

## **Health & Safety Policy and associated Guidance Notes**

### **Introduction**

This booklet contains the Health & Safety policy of the Viking Centre and associated Guidance Notes so you have them together in one document for ease of reference.

The following pages are given for general guidance to group leaders and others who use the Viking Centre Facilities. The information given is not exhaustive and is given as general guidance only.

The areas covered are:

1. **Health and safety Policy**
2. **General information**
3. **Fire and emergency evacuation procedures**
4. **Building surrounds and external areas**
5. **Dormitory areas**
6. **Showers and WC's**
7. **Kitchen and dining room areas**

## **Health & Safety Policy**

### **1) Section A: Responsibilities**

- a) It is the responsibility of the committee members, so far as is reasonably practicable, to ensure that:
  - i) The centres grounds are maintained to a required regulatory standards, or where no standard exists, to a standard that is safe and without risk to the health, safety and welfare of visitors, contractors, members of the public or committee members,
  - ii) The care and maintenance of the building is to the required regulatory standards, or where no standard exists, to a standard that is safe and without risk to the health, safety and welfare of visitors, contractors, members of the public or committee members,
  - iii) The care and maintenance of the centres furniture, fixtures, fittings and equipment is to a required regulatory standards, or where no standard exists, a standard that is safe and without risk to the health, safety and welfare of visitors, contractors, members of the public or committee members,
- b) A list of the current committee positions and the name of the current holder of that position will be posted on the notice board in the Viking Centre.
- c) Telephone numbers of committee members that are to be contacted in case of problems or in an emergency will be posted on the notice board in the Viking Centre.

## **2) Section B: General Statement of Policy**

- a) The Viking Centre Committee (the committee) will adhere to this Health and Safety policy as far as is reasonably practicable, in accordance with the requirements of the Health and Safety at Work etc Act 1974 and any associated current legislation.
- b) The safety policy will be regularly reviewed to take account of changes in legislation or any alterations to the site, building or facilities provided, to ensure that those using the centre and its facilities can do so safely and with minimum risk.
- c) The committee will ensure that any contractors/sub-contractors who carry out work in the centre or to its fixtures or fittings:
  - i) Have sufficient and suitable health and safety arrangements and/or systems in place, as required by the Health and Safety at Work etc Act 1974 and any associated current legislation.
  - ii) Are competent, and where required, qualified to do the work which they are contracted to carry out.
  - iii) Have suitable and sufficient third party liability insurance,
  - iv) Carry out their work in a manner that is safe and without risk to others who may be using or visiting the centre.
- d) A committee member will be responsible for organising the inspection and maintenance of fixtures, fittings and equipment, and where appropriate at the recommended frequency and to the standard as required by current legislation and/or Approved Codes of Practice or guidance handbooks.
- e) Typically the following items are to be subject to inspection and maintenance:
  - i) First aid fire fighting appliances (extinguishers, fire blankets etc).
  - ii) Emergency lighting, smoke detectors, warning systems etc.
  - iii) Portable electrical equipment (fridge/freezers, kettles etc).
  - iv) The building fixed electrical installations (sockets, lighting, fixed wiring etc) should be checked by a competent person every 5 years.

- v) Heating & hot water system (especially thermostats/controls).
- vi) The wood burning system and associated equipment.
- vii) Safety signs, notices etc.

The above list is not exhaustive and is given as a general guide.

- f) A member of the committee will be responsible for briefing the group leader(s) or responsible person(s) on the various safety requirements of the centre e.g. fire procedures, location of exits, emergency assembly point, first aid box, accident book, use of kitchen cooking equipment, general safety etc.
- g) The committee will co-operate with all local authority enforcement officers.

## **General information**

### 1) **Smoking**

- a) With effect from 1<sup>st</sup> July 2007 the 'Health Act 2006' and associated Regulations came into effect. This new legislation makes provisions that effectively bans smoking in any enclosed public place.
- b) To comply with this legislation, smoking is prohibited at all times in all internal areas of the 'Viking Centre', or any outbuilding that is enclosed or partially enclosed.
- c) Smoking will only be permitted in the areas designated. These are to be at least 3m from building entrances, windows that can be opened, ventilation openings, or any other opening that could allow tobacco smoke or fumes to enter the building(s).

### 2) **Litter, rubbish etc**

- a) Please ensure that litter and rubbish is placed in the bags & bins provide,
- b) This is especially important with regards to waste food and food contaminated packaging, which if left around could encourage vermin.
- c) Loose litter can be blown around, which not only makes the area untidy, but could cause problems on the neighbouring farmland, and could also cause serious problems to farm, domestic and wild animals.
- d) If you go out and about please make sure you bring your litter back and place it in the bags & bins provided.

### 3) **Children**

- a) Group leaders should ensure that:
  - i) Young children are adequately supervised at all times,
  - ii) That the supervisor of young children is at least 12 years of age and is competent and mature enough to fulfil this role,
  - iii) Are made aware of rules of the centre regarding vehicles, not climbing fences, not climbing over accommodation walls, cooking area safety and hygiene, safety in the shower areas etc

### 4) **Flammable, highly flammable substances**

- a) None of these items are to be stored within the building.
- b) Typical items would be barbeque fire lighters, liquids, complete barbeque kits etc; camping stoves and/or associated gas containers/bottles; any type of vehicle fuel etc.
- c) Ensure such items are stored in a secure, cool, well ventilated area.

## 5) General Safety.

- a) Clean up spilled liquid, food etc immediately to prevent possible slips.
- b) Ensure cupboard, cabinet doors; drawers etc are closed when not in use to prevent people walking into them.
- c) Keep an eye open for potential trip hazards e.g. articles, leads, cables etc. remove them as soon as possible.
- d) Do not allow anyone to climb on furniture e.g. tables, chairs etc, or unstable items.
- e) Lifting & Carrying etc.
  - i) Never attempt to lift anything you think may be beyond your ability or cause you difficulties.
- f) Remember:
  - i) Always plan the task first:
    - (i) Check the route is clear of obstacles, do you require assistance etc?
    - (ii) Is there likely to be other persons or children in the area/route?
    - (iii) Is item large, awkward, bulky, is Centre of Gravity offset etc?
    - (iv) Is it hot/cold, has sharp edges, do you need to wear gloves?
  - ii) When you have to lift an item:
    - (i) Stand close to the object and keep a wide stance.
    - (ii) Adopt a good posture and test the load.
    - (iii) Lift the load using the leg muscles, keep back upright and do not twist.
    - (iv) Carry load as close to the body as possible.
    - (v) Do not twist trunk when turning.
    - (vi) Lower load using leg muscles and then slide object into place.
  - iii) Repetitive manual handling:
    - (i) Take short breaks or rotate jobs to avoid being over-tired or straining something.
    - (ii) How often you need to have a break or rotate the job will be determined by:
      - a. The weight/size of objects being lifted & carried.
      - b. How far you have to carry them
      - c. Number of items being moved.
      - d. How fit you are.

## **Fire and emergency evacuation procedures.**

### **1) 'Fire Exit' and other doors used in an emergency**

- a) Group leaders are to ensure that:
  - i) The emergency 'Fire Exit' works by operating the 'push bar' to open the door.
  - ii) The 'break glass' key containers for the other doors have a key in them.
  - iii) At night, whenever possible, doors are to be kept closed so that should a fire occur it can be confined in an area, to allow time for people to escape from the building.

### **2) Fire evacuation drill**

- a) Group leaders are to ensure that:
  - i) On arrival all persons, especially those using the dormitory bedrooms, are fully aware of the emergency evacuation procedures.
  - ii) All persons in their group know how to operate the 'Fire Exit' in the sleeping accommodation area, and open all other doors that may have to be used in an emergency, especially those that require the use of the keys in the 'break glass containers'.

### **3) Fire Extinguishers**

- a) Group leaders are to ensure that all persons in their group:
  - i) Know the location of fire extinguishers, fire blankets etc.
  - ii) Read or have explained to them the instructions for use, with emphasis on what types of fire each type of extinguisher can or cannot be used on, e.g. cannot use water extinguishers on electrical fires.

### **4) Flammable, highly flammable substances**

- a) None of these items are to be stored within the building.
- b) Typical items would be barbeque fire lighters, liquids, complete barbeque kits etc; camping stoves and/or associated gas containers/bottles; any type of vehicle fuel etc.

## **External areas & building surrounds**

### **1) Gate to main road**

- a) Please ensure it is kept closed at all times when not in use.

### **2) Car park area**

- a) Only adults should assist drivers to reverse or manoeuvre vehicles.
- b) Unless directly involved with assisting drivers to reverse or manoeuvre their vehicles, all other persons should keep clear of the area.
- c) Ensure children and young persons, are kept clear and appropriately supervised whilst vehicles are manoeuvring in this area.

### **3) Fencing around site**

- a) The fencing is for marking the boundary of the centre and to prevent farm animal's entry onto the site, it is not designed to climb on and may not even take the weight of a child.
- b) Do not allow climbing on any of the fencing unless it is specifically designed for climbing onto e.g. stiles.

*Do not allow climbing on fencing or gates*

### **4) Large wooden shed**

- a) Ensure shed door is locked and secure at all times when not in use.
- b) Access to the shed:
  - i) Is restricted to authorised persons only,
  - ii) By children is strictly prohibited.

*Do not allow climbing onto the building or shed roof*

### **5) Barbecue area**

- a) When in use this area presents a risk of burns and/or fire spread. To minimize the risks, strict control by adults and group leaders is required:
  - i) The barbecue is only to be lit and operated by adults
  - ii) When lighting a barbecue only use products designed for this purpose, never use petrol, lighter fuel or other flammable substance to start or re-light a barbecue.

- iii) When lit, in use or is still hot, it must be under the control and supervision of one or more adults.
- iv) Children should be kept away from a hot barbecue unless under strict supervision by an adult.
- v) Physical games e.g. football, Frisbees, tag etc should not be played in the vicinity of the barbecue whilst it is in use or still hot.
- vi) When using the barbecue:
  - (1) Ensure that a bucket of water & a foam or water fire extinguisher is near by,
  - (2) It is safer to put the barbecued food on serving plates and then putting these away from the barbecue, rather than have lots of people queuing up near to a hot barbeque.

## **Dormitory areas**

### **1) 'Fire Exit' and other doors used in an emergency**

- c) Group leaders are to ensure that:
  - i) The emergency 'Fire Exit' works by operating the 'push bar' and opening the door.
  - ii) The 'break glass' key containers for the other doors have a key in them.
  - iii) All persons in their group know how to operate the 'Fire Exit' in the sleeping accommodation area, and other doors that may have to be used in an emergency.
  - iv) At night, whenever possible, doors are to be kept closed so that should a fire occur it can be confined in an area, to allow time for people to escape from the building.

### **2) Fire evacuation drill**

- a) Group leaders are to ensure that:
  - i) All those using the sleeping areas (bedrooms) are fully aware of
    - (1) The emergency evacuation procedures before they settle down on the first night,
    - (2) The location of the fire extinguisher (should be near the fire exit at the end of the corridor),
    - (3) How to sound the alarm in case of fire or emergency.
  - ii) All persons are made aware of the need to keep the access corridor and the internal and external areas of the fire door free from any obstruction(s), trip hazards etc.

### **3) Sleeping areas (bedrooms)**

- a) Group leaders are to ensure that:
  - i) All persons are made aware that the dividing walls between individual dormitories or the corridor are not to be leaned over or climbed on.
  - ii) Those allocated 'top bunks' are:
    - (1) Over 6 years old (RoSPA recommendation)
    - (2) Are physically capable of using the ladders safely
    - (3) Are made aware that they should always use the ladder for getting up and down from the bunk.
  - iii) No one keeps flammable, highly flammable, possible ignition sources, cigarettes or similar items in this area.

**4) Damage to accommodation facilities**

- a) Damage, however caused, should be reported to a member of the 'Viking Centre' committee as soon as possible, particularly if the damage is to:
  - i) Top bunk-bed ladders, retaining bar etc,
  - ii) Bed bases or mattresses,
  - iii) Bunk-bed vertical or lateral support structures
  - iv) Sliding doors,
  - v) Support walls,
  - vi) Lighting etc.

*It is illegal to smoke in any enclosed public place, which includes the Viking Centre.*

*Regardless of the above, for fire safety reasons, a 'No smoking' policy is to be strictly enforced, in the dormitory areas.*

## **Kitchen areas**

### **1) Introduction**

- a) Kitchens can be dangerous places, especially for children, so ensure children in this area are supervised.
- b) Always be on the alert for hazards and eliminate/remove them as soon as possible.
- c) Follow the 3 basic rules:
  - i) Clean up spills immediately,
  - ii) Use proper lifting techniques,
  - iii) Follow good hygiene practices.

### **2) General safety.**

- a) Never wear sandals or open toed shoes when working in the kitchen area.
- b) Keep raw and cooked foods separate.
  - i) Where possible use separate chopping boards/surfaces.
  - ii) Thoroughly clean any surface where raw foods, especially meat, fish etc, has been placed before using it for other foods especially cooked foods, fruit, salad items etc.
- c) Always clean up any spilled grease or fat from the floor immediately using hot soapy water, rinse and dry area thoroughly.
- d) Clean up any water spills etc from the floor immediately.
- e) Never attempt to lift or carry heavy containers of food single handed, always get help.
- f) Do not let appliance cables hang over the edge of work tops where they could snag and/or be pulled off.
- g) Keep electrical appliances and leads away from water, unless they are designed to be used with water e.g. electric kettles.
- h) Wear a suitable apron when cooking.
- i) Never use damp clothes for lifting or carrying hot pans, utensils etc. Heat penetrates damp cloths quicker than dry cloths.
- j) Ensure there is a suitable source of cold water nearby to treat any burns or scolds.
- k) Make sure you know where the first aid box is located.
- l) Make sure everyone knows how to call the emergency services.

### 3) Personal Hygiene

As a food handler, it is important that you ensure that you maintain the highest standard of cleanliness and hygiene at all times.

#### a) Infections.

- i) If you are suffering with, or just recovering from, any infectious disease e.g. coughs, colds, sickness or diarrhoea etc, you should not handle or be involved with food or food preparation.

#### b) Hands.

- i) As the hands are in direct contact with food, they are the main route for transferring food poisoning bacteria. Hands must be washed regularly throughout the period that food is being handled, but especially:
  - (1) after visiting the toilet,
  - (2) before handling any food cooking equipment or utensils
  - (3) in between handling raw and cooked foods
  - (4) after handling dirty/used dishes, cooking equipment, utensils, waste food or refuse
  - (5) after eating, combing or touching hair, sneezing, coughing or blowing the nose, smoking etc

#### c) Cuts, spots abrasions etc.

- i) To prevent contamination of food by harmful bacteria cuts, spots, abrasions, skin rashes etc should be completely covered by a waterproof dressing.
- ii) These dressing whenever possible should be highly coloured so they can be easily spotted if they come off. If possible wear plastic gloves over the dressing to prevent contamination to both food and the cut etc.

#### d) Hair, jewellery etc.

- i) Whenever possible hair should be covered or tied back
- ii) No jewellery, other than a plain ring should be worn whilst handling food. Item such as ear rings, watches, very ornate rings etc should be removed or covered.

### 4) Knives and other sharp utensils.

- a) Always carry sharp utensils e.g. knives, scissors etc with points downwards towards the floor.
- b) Never attempt to catch a knife, or other sharp utensil, if you drop it.
- c) Never cut or chop items whilst holding them in your hand, always use a chopping board.
- d) Do not place knives or other sharp implements in a washing up bowl or sink unless you intend to wash them immediately.

- e) Always cut away from the body whenever possible.
- f) When washing or drying knives keep the cutting edge away from the hands, wipe from the blunt edge towards the sharp edge.
- g) Never leave knives or other sharp items near edges of tables or surfaces, always put them away from an edge.
- h) Always return knives or other sharp items to their storage area as soon as possible after use.

## 5) **Storage of food.**

Correct storage and stock rotation of food is fundamental to food hygiene. Check food is in date. Any out of date foods should be disposed of in a waste bin.

### a) Perishable foods.

- i) E.g. meats, fish, eggs etc should be kept in the fridge.
- ii) In the fridge keep cooked and raw foods separate and never store raw foods, especially meats, fish etc above cooked foods or foods that are eaten raw e.g. salads, fruit etc.

### b) Fresh Foods.

- i) Vegetables e.g. potatoes, carrots etc, should be kept in a cool, dark, well ventilated place which is vermin proof.
- ii) Always wash fresh fruit, salad items, or raw vegetables, before eating them in their raw state.

### c) Packet foods.

- i) Boxes of cereals, biscuits, tea etc, should be stored in a dry, cool, ventilated and vermin proof area, off the floor.

### d) Canned foods.

- i) Risk of illness from unopened canned foods is very small, but check that they are not badly dented, rusty, 'blown', holed etc.
- ii) Wipe can lids before opening.
- iii) When using a hand held can opener, protect the other hand with a cloth or kitchen towel.
- iv) Once opened food should not be stored in the can but transferred into a plastic, glass etc container and kept refrigerated.

### e) Frozen foods.

- i) Use by date on package.
- ii) Follow instructions on pre-packaged frozen foods.
- iii) Foods you have frozen yourself should be thoroughly de-frosted before cooking or re-heating etc.

- iv) Never re-freeze food once it has been defrosted.
- v) If you are freezing cooked foods make sure they are cool before putting them in the freezer. Put the date of freezing on them.

## **6) Refrigerator & freezer.**

- a) High risk perishable foods should be stored in refrigerated conditions.
- b) Please make sure someone:
  - i) Checks the refrigerator and freezer daily to make sure they are working correctly and there are no signs of water etc.
  - ii) Check that the fridge is defrosted and cleaned before it is first used.
  - iii) When switched on, it should reach an operating temperature of between 1° c and 4° c within a reasonable time.
- c) Freezer should be defrosted and cleaned at regular intervals.
- d) All foods should be covered up when placed in a fridge or freezer.
- e) In the fridge keep cooked and raw foods separate and never store raw foods, especially meats, fish etc above cooked foods or foods that are eaten raw e.g. fruit, salad items etc.

## **7) Surfaces.**

- a) Soiling of surfaces and equipment is unavoidable during any food preparation. However, it is essential that food residue, dirt, grease etc is removed as soon as possible.
- b) Ensure that food debris is not left on tables, cookers, chairs or the floor.
- c) Always clean tables before and after use.
- d) Never use a board or surface for cooked or fresh foods after it has been used for raw foods such as meats, fish etc.
- e) Always clean a board or surface thoroughly, if possible with an anti-bacterial spray or cleaner, after it has had raw food such as meat, fish etc on it.
- f) Whenever possible use separate chopping boards for the preparation of raw foods such as meat, fish etc, and fresh and cooked foods such as salad items, bread, fruit, cooked pies etc.
- g) Ensure the sink and washing bowl is cleaned after use.
- h) Never used dirty or contaminated clothes etc for washing and wiping surfaces or equipment that are used for food.
- i) If possible use an anti-bacterial spray for cleaning surfaces, tables etc.

## 8) Kitchen appliances.

### a) Cookers & ovens:

- i) Keep young children away from the area whilst cookers & ovens are in use, and remember these appliances are still hot for some time after they are switched off.
- ii) Before moving hot pans etc check whereabouts of others, especially children.
- iii) Keep pan handles turned towards the rear of the cooker, use the back rings whenever possible.
- iv) Make sure pan handles are not over other hot rings.
- v) Do not reach over naked flames.
- vi) Do not leave metal utensils e.g. spoons, forks etc in pans with boiling liquids in them.
- vii) For safety & economy ensure cookers and ovens are switched off as soon as you have finished using them.

### b) Microwave:

- i) Children should not use a microwave unless closely supervised.
- ii) Make sure the container to be used is microwavable.
- iii) Ensure no metal items e.g. tin foil, cutlery etc is placed in the microwave.
- iv) Remember microwave heated food has to have a standing time, during this time it will continue to cook, so leave for a period of time before it is eaten.
- v) Food that has been micro-waved will be very hot so use a cloth or oven gloves when taking it out.
- vi) Take care when lifting lids/seal on micro-waved food as the steam can scald.

### c) Kettles, toasters etc:

- i) Keep well away from the edges of surfaces.
- ii) Do not let appliance cables hang over the edge of work tops where they could snag and/or be pulled off.
- iii) Keep electrical appliances and leads away from water, unless they are designed to be used with it e.g. electric kettles.
- iv) Disconnect from power supply socket as soon as finished with.
- v) Do not let children use them unless they are closely supervised by an adult.

**9) Cleaning liquids, sprays, materials etc.**

- a) Keep all cleaning materials locked away out of reach of children.
- b) Select those products which have child-proof closing devices.
- c) Never put cleaning fluids into bottles or containers originally used for food or drink e.g. fizzy drink bottles.
- d) Always check container for signs of leaks, spills or damage before and after use.
- e) Always replace lid, top etc as soon as possible so if its knock over the contents won't be released.
- f) Return containers to secure area as soon as they are finished with.
- g) Keep contaminated clothes etc with the cleaning materials, or dispose them in the waste bin.
- h) Store away from heat, especially pressurised sprays etc.

**10) Fires in the Kitchen area.**

- a) If pan catches fire:
  - i) Never throw water onto or into it!
  - ii) Turn off the heat, but do not attempt to move the pan until it has cooled down.
  - iii) Cover with a lid or a damp cloth.
- b) General:
  - i) Keep flammable materials and substances away from the cooker, oven, toaster etc.
  - ii) Never leave cooking appliances unattended when they are in use.
  - iii) Do not allow clothing, towels etc to be dried in front of a hot oven.
  - iv) Never leave clothes, paper, packaging or combustible materials near to an appliance that gets hot.
  - v) If frying do not have the heat too high.
  - vi) Never fill a chip pan more than one third full of oil.
  - vii) Always dry food before you fry it to reduce the risk of the oil or fat from 'splattering' and possibly catching fire.
  - viii) If the oil or fat starts to smoke switch off the heat immediately. Refer to a) above 'if a pan catches fire'.
  - ix) Keep cooker tops, ovens, toasters etc clean, a build up of food, grease and fat residue can catch fire.

