BIRSE COMMUNITY TRUST
HEALTH AND SAFETY MANUAL

Purpose
The purpose of this Health and Safety Manual is to set out in a structured manner BCT's approach to achieving its health and safety objectives. The aim is to provide all personnel with clear policies and guidance on subjects that have health and safety implications.

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Preface
A major objective of Birse Community Trust (BCT) with regard to activities carried out either in-house or on-site, is to ensure that the health and safety of individuals is safeguarded.
We therefore require-all recipients of this document to read the manual carefully as we wish you to know and understand BCT's Health and Safety goals; and the controlled and structured way in which we can work jointly towards their achievement
This manual will continue to evolve and should you have any comments or require clarification on the contents, we ask you to communicate this to any available Project Manager or Trustee.

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1.0. Introduction
BCT exists 'to promote the common good of the inhabitants of Birse parish and deliver wider public benefits'. As such, the trust undertakes a wide range of projects on behalf of the local community.
BCT is committed to providing a safe and effective working environment for all staff, volunteers, visitors and contractors by the implementation of the contents of this manual.

2.0. BCT's Statutory Duties
The Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999 place a duty both on employers and the self-employed to assess the risks to employees and anyone else (e.g. voluntary workers, clients and customers) who may be affected by the work activities being undertaken. As a result of this assessment, appropriate preventive and protective measures have to be taken to reduce the risks identified if they are not being adequately controlled at present. The commitments listed later describe specific protective and preventive measures that BCT will take in specific circumstances or when undertaking particular activities.

Note; Where any organisation has at least one paid employee, it is considered to be an 'employer' for the purposes of the Health and Safety at Work Act and the regulations made under it.
(Extract from HSE Publication - updated 10/11/05)

3.0. Policy
BCT is committed to a policy of taking all reasonably practicable steps necessary to safeguard the health and safety of all personnel who might be affected by its work. BCT will comply with all relevant statutory obligations including the provision of adequate supervision, information, instruction and training.
This Policy will be expanded to identify:
• The objectives to be achieved;
• The responsibilities of personnel involved in defined activities;
• The arrangements.

4.0. Objectives
BCT requires the full participation of all Trustees and contractors in order that the following principle objectives may be achieved:
• Meet all relevant health and safety legislation as appropriate to individual circumstances;
• Provide information, training and supervision to staff and contractors as required;
• Prevent all incidents and injuries on BCT premises and designated sites;
• Provide a safe and healthy workplace;

• Establish and maintain clear written standards and instructions to control risks to safety and health;
• Jointly consult with staff and contractors on safe working practices;
• Ensure that all incidents are properly investigated and appropriate corrective action is taken.

5.0. Scope
The requirements of this document apply to all activities undertaken in the name of BCT, by Trustees, employees, contractors and volunteers wheresoever undertaken whether on or outwith BCT's owned or managed premises or sites.

6.0. Roles and Responsibilities

Sound health and safety management depends on the commitment, co-operation and effort by all Trustees and contractors. The identification of responsibility and accountability for health and safety within BCT is a key part of both safety management and the development of a safety culture. All personnel, whether with or without managerial positions, have responsibilities to comply with the Health and Safety Objectives.

7.0. Special Cases

7.1. **Lone Workers**
Lone workers are people who work on their own with little or no supervision. Thus in the event of an emergency there is no one to give assistance, or summon help. There is no time limit attached to working alone. It may be for the whole work period, or only for several minutes.
Operating the sawmill is considered high risk. Consequently, the operator must always be accompanied by a responsible adult when producing sawn timber for BCT.

7.2. **Volunteers**

A 'volunteer' is defined as someone, who commits time and energy for the benefit of others, and who does so freely, through personal choice, and without expectation of financial reward, except for the payment of actual out-of-pocket expenses.
In general, the same health and safety standards should be applied to voluntary workers as they would to employees exposed to the same risks. However, if a risk assessment shows that the risks to voluntary workers are different, the preventive and protective measures taken should reflect the different risks.

Note: The Health and Safety Executive considers it good practice for volunteers to be provided with the same level of health and safety protection as that for an employer/employee relationship, irrespective of whether there are strict legal duties.

The following identifies the major roles and responsibilities for Health and Safety within BCT.

Role	Responsibilities
Chairman of Trustees	Approve the Health and Safety Manual and ensure timely issue of current document and any subsequent updates.

	Monitor and evaluate with the Trustees the effectiveness of BCT Health and Safety strategies and plans. Chair Health and Safety Review Meeting(s), endorse agreed changes and update of contents. Accountable to the Trustees for the timely production/update of the Health and Safety Manual. Carry out bi-annual review of BCT legal obligations and health and safety measures; ensure that Members are advised of any implications. Oversee the development and implementation of Health and Safety Policies.
Project Managers	Stop or suspend any activity or prohibit the use of plant and equipment if such action is deemed necessary to prevent injury or ill health. Take whatever steps are deemed appropriate (e.g. risk assessment) in order to take 'reasonably practicable' precautions to safeguard persons involved in the Trusts work. Maintain a written record of decisions made. Receive reports of, and consider accidents, incidents and 'near misses,' ensure that appropriate action is taken in response to any accident, and make recommendations where necessary for the improvement of health and safety to the Trustees. Provide such information, instruction, training and supervision as necessary to ensure the health and safety of all contractors and visitors.
Office Staff	Promote good practice in safety systems including office appliances and first aid facilities. Maintain and distribute the Emergency Contacts Manuals. Ensure that a complete record of reported accidents/incidents is maintained. Maintain an up to date set of Health and Safety Records.
Contractors	Evaluate all significant risks arising from designated activities and put in place appropriate control measures, with relevant retrievable records. Provide and maintain plant, equipment, facilities and a working environment that is safe and without risk to health and safety. Provide information, instruction, training and supervision to all staff and other persons that is relevant and appropriate to the activities. Provide and maintain safe access to all sites and places of work and ensure adequate means of egress.

Lone Workers (Contractors or Staff) and/or Volunteers	Take reasonable care to look after their personal health and safety. Safeguard the health and safety of other people affected by their work.

	Co-operate with BCT's health and safety procedures. Use tools and other equipment properly, in accordance with relevant safety instructions and any training they have been given. Not misuse equipment provided for their health and safety. ***Note:*** *Checks may be carried out, for example, by regular visits* of a *designated person; or* a *system by which workers/volunteers are required to check in at regular intervals.* *Where personal checks are used, the duration between checks will be based on the estimated hazard* of *the job. Periodic telephone contact may be adequate for low risk working alone situations.*

8.0. **Policies and Procedures**

BCT has produced and issued a number of specific policies and procedures in support of the principal requirements for health and safety outlined in this document. They are contained in a separate document entitled 'BCT Policies and Emergency Procedures File' which is distributed to relevant locations.

See **Appendix 1** for a list of contents.

9.0. **Risk Assessment**

Although risk assessment is only a legal requirement if more than five people are employed, BCT believes it is prudent to implement such assessments in all cases, irrespective of the legal requirement.
BCT shall carry out (or cause to be carried out) risk assessment appropriate to individual circumstances and will require contractors to demonstrate their having undertaken this analytical approach to health and safety.
A risk assessment is simply a careful analysis of those things that could potentially harm people in the workplace and also the hazards that the work itself may possess. In so doing, BCT can assess whether enough has been done to eliminate or reduce the individual

hazards as much as possible; or if it is something that needs to be dealt with. The main aim of a risk assessment is to prevent people from being injured or falling ill.
The 'trigger point' for initiating a risk assessment will be that prior to the start of any new work, the relevant Project Manager shall provide answers to the following questions:

1. Have all **Significant Hazards** been identified?
2. Has the **Probability** of their occurrence been defined?
3. Have the **Consequences** of an occurrence been determined?
4. Are appropriate **Controls** in place to manage the risks?

If the answers to the above are known and validated, the information shall be formally recorded.
If the answers to the above are not forthcoming, a risk assessment shall be carried out to determine the risk reduction measures required. For example;

• Implement controls to eliminate or mitigate the risk;
• Monitor the risk;
• Pass the risk on to a 3rd party better qualified by virtue of their expertise.
Projects cannot be completely risk free, but they can be managed to ensure that risk is kept to a tolerable level.
The Project Manager will be required to verify that all significant risks have been identified and are being managed throughout the life of the project.

Note: Account must be taken of any change(s) to a known risk that may occur when persons who are exposed to the same hazards have considerably differing levels of competency. For example:
A person is considered to be competent to operate a Sawmill by virtue of extensive experience gained over many years. (In other words both the **probability** of an incident occurring with attendant **consequences** is low).
A Visitor to the Sawmill is considered to be not competent by virtue of their unfamiliarity with the Sawmill and its associated machinery. (In other words there may be a considerable escalation in the **probability** of an untoward incident occurring with potentially severe **consequences.)**

The following chart provides initial guidance when assessing risks in the workplace.

1. Identify the hazards	For example; flammable equipment, electrical equipment, working from heights, machinery in use in remote areas, uneven ground, etc.
2. Decide who might be harmed by the hazard and in what way they would be hurt.	The people involved in the work and others who might, e.g. visitors, operators, etc.
3. Evaluate the risks arising from the hazards and decide whether existing safety precautions taken (if any) are enough to	Do they meet the BCT and/or legal requirements for safety? If not, actions that need to be taken to make them safe should

reduce or eliminate the hazard; or should more be done. Define the actions to be taken either to eliminate the risks, or to reduce them to 'as low as reasonably practical'.	be identified and prioritised. Do not look at cost as a constraint, many issues can be solved with cost-effective solutions and the cost will be less legal expenses that could result from failing to act.
4. Record the findings: • Any significant hazards • Important conclusions • Develop Procedures to manage risk • Inform relevant personnel	From information provided in Steps 1 to 3
5. Review the assessment from time to time and revise if necessary.	Consider any significant changes to the original situation which could lead to new hazards.

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Many of the hazards identified may be obvious but it is still essential to record them. Although it may be impossible to completely eliminate the threat of a hazard, there should be a concentration on making the risk as small as possible. In other words, control the hazard so that the risk of being harmed is low.

Note: The BCT Policies and Emergency Procedures File contain an HSE Publication entitled 'Five Steps to Risk Assessment' which should be consulted by anyone engaged in carrying out this activity.

BCT will review and update its risk assessment strategy if changes are introduced in a workplace, or if legally required when more than five people are employed.

10.0. Review and Improvement

Assessment of the effectiveness of BCT's health and safety standards is important, particularly as the organisation accommodates changes in scope and operational parameters. In recognition of the need to remain vigilant, a programme of review and improvement is implemented, as follows:

10.1. **Review of incidents**

• Carried out by the appropriate Project Manager.
• Lessons learned and/or changes to current health and safety practice amended as appropriate.
• Affected parties formally notified.

• Agenda item on next Management Team Meeting.
• Trustees notified for information.

10.2. **Management Review**
• Review of incidents as reported by Project Managers.
• Conclusions reached as a result of discussions, to form an agenda item on the next Trustees Board Meeting.
• Recommendations for change to the current system approved/denied.
• Documentation amended, as appropriate.
• The latest version brought to the attention of all personnel.

11.0. **New *and/or* Amended Legislation**
Although what follows may not be directly applicable to BCT's current activities, the Trustees consider it prudent to include relevant highlights within the H & S Manual in order to demonstrate awareness of what might be (or become) 'significant issues'. For example, the vetting scheme is not directly applicable as there is a reasonable assumption that persons accompanying any visiting children or vulnerable adults will have already been 'vetted'.

11.1. **Corporate Manslaughter**
On 6 April 2008 the Corporate Manslaughter and Corporate Homicide Act 2007 (the Act) came into force. It created a new criminal offence of 'corporate manslaughter' ('corporate homicide' in Scotland) for *incorporated organisations* causing death through gross negligence. This significant development in the law should prompt charities to consider whether they are up to date with the latest health and safety guidance and check current best practice is being followed.

Note: *Incorporated organisation,* also known as A Company. Defined as an organisation that is registered as a company with Companies House. It may have limited liability by guarantee, or shares. It must comply with Company Law and make financial returns to Companies House.
It may or may not also be registered as a charity. If it is then it must comply with both Charity Law and Company Law.

11.2. Vetting Scheme
The new Vetting and Barring Scheme, involving the Independent Safeguarding Authority (ISA), has a major impact on the recruitment and monitoring practices of people working or volunteering with children.
Created under the Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006, the new Vetting and Barring Scheme is replacing the current List 99, Protection of Children Act (PoCA), Protection of Vulnerable Adults
(PoVA) and Disqualification Orders regimes. The ISA decides who is unsuitable to work or

volunteer with vulnerable groups. It bases its decisions on pulling together information held by various agencies, government departments and the Criminal Records Bureau (CRB).
Once the scheme is fully implemented, it will be illegal to hire someone in regulated activity who is not registered, and has therefore not been checked by, the ISA. The new scheme will cover employees and volunteers in the education, care and health industries.
A separate but aligned scheme is being introduced in Scotland and anyone barred in any part of the UK will also be barred from working with children and vulnerable adults anywhere else.
The Scottish scheme places the onus on the employer or organisation to make sure vetting is carried out - individuals will not be held responsible.

12.0. Health & Safety Supporting Documents

12.1. Introduction

Health and Safety legislation is applicable to all businesses, regardless of the nature or type of business. Therefore, voluntary organisations and charities all have the same health and safety duties as any private sector employer in the same circumstances.

12.2. Application

BCT's Trustees, being mindful of the above, have developed a suite of supporting documents taken from official publications issued at various times by the Health & Safety Executive. They are designed to provide practical guidance to personnel involved in activities on behalf of BCT.

12.3. Implementation

The documents (as referred to in Section 8 - 'Policies and Procedures') are contained within a separate file and have been tailored to ensure, as far as possible, that the arrangements and procedures detailed therein are suitable and sufficient for their intended application.
It is the duty of all those involved to act responsibly, and to do everything they can to prevent injury to themselves and fellow workers. Although the implementation of H&S policy and procedures is a management responsibility, it will rely heavily on the awareness and co-operation of those who actually take the risks.

13.0. Appendix 1
BCT Policies and Emergency Procedures
1) Accident and Incident reporting Procedure (Doe No: BC-HS 002)
2) Guidance on Accident Investigation and Reporting (Doc No: BCT-HS 003)
3) Five Steps to Risk Assessment (HSE Publication)
4) RIDDOR (Reporting of Injuries, Diseases and Dangerous Occurrences Regulations 1995.
5) The Control of Substances Hazardous to Health Regulations 2002 (COSHH)
6) First Aid
7) Accident Report Book
8) General Guidelines
• Housekeeping
• Manual Handling
• Display Screen Equipment and Workstations
• Electrical Equipment Maintenance and Checks
• Fire Procedure

The following suite of H&S documents are retained by BCT in a separate manual and are designed to be used solely as a library of reference documents. The objective is to enable personnel engaged on BCT business to consult, on (say) the occasion of a major change in operations, in order to assure themselves that BCT continues to comply with legislative requirements.

Risk Management - Policy & Risk Assessment.
Manual Handling Operations - Policy & Assessment Checklist.
Personal Protective Equipment - Policy
Noise Hearing Conservation - Policy & Conservation Programme / Records .
Electricity at Work - Policy
Inspection, Testing & Maintenance of Electrical Equipment - Policy
COSHH -Policy & Risk Assessment Checklist
Fire Safety - Preliminary Check List
Fire Safety - Small Premises Management Plan
Fire Safety - Fire Risk Assessment Process
Fire Safety - Fire Safety Log Book
Dust (including toxic woods) Regulation.

The documents referred to above may be amended, approved and re-issued from time to time.