

VOLUNTARY ACTION – LEEDS

HEALTH AND SAFETY POLICY

This document should be read in conjunction with its appendix, which identifies current postholders.

1. Statement of Policy

This document is the Health & Safety Policy of Voluntary Action – Leeds.

It is the policy of Voluntary Action – Leeds to provide healthy and safe working conditions, equipment and systems of work for all our employees, volunteers and members, and to provide them with such training and information as is necessary. We also accept responsibility for the health and safety of other people whilst on our premises, i.e. Stringer House, 34 Lupton Street, Hunslet, Leeds, LS10 2QW. With regard to agreements between VA-L Properties Ltd and tenants of Stringer House, it is the responsibility of the tenant organisation to provide a Health & Safety Policy for its employees, and this shall be stated in all tenancy agreements.

This policy will be updated to reflect changes both in Voluntary Action – Leeds and in the relevant legislation. It will be formally reviewed annually.

All individuals at every level in Voluntary Action – Leeds have some level of responsibility for ensuring that this Policy is carried out, and breaches of this Policy will be regarded as a disciplinary offence. Training in basic health and safety will be provided for all VA-L staff as part of their induction process and as changes are made to this Policy, and more intensive training will be provided for those staff with named responsibility under this Policy,

Overall responsibility for this policy is vested in:

Position: General Manager (see appendix)

Date: 5th May 2000 (policy adopted)
20th September 2005 (this version)

2. **The Organisation of Health & Safety**

Person with Overall Responsibility

The person with overall responsibility for health and safety in Voluntary Action – Leeds is the General Manager.

Registration of Activity

The activity of Voluntary Action – Leeds is registered with the Environmental Health Service Department of Leeds City Council (form OSR1).

Fire Precautions

The person with overall responsibility for fire precautions in Voluntary Action – Leeds is the General Manager. The following tasks have been delegated to the posts named (see appendix A) :-

- (a) fire risk assessment (annual) and contact with the Fire Brigade (as required)
Responsible person: Caretaker.
- (b) obtaining & organising the maintenance & testing of fire equipment (annual), and keeping records thereof
Responsible person: Caretaker.
- (c) completing the fire drill procedure
Responsible person: Caretaker.
- (d) compiling fire notices
Responsible person: Caretaker.
- (e) preparing the emergency evacuation procedure (reviewed after each evacuation)
Responsible person: Caretaker.
- (f) responsibility for the fire register (reviewed before and after each evacuation)
responsible person: Management Team.
- (g) ensuring the regularity (six monthly) of fire drills
Responsible person: Caretaker.

Records relating to all of the above are maintained by the Caretaker and can be found in the file labelled "Fire" by the Caretaker's desk.

Insurance

The person responsible for ensuring that the activity of Voluntary Action – Leeds is insured is the General Manager.

First Aid

The Appointed Persons who have responsibility for ensuring the availability of first aid facilities and supplies are listed in appendix A; however, VA-L is committed on an ongoing basis to training other staff in first aid cover.

The first aid kit is located in the kitchen, under the sink, and the Appointed Persons are responsible for ensuring that the accident book and kit are up-to-date (checklist for kit is in box) and that accident reports are filed via the Administration Manager. Accident trends are reviewed by the Health & Safety Working Group.

Recording and Reporting of Accidents and Incidents

All staff members are responsible for ensuring that accidents and incidents are reported and recorded; the General Manager is responsible for ensuring that this happens. The person responsible for ensuring the investigation, recording and reporting of accidents and incidents (including violence) is the General Manager. All staff are expected to familiarise themselves with the format of the Accident Book and to have a basic understanding of RIDDOR requirements, i.e.: RIDDOR is the Reporting of Injuries, Diseases and Dangerous Occurrences Regulations 1995. The following must be reported to Environmental Health when associated with a work activity:

- (a) fatal accidents (to employees and non-employees)
- (b) major injuries (to employees) – e.g. broken limbs, any loss of sight, electric shock causing loss of consciousness, etc.
- (c) dangerous occurrences (explosions, etc, even if no injuries)
- (d) accidents causing more than 3 days incapacity for work
- (e) certain work-related diseases
- (f) certain matters relating to the safe supply of gas
- (g) injuries requiring immediate hospital treatment (to non-employees)

The definition of accident includes acts of violence against employees at work. In the case of a, b and c, the incident must be reported either by telephone or online immediately, and the follow-up paperwork must be submitted within 10 days. If the General Manager is not available, another manager or worker may make the initial report.

It is VA-L's policy to record near misses as well as actual accidents and incidents. A near miss is defined as an incident, which may have risk assessment implications and/or may have caused injury had it happened – for example, a slip or trip, etc. Near misses should be recorded by the staff member involved or witnessing the incident in the near misses book kept with the Accident Book (available from the Administration Manager). All staff involved in risk assessments must check the near misses book to help to identify any potential problems or patterns of incidents.

3. **Health & Safety Arrangements and Procedures**

Fire Safety

- (a) Local Fire Brigade: Contact Person: The Sub Officer Tel. Number 2717296.
- (b) Fire Equipment:
The details of the maintenance company, the actual equipment (including location, service records, etc) can be found in the file labelled "Fire" by the Caretaker's desk.
- (c) Fire Certificate: VA-L's fire certificate can also be found in the "Fire" file.
- (d) Fire Procedure: please see attached copy.
- (e) Location of Fire Exits, Escape Routes, Extinguishers, Assembly Point, + Map: please see attached copy.

Insurance

- (a) Employer's Liability and Public Liability:
VA-L's current insurance certificates are displayed on the "Statutory Information" noticeboard in the entrance hall.
- (b) Other Insurance: no other insurances are currently held.
- (c) Motor Insurance: Staff are hereby notified that Voluntary Action – Leeds does not hold insurance to cover staff use of any motor vehicle for any work-related purpose. There is no

requirement to use a private vehicle. Should staff wish to use their cars for any work-related purposes, they do so at their own cost and risk and they are required to complete and sign the attached driver's declaration form (appendix B) and to provide copies of the documentation specified thereon. VA-L will be unable to process any staff mileage claims, until the required information has been completed. Voluntary Action – Leeds accepts no liability for any incidents, accidents or injuries, which may occur to staff using their cars for work-related business or to third parties as a result of staff using their cars for work-related business. Staff should also note that they use the carpark at Stringer House at their own risk, and Voluntary Action – Leeds accepts no liability for any incidents which may occur.

Mobile Phones and Driving

VA-L is committed to reducing the risks faced by staff at all times. Where staff have chosen to use their cars for work-related travel (see preceding paragraph) VA-L has a strict policy regarding use of mobile phones and driving: staff may not make or receive ANY calls (work or personal) on a mobile phone (whether hand-held or hands-free) while driving. Staff are encouraged to be contactable while on VA-L business but this means making sure that the phone's message facility is working and that messages are checked and calls returned once you are safely parked. In signing this Policy and the driver's declaration you signify agreement to abide by this rule, and breaches will be treated as a disciplinary matter because they put at risk your own health and safety and that of others as well as VA-L's liability.

Legislation

Voluntary Action – Leeds recognises and welcomes its responsibility under the various legislation, which is or may be applicable to its operation in terms of health and safety.

Risk Assessment

Voluntary Action – Leeds carries out a range of risk assessments – e.g. Health & Safety, COSHH, Fire, Violence, First Aid, Young Persons. Full information on these including responsible persons,

dates of assessments, findings/action, etc, can be found in the file labelled "Risk Assessment" by the Caretaker's desk.

4. **Staff Safety Rules**

- Any employee who finds any hazard in their place of work or elsewhere in Stringer House should report it to the General Manager or to a member of the Health & Safety Working Group (see appendix) immediately.
- It is the responsibility of each worker to ensure that work areas are kept tidy and that doorways and gangways are kept clear for safe entry and egress.
- Employees must treat electric points and electrical equipment with respect: sockets must not be overloaded, wires must not trail across walkways, equipment must be switched off when not in use, and any perceived problem must be reported immediately, as above, and the equipment must not be used until the problem has been addressed by the responsible person.
- Staff must not lift or handle any item, which may involve risk of injury. Trolleys or wheels must be used to move heavy or awkward items.
- ALL accidents and incidents MUST be reported and recorded in the accident book by staff and/or witnesses involved.
- In the event of an accident resulting in minor injury or illness, one of the first-aiders MUST be called. In the event of a more serious injury or illness, an ambulance should be called immediately.
- Any staff member who brings onto the premises any cleaning or other potentially hazardous materials must ensure that a COSHH assessment is carried out before the materials may be stored or used. Any employee using hazardous or potentially hazardous materials (e.g. cleaning fluids, toner) should ensure that the materials are not left unguarded and that they have received training/advice in the proper handling of such materials; it is VA-L's responsibility to ensure that such training/advice is provided. VA-L will endeavour to eliminate or control the use of harmful substances by purchasing items ready-diluted, less harmful alternatives, etc.

- Staff who use DSE regularly as part of their work for VA-L must ensure that they take regular breaks from screen-work. It is VA-L's responsibility to assess and control the risks associated with such work, and employees must report to their line managers or to a member of the Health & Safety Working Group any concerns about such work relating to eyesight, physical problems or mental stress, and must comply with any remedies implemented by VA-L.
- Staff MUST ensure that they follow signing-in and signing-out procedures at all times, and that their visitors do the same. Staff must ensure that their whereabouts during working hours is known to VA-L, and that they are contactable in an emergency.
- Voluntary Action – Leeds takes seriously the potential threat to the health of its staff which may be caused by work-related stress. Any staff member who feels that such stress is causing or is likely to cause them ill-health MUST report this to their line manager or to any VA-L manager as soon as reasonably practical.
- Any employee who is pregnant, or any employee who has recently given birth or is breastfeeding (and any employee who receives a visitor in these categories) must take extra care with regard to exposure to dangerous substances, processes or working conditions (including DSE). It is VA-L's responsibility to ensure that these risks are assessed and controlled, and the employee's responsibility to ensure that their line manager is made aware of their situation. VA-L will provide alternative working conditions OR offer protection in such cases.
- Voluntary Action – Leeds takes seriously the possibility of violence against staff; any employee who feels threatened or is threatened or who may be entering a potentially risky situation MUST report this to their line manager or to any VA-L manager immediately, and should ensure that they are accompanied by a colleague and have received training/advice if there is any likelihood of the situation recurring; it is VA-L's responsibility to provide such training/advice where necessary. In this context, all staff must read and abide by the document entitled "Personal Safety Guidelines" in the Staff Handbook.
- Staff who choose to use their own transport for work-related purposes must complete the required documentation and

abide by the rules laid out on page 5 of this Policy, including the rules regarding use of mobile phones while driving.

- Staff must abide by fire drill procedures and ensure that their visitors do likewise.
- Staff are encouraged to involve themselves in VA-L's health and safety activities and should consult any member of the Health & Safety Working Group or any VA-L manager should they wish to be more actively involved.
- Smoking is not permitted in Stringer House.
- Adherence to the Health & Safety Policy of Voluntary Action – Leeds is a condition of employment for all VA-L staff, and staff MUST familiarise themselves with the Policy and sign their contracts accordingly. Staff should note that other VA-L policies (e.g. Equal Opportunities, Working Time as laid out in the Statement of Written Employment Particulars, Personal Safety Guidelines, Capability Policy, etc) are intended to be complementary to this Health & Safety Policy and should be viewed as such.

*This Policy was formally adopted by the Trustee Board of Voluntary Action – Leeds on 20th June 2000.
Updated September 2005.*

**APPENDIX A: CURRENT POSTHOLDERS REFERRED TO IN
HEALTH & SAFETY POLICY OF VOLUNTARY ACTION – LEEDS AS
AT 20.09.05**

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|----|--|--|
| 1. | GENERAL MANAGER | Rhona Davidson. |
| 2. | CARETAKER | Clive Newton |
| 3. | MANAGEMENT TEAM | Rhona Davidson
Richard Jackson |
| 4. | APPOINTED PERSONS, FIRST AID | Allan Pearson;
Emily Wragg
<i>(others to be confirmed)</i> |
| 5. | HEALTH & SAFETY WORKING GROUP | Richard Jackson
Clive Newton
Maxine Woods |

HEALTH & SAFETY POLICY: APPENDIX B:
DRIVER'S DECLARATION

Declaration in connection with use of a private vehicle on work-related business (to be renewed if vehicle or insurance company details change).

Name of employee:

Vehicle registration, make and model:

1. I have read and accept the conditions attached to use of a motor vehicle for work related business as laid out in the VA-L Health & Safety Policy. I understand that I am not required to use my car for work but have chosen to do so.
2. I confirm that I hold a current driving licence appropriate to the vehicle being used.
3. I confirm that the vehicle has a current MOT certificate if over 3 years old.
4. I confirm that my motor insurance policy covers the following:
 - bodily injury or death of third parties, without limit
 - bodily injury or death of any passenger, without limit
 - damage to the property of third parties
 - permission to use the vehicle for business purposes.

I have attached a copy of the insurance policy schedule to this form.

(NB: If the insurance policy covering the vehicle is not in your name, it is essential that it specifically covers your use of the vehicle for business purposes.

5. If I use the car to transport VA-L equipment I will check that this is permissible under the terms of my insurance but I do not have to cover loss or damage to VA-L property.

6. I understand that VA-L does not accept any responsibility for any risks not covered by my insurance policy or any liability for an accident or incident while the vehicle is used for work-related purposes, and that it is my responsibility to ensure that the conditions of my insurance policy are fulfilled.
7. I understand and accept VA-L's rules (as laid out in the Health & Safety Policy) on the use of mobile phones while driving.

Signed:

Position:

Date:

THIS FORM MUST BE SIGNED BY A LINE MANAGER WHO HAS CHECKED THE INSURANCE DOCUMENT AND WHO WILL ADVISE THE FINANCE DEPARTMENT THAT MILEAGE CLAIMS FOR THIS EMPLOYEE MAY NOW BE PROCESSED.

Line manager's signature:

Date Finance Dept. informed: