Whitchurch-on-Thames Parish Council

Health and Safety Policy

Policy Review	
Signed	
Parish Council Minute Reference	
Date ratified	12 November 2026
Date of next review	

1. Scope

This policy applies to all premises and activities for which the Whitchurch-on-Thames Parish Council (WOTPC) is responsible: including facilities, and employees and councillor activity undertaken on behalf of the Parish Council.

It is expected that other Parish groups will have their own Health and Safety policies and proactively manage health and safety risk and therefore will be outside the scope of this policy. These groups include:

- The Youth Group, which is a Church sponsored activity
- Allotments, which have their own management group. WOTPC rent them the land.
- Village Hall, which is managed by its Trustees.

Highways and the river are public land owned by OCC and the Environment Agency respectively, not PC owned land but we will be mindful of associated risk and will seek to mitigate it when and where appropriate.

2. Policy Purpose

This policy sets out the general principles and approach that WOTPC will follow to meet the requirements of Health and Safety legislation: Health and Safety at Work Act (1974), and Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations (1998), for premises and activities for which the Council is responsible. **It is the responsibility of all councillors' and employees of the council to be aware of the following policy statements on Health and Safety and of the organisational arrangements made to implement these policies.**

3. Responsibilities

- WOTPC is responsible for managing safety, based on its Health and Safety policy
- The Clerk is responsible for monitoring and reporting to WOTPC any Health and Safety issues
- Day to day matters of Health and Safety are dealt with by the Clerk acting on behalf of the Council
- All Councillors, employees/contractors and volunteers have a duty to take reasonable care for their own health and safety and that of any persons who may be affected by their acts or omissions.

4. Health and Safety Policy Statement

In accordance with legal requirements WOTPC accepts its duty to provide and maintain both physically and mentally, safe and healthy working conditions for its employees and accepts its duty

of care to other persons such as volunteers and contractors who work on behalf of the Parish Council.

WOTPC will take all reasonable steps to ensure that it complies with the law on Health, Safety and Welfare and any relevant Regulations, Approved Codes of Practice and Guidance. It will provide the resources to ensure the safety of its employees and others affected by its work.

Reasonable steps include, to ensure:

- Information, instruction, training, supervision, equipment and facilities necessary to achieve a safe working environment for employees, members of the public, contractors and volunteers are provided
- Its work, in all its forms, is done in ways so that members of the public are not put at risk. Where necessary the council will obtain specialist technical and Health and Safety advice for any projects or pieces of work that could affect the general public.
- Arrangements are in place for the safe use, handling, storage and disposal of all substances and equipment that may endanger health or welfare
- This policy is brought to the attention of all employees, members of the public, contractors, volunteers and Councillors and is reviewed periodically.

5. Employers' liability insurance

Local councils are required by law to insure against liability for injury or disease to their employees arising out of their employment under the provisions of the Employers' Liability (Compulsory Insurance) Act 1969. A copy of the Parish Council Employers Liability Insurance Certificate is published on the WOT website.

6. Risk Management and Assessments

Proactive health and safety risk management is a priority for WOTPC. Health and Safety is a standing WOTPC monthly agenda item with discussion focused upon risk mitigation.

WOTPC carry out risk assessment of its activities as and when necessary and review these annually.

The Parish Council requires contractors (and venue hirers, where applicable) prior to starting any **major works** on behalf of the council, to supply Risk Assessments, written Method Statements and Safe Systems of Work.

7. Health and Safety Procedures

WOTPC have set up and monitor policies and procedures to reduce any risks that are identified. Health and Safety Procedures are set out in Appendix A.

8. Policy Review

This policy shall be reviewed at least once per council term.

Appendix A: Health and Safety Procedures

1. Health and Safety records management

The Clerk shall keep copies of all risk assessments, method statements and Health and Safety documents and maintain the Equipment Maintenance and Safety checks log**.**

2. Equipment Maintenance and Safety Checks Log

For WOTPC owned equipment that requires regular maintenance and/or safety checks a log is maintained to help ensure that appropriate and timely checks are made and that if appropriate risk mitigated. The log includes:

- Equipment location
- Equipment type
- Check required
- Check frequency required
- Date of last check
- Outcome
- Mitigation of any identified issues.

3. Reporting accidents

All accidents, no matter how small, must be reported in the first instance to the Clerk and details entered in the WOTPC Accident Book. Thereafter, all such accidents will be brought to the attention of the Council.

In the event of a serious injury or dangerous occurrence, the Chairperson, or in his absence the Vice Chairperson should be informed immediately.

4. Health and Safety Risk Register

A Health and Safety Risk Register is maintained, which is reviewed at each regular WOTPC Meeting. The focus of discussion is on proactive risk management and the mitigation of potential risk.