

Stoke Holy Cross Parish Council

Health and Safety Policy

Purpose of the Policy

It is noted that there is no requirement for a council which employs less than 5 people to have a policy, but the council considers it is best practise to detail its responsibilities under Health & Safety legislation. The council is committed to providing a safe working environment for its staff and a safe environment for the users of its facilities. The policy helps explain how the council will meet its duties under this legislation.

Responsibilities for health and safety

The council is ultimately responsible for health and safety, which will be managed by its officer, the Parish Clerk. The responsibilities of the Clerk are detailed in this policy as well as in the job description.

Arrangements for health and safety

1. The council's insurers

The Clerk arranges the insurance of the council, which will be reviewed annually / every third year. The current insurance policy details are published on the council's website.

The council must have Employer Insurance (£10 million); Public Liability (£10 million); Fidelity Guarantee (at least to the level of the balance at year end) and Asset Insurance.

2. Risk Assessments

The council must undertake risk assessments for all of its activities. These are detailed in the Health and Safety Risk Assessment. It is the duty of the Clerk to write these risk assessments and discuss with the people involved in the activity to ensure that risk to everyone is minimised.

3. Contractors

The council will use contractors who hold the required public liability insurance and will request a copy of the certificate of insurance. The level of public liability required will depend on the type of work being undertaken and where it is being undertaken. If unsure the Clerk should discuss the level of public liability insurance with the council's insurer. Risk assessments should be undertaken by contractors for all works and the council should have a copy of these.

4. Council's own staff

The council may employ its own staff or volunteers to undertake tasks provided those tasks have been risk assessed and the person doing them has been provided with appropriate and well-maintained equipment as well as safety equipment. Note that any chain saw work will require a suitably qualified person to undertake.

5. Play Areas

The Playing Field Working Group will arrange regular play equipment inspections which will be logged on an agreed play inspection form. The Clerk will arrange annual professional inspections. The regular inspections will make a cursory inspection of equipment, notices, safety surfacing, fencing and also for litter.

The Play Areas for which the council has responsibility are:

Long Lane Playing Field and Area
Carol Close Playing Area

6. Council property

The council will arrange regular inspections of council property such as benches, bins, noticeboards and bus shelters. Repair work will be arranged by the Clerk. Any equipment owned by the council such as mowers will be serviced when required.

7. Trees

Trees in the ownership of the council or those trees adjacent to public space areas will be inspected bi-annually.

8. Public footpaths

The council considers that it does have a level of responsibility to ensure its public footpaths are safe and for any paths reported as unsafe the council will liaise with Norfolk County Council concerning the problem.

9. Safety for its employees, volunteers, councillors and visitors

The council will ensure that its employees are provided with a safe working environment. The council will ensure that councillors, volunteers, employees and visitors who frequent rooms used for meetings are provided with a safe environment and measures have been taken to reduce risk by regular inspections of these premises. These facilities, wherever possible, should provide disability access and facilities. The council meetings are generally held at The Community Hall, Long Lane, Stoke Holy Cross.

10. Budget

The council will ensure that it will maintain a budget which is adequate to maintain its assets as well as provide training to staff, volunteers and councillors. The Clerk, as Responsible Financial Officer, will ensure that budgetary provision is adequate and a reserve fund is held for long term maintenance or replacement of council assets.

Date adopted: October 2025

Date to be reviewed: October 2028