valid, up-to-date Risk Assessments, written Method Statements, and Proof of Public Liability Insurance prior to commencing work.

Contractors working adjacent to public highways or on public infrastructure (e.g., bus stops and street signs) must prove competence in working safely alongside vehicular traffic.

8. Individual Responsibilities

Day-to-day matters of health and safety are managed by the Parish Clerk acting on behalf of the Council.

However, all Councillors, employees, and volunteers have a personal legal duty under Section 7 of the Health and Safety at Work Act to take reasonable care of their own health and safety, as well as that of any other persons who may be affected by their acts or omissions.

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