



Bexley Churches Housing Association Health & Safety Policy

1. Introduction

- 1.1 This document sets out the Association's policy for health and safety. The aim of the policy is to protect employees, contractors, consultants and the public, and to meet all the relevant statutory health and safety obligations.
- 1.2 This policy is a measure of the importance the Association places on the active prevention of accidents and ill health and failure to comply will result in disciplinary action being taken, up to and including dismissal.
- 1.3 It will be reviewed annually in order to ensure it includes all the latest health & safety legislation.
- 1.4 It will be supplemented by detailed procedure notes and their implementation and ongoing adherence by staff will be monitored closely through regular staff meetings.
- 1.5 The Chief Executive has overall responsibility for ensuring that the workplace is safe and that health and safety is regarded on an equal footing with the core business.

2. Related Policies

- 2.1 The following policies form part of this health & safety policy:
 - The Lone Worker Policy
 - The Risk Assessment & Management policy
- 2.2 This policy needs to be read in conjunction with
 - The prevailing Employee's Handbook,
 - The Anti social behaviour policy
 - The Equal Opportunities Policy
 - The health & safety procedures.

3. Policy - General

- 3.1 BECHA will, so far as is reasonably practicable, ensure the health and safety at work of all its employees and of all other persons visiting its premises, including contractors, tenants, clients and members of the public, and will take all reasonable steps necessary to minimise any risk.

- 3.2 BECHA will through its professional advisors retained for this purpose, endeavour to keep up-to-date with current requirements on health and safety matters and observe all relevant Statutes, Regulations and Codes of Practice.
- 3.3 The Association will comply with all appropriate directives and good practice issued by the Health and Safety Executive and other appropriate bodies in order to create a safe working environment for all those working with the Association.
- 3.4 The Association aims to provide adequate control of the health and safety risks within the Association, ensuring that staff, contractors, tenants and members of the public are not exposed to undue health and safety risks in the course of their work for BECHA
- 3.5 The Association agrees it will take all reasonable steps to safeguard the health and safety at work of all employees, by ensuring that the policy is implemented and agreed procedures are followed by all staff.
- 3.6 The Association also has a responsibility to ensure the health and safety of others who may be affected by the Association's work activity and reasonable steps will be taken by all concerned to ensure that this duty is observed.

4. Employees

- 4.1 The Health and Safety at Work Act equally places upon employees a statutory duty to ensure the health and safety of their colleagues, themselves and all others who may be affected by their acts or omissions.
- 4.2 Therefore BECHA expects all staff, tenants and contractors to have a duty to take reasonable care of themselves and others in the course of their work.
- 4.3 We will ensure all employees are kept aware of and are mindful of all the health and safety procedures and fire precautions and that they aware they should report any concerns to the Chief Executive.
- 4.4 We will ensure that adequate training is given in the use of all equipment used on the premises with specific reference to health and safety and the provision of First Aid.
- 4.5 We will offer free eye tests to all staff.
- 4.6 We will consult staff on matters affecting their health and safety to ascertain what measures should be taken to increase awareness of health and safety and to ensure that all necessary measures are taken to make this policy effective.
- 4.7 We will provide staff with information, training, support, advice and safe equipment, which we will ensure is properly maintained.
- 4.8 We will endeavour to maintain safe & healthy working conditions for all staff.
- 4.9 We will advise staff that those who fail to comply with this policy or place themselves or others at risk, may be subject to disciplinary action that could lead to dismissal.

5. Fire Risk Assessment

5.1 The Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005 is expected to come into force on 1 October 2006. In order to be compliant with this order, BECHA will:

- Nominate the Chief Executive as the Responsible Person
- Ensure there is an assessment of the risk of, and from, fire undertaken for the office and for any common parts of the properties where we have flats and therefore shared access.
- Ensure these assessments are written down and publicised accordingly.
- Ensure there are appropriate procedures in place that are well publicised, implemented and monitored.

6. Other Risk Assessments and Safety Audits

6.1 The purpose of a risk assessment is to identify what an employer needs to do to enable him to comply with the requirements of the Health and Safety at Work Act 1974 and all relevant subordinate legislation.

6.2 The Association will, therefore, ensure that risk assessments are carried out in respect of all work activities within its undertakings and that:

- all significant findings are recorded in writing;
- all measures, as far as reasonably practicable, are taken to eliminate or minimise the risk;
- all persons appointed are, through training, knowledge or experience, competent to undertake risk assessments.

6.3 The Chief Executive will report the findings of all risk assessments to the Committee at least on an annual basis.

7. Lone Working

7.1 See the Lone Worker policy for detail on this policy

8. Safety against aggressive tenants/clients

8.1 BECHA will not tolerate any aggressive behaviour levelled against any member of staff, a contractor, a tenant or a client.

8.2 If we discover a tenant is being un-necessarily aggressive, we will look to instigate the Anti-Social Behaviour procedure.

8.3 If we find a member of staff is being un-necessarily aggressive, we will consider instigating the Disciplinary Procedure, and if it is a contractor, we will consider ending their contract.

9. Safety at Work

9.1 BECHA will ensure all staff are aware of the latest prevailing safety at work legislation.

9.2 BECHA recognises that it has a duty of care in law to make sure our

employees are not made ill by their work:

9.3 We will carry out risk assessments on a regular basis to ensure that staff are provided with a safe system of work, as well as ensuring no staff work excessive hours or does not take regular breaks, especially from the computer;

9.4 We will ensure that stress is minimised in the workplace.

9.5 If we find that a member of staff is suffering from stress due to bullying and/or harassment, as this type of behaviour is anti-social, we will consider following that, or the disciplinary procedure.

10. Use of mobile phones in vehicles

10.1 The Association's policy on the use of mobile phones in vehicles, whether the vehicle is provided by the Association or is privately owned, is as follows:

10.2 The use of handheld phones is not permitted whilst driving. This includes phones with microphones and earpieces.

10.3 Handheld phones must only be used when the vehicle is properly parked and the engine switched off. This does not include the hard shoulder of the motorway, stationary at traffic lights, in a traffic jam or in slow moving traffic.

10.4 The phone should be switched off or switched to the message service while driving unless a hands free kit that conforms to the Department of Transport is fitted.

10.5 To send and receive text messages, the vehicle should be properly parked as with handheld phones.

10.6 Employees and Managers should avoid calling staff when it is known or suspected that they may be driving.

10.7 The use of handheld mobile phones whilst driving is illegal and subject to 'on the spot' penalty fines. The Association will not accept any liability for any fixed penalty payments or fines as a result of staff being convicted.

10.8 Any staff member who does not comply with this policy will be subject to disciplinary action.

11. Other

11.1 The Association will arrange for regular inspections by suitably qualified engineers of portable electrical equipment, fire appliances/extinguishers and for any remedial work to be carried out to the insurer's satisfaction.

11.2 We will only permit authorised personnel to investigate or undertake any electrical work on the Association's premises.

11.3 Where we will undertake any construction work, other than demolition, that lasts 30 days or more, involves more than 500 person days of work or needs more than four persons per day, we will abide by the Construction (Design and Management) [CDM] Regulations and all contractors will be expected, in accordance with these provisions, to provide their Health & Safety Plan.

12 Review

12.1 The Health and Safety Policy of Bexley Churches Housing Association will be revised or amended as required should there be any change in:

- Legislation
- Organisation
- Arrangements