

**Brecknock Society and Museum Friends (BS&MF)**  
**Cymdeithas Brycheiniog a Chyfeillion yr Amgueddfa**  
(Charity Registration No. 518041 Rhif Cofrestru Elusenol)

## **Health and Safety Policy**

**Originator:** Nigel Clubb

**Policy Status:** Supplied to all BSMF Member, Volunteers and all those who act on behalf of BS&MF in any capacity. Adherence to it is deemed to be a condition of Membership of the Society or acting on its behalf.

**Approved by BS&MF Executive Council:** September 2019

**Last Reviewed:** May 2023; revised October 2023

**Review due:** May 2025

(BS&MF is committed to reviewing this policy every three years or sooner if required by changes in legislation or within the organisation and in the light of experience.)

**Current BS&MF Chair:** Elizabeth Siberry

**Internal Health and Safety Contacts:**

- **Events:** Elaine Starling and Libby Rees
- **Executive Council Meeting Venues:** Council Secretary
- **General advice:** Nigel Clubb
- **Reports on event risks higher than Low –** The Chair
- **Reports on Incidents –** The Chair

## **BRECKNOCK SOCIETY AND MUSEUM FRIENDS (BS&MF)**

### **HEALTH AND SAFETY POLICY**

#### **1. Introduction**

1.1. The Brecknock Society and Museum Friends is a volunteer-based charity. In health and safety terms, volunteers should be regarded in exactly the same ways as employees would be. The Society seeks to take reasonable measures to prevent accidents and cases of ill health by managing health and safety risks both for its volunteers, (which includes members of the Executive Council and Officers, those who manage the Society's activities and all other volunteers), and for the public participating in the Society's activities, for example, at meetings, lectures, events, site visits and projects, whether they are members of the Society or not.

1.2. Volunteers are likely to travel on Society business by driving a motorcar or other vehicle or being driven by a third party, and may on occasions handle heavy or awkward loads such as furniture, exhibition boards and exhibits and boxes of publications. Volunteers may also be carrying out work on visual display units. All of these activities have health and safety implications which require the consideration of risk.

1.3. The Society aims to make health and safety management an integral element of its culture. To help meet this aim, the Chair and Executive Council of the Society have adopted this *Health and Safety Policy*, which they expect to see adopted by all who carry out work for the Society at all levels. The objective of the Policy is to ensure that those managing activities are able to identify risk and ensure that volunteers and the general public have as safe an experience as possible.

1.4. While the Society aims to take reasonable steps to ensure the health and safety of its volunteers and of the general public, individuals also have responsibility for considering their own health and safety and to behave responsibly and reasonably in the light of potential risks.

1.5. We should be aware that a claim against the Society would be difficult to defend and insurance policies could be invalidated if it could be demonstrated in a particular case that the Society had failed to take reasonable steps to assess and manage health and safety risks.

1.6. This *Health and Safety Policy* should be considered in association with the *Society's Safeguarding Children and Vulnerable Persons Policy*.

1.7. In communicating this Policy, the Society understands that the management of health and safety should be proportionate to the risks faced by an organisation, which in the case of the Society should normally be of low risk.

## **2.Activities on properties owned by other parties**

2.1. The Society does not own any land or buildings so it is a given that all its activities will take place on land or in buildings owned by others who are likely to have primary health and safety responsibilities for people on their property, including volunteers themselves when working on the Society's business at home. However, this does not absolve the Society completely from considering and managing risk for the activities it organises.

## **3.The Society's Health and Safety Policy**

3.1. The Society's Health and Safety Policy consists of the following:

- This *Health and Safety Policy* document will be available publicly on the Society's website. BS&MF members to be informed that all the Society's policies are available on the Society's website, and as hard copy on request from the Council Secretary. Members to be advised of the importance of familiarising themselves with the policies, in particular the Health & Safety policy if they are involved in supporting the Society by volunteering at its events and activities. Any Member organising a BS&MF event or activity with volunteers, particularly where physical events are concerned, to ensure the volunteers involved have confirmed they have read and understood the Society's Health & Safety Policy.

- **Named** individuals will be appointed with responsibility for health and safety policy for each of the Society's main areas of activity, for example, meetings, events, site visits and projects, and for oversight of the Policy as a whole.

- The health and safety implications of all activities should be considered and **formal and documented risk assessments should be completed for any activity which has risks higher than low risk** for submission to the Chair of the Society for consideration in advance of the activity and to determine whether or not the activity should proceed in the light of proposed mitigation of risk. (See the Appendix of this Policy for a risk assessment template.)

- If an incident should occur, the Chair of the Society will appoint an individual to carry out an inquiry into the circumstances and reasons for it, the lessons learned and future actions to be taken. The results will be submitted to the Executive Council.

- Where appropriate, consideration should be given to providing managers of the Society's activities with appropriate training in health and safety assessment and management.
- The Policy will be reviewed regularly by the Executive Council and revised as necessary.

#### 4. Risks to be considered for all activities

4.1. Any venue proposed for a Society activity should be visited in advance by a representative of the Society. Risks to be considered include the capacity of the accommodation to handle the expected number of attendees together with access routes, exits and hazards. Fire risk should always be considered, including the presence of adequate fire precautions and protocols. Hazards can be very wide-ranging, including tripping, colliding with glass and those arising from chemicals and catering and electrical equipment. Items such as exhibition exhibits and boards may fall on individuals, causing injury or discomfort.

4.2. Organising an event may involve lifting heavy or awkward loads such as furniture, exhibition boards and exhibits and boxes of publications. The need for hazardous manual handling should be avoided wherever reasonably possible, but if pursued, this should only be in the light of documented risk assessment and mitigation.

4.3. On its website, the Health and Safety Executive (HSE) has a guide to good handling techniques for lifting

### **5. Special risks of site visits to historic properties and landscapes**

5.1. The majority of accidents on historic sites and properties are caused by tripping over surfaces such as uneven floors and steps, carpets and rugs. Risks are inherent in stairs and/or ladders, rood lofts in churches and galleries, and in accessing internal roof spaces and exterior walkways. The areas around historic properties may have risks arising from uneven ground, for example banks and ditches in the case of castles, or burial grounds in the case of churches, where tombs and headstones may be unstable. Particular care should be taken when photographing or recording buildings or structures, particularly when stepping back.

5.2. Underground vaults may have high humidity and poor ventilation, which encourages the growth of moulds, with risks of toxicity, especially in confined spaces.

5.3. Animals may create risks in certain circumstances, for example droppings from rodents, bats and birds.

5.4. There may be temporary risks arising from parts of a building or monument, which are dangerous because of structural failure or are undergoing conservation work. Hazards to look out for include scaffolding and chemicals used for conservation purposes.

5.5. Risks can arise from the lone working of volunteers, especially in remote locations, where they may be engaged on work for the Society. They should ensure that someone is aware of where they are working. Mobile phones can help to maintain contact in case of illness or accident, although in the historic county of Breconshire phone signals are often not available and volunteers should consider whether to take another person along.

## **6. Travelling to sites by car or other vehicles**

6.1 Driving on public roads is perhaps one of the most hazardous activities likely to be undertaken by volunteers. Accidents can also occur by travelling on private roads or private land, for example to reach a building from a private road.

6.2. Volunteers driving on Society business should have comprehensive car insurance. Driving directly between home and an event or site is normally covered as most insurance companies will count volunteering within the 'Domestic, social and pleasure' category, although some may regard it as 'Business' use. Volunteers should check this with their insurance company, including covering situations where a third-party is driving the volunteer or where project materials are being transported.

## **7. Use of Visual Display Units/Computer screens**

7.1 Everyone who regularly spends extended periods of time (of one hour or more) working on a visual display unit (VDU), also known as Display Screen Equipment (DSE), faces risks such as fatigue, including visual fatigue, and stresses to muscles and limbs brought about by poor posture. Work on display screen equipment should be periodically interrupted by such breaks or changes of activity to reduce risk.

7.2. The Health and Safety Executive (HSE) has a guide on its website to working with display screen equipment.

## **8. First aid provision**

8.1 The availability of access to a first-aid kit should be considered for all activities. Those who are known health risks should assess the risks of fieldwork and take mitigating actions, including carrying appropriate medication and equipment.

## **9. Training**

9.1. The Executive Council will regularly review whether there are training needs to be met in health and safety or in specific areas such as risk assessment, working with visual display units or manual handling

**Nigel Clubb**

**August 2019**

*Appendix – Risk Assessment Template*

**APPENDIX - RISK ASSESSMENT TEMPLATE**

<b>Name and Location of Project/Venue</b>	
<b>Outline of activity</b>	
<b>Risks/hazards and level of risk (High, Medium Low)</b>	<b>1. 2. 3. etc</b>
<b>Justification for the activity</b>	
<b>Who might be exposed to the risks?</b>	<b>1. 2. 3. etc</b>
<b>Existing mitigation measures</b>	<b>1. 2. 3. etc</b>

<b>Additional actions required</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1.</li> <li>2.</li> <li>3.</li> </ol>	<b>By</b>

<b>Form completed by Activity Manager</b>	..... <b>Name</b>	..... <b>Signature</b>	..... <b>Date</b>
---	----------------------	---------------------------	----------------------

<b>Signed by Chair/representative of Executive Council</b>	..... <b>Name</b>	..... <b>Signature</b>	..... <b>Date</b>
--	----------------------	---------------------------	----------------------

<b>Subsequent Actions Completed</b>	<b>Dates</b>	<b>Satisfactory?</b>	<b>Activity reviewed and approved?</b>	<b>By?</b>



