

# Scottish Poetry Library

## HEALTH AND SAFETY POLICY

### **1. Introduction and Health and Safety Policy Statement**

- 1.1 The Scottish Poetry Library is committed to safeguarding the health, safety and welfare at work of its directly employed staff, volunteers and any temporary staff that work on its premises from time-to-time. The Library understands its obligations under the Health and Safety at Work Act 1974, and wishes to meet them through the operation of clear, effective, and well-managed health and safety arrangements.
- 1.2 As such the Library's general health and safety policy is to provide adequate control of any health and safety risks arising from work activities, by conducting and acting on the results of risk assessment.
- 1.3 The Library will also consult with staff and volunteers on matters affecting their health and safety, and will provide and maintain safe equipment for staff to conduct their day-to-day activities.
- 1.4 The Library will ensure that staff are able to practice moving and handling safely, and will provide information, instruction and supervision for staff and volunteers that will enable them to undertake safely any other work activity that carries risk.
- 1.5 The Library will take action to prevent accidents and cases of work-related ill health, and will seek to provide and maintain safe and healthy working conditions at all times.
- 1.6 Finally the Library will monitor, review and amend this policy at regular intervals, and will assign clear duties and responsibilities for the management of health and safety to staff and volunteers.

### **2. Responsibility for the Management of Health and Safety At Work**

- 2.1 Overall and final responsibility for health and safety at work rests with the Library Director.
- 2.2 Day-to-day responsibility for ensuring this policy is put into practice is delegated to the Deputy Director.
- 2.3 All staff and volunteers are responsible for co-operating with the Director and Deputy Director on health and safety matters
- 2.4 All staff and volunteers are responsible for not interfering with anything provided to safeguard their health and safety (e.g. fire extinguishers, fire doors) and taking reasonable care of their own health and safety at all times.

2.5 All staff and volunteers are responsible for reporting any health and safety concerns to the Deputy Director or Director, and for reading and understanding this Policy

### **3. Assessment of Health and Safety Risks Arising from Work Activities**

- 3.1 The Library will operate a risk assessment approach to the management of all potential health and safety risks. These will be undertaken by the Deputy Director, who will be trained for the purpose.
- 3.2 The findings of the risk assessments will be reported to the Director, who will also approve actions to remove or control risks identified.
- 3.3 The Deputy Director will be responsible for ensuring the action required is implemented and that all staff are informed
- 3.4 The Director will check that the implemented actions have removed/reduced the risks.
- 3.5 Risk assessments will be reviewed annually or as and when the work activity changes

### **4. Consultation and Communication with Staff**

- 4.1 Consultation and communication with staff and volunteers about health and safety at work issues will be provided through existing communication channels including at staff meetings (by assigning agenda items, as necessary), through regular e-mail updates and day-to-day discussion, as necessary.

### **5. Information, Instruction and Supervision**

- 5.1 A Health and Safety Law poster is displayed in the office area behind the front desk and in the office area downstairs.
- 5.2 Health and safety advice is available from the Health and Safety Executive (address on H & S poster).
- 5.3 Supervision of young workers/trainees will be arranged/undertaken/monitored by the appropriate person i.e. the Librarian or Front of House Supervisor.
- 5.4 The Deputy Director is responsible for ensuring that staff working at locations under the control of other employers, are given relevant health and safety information.

### **6. Training to Ensure Competency**

- 6.1 Induction training which covers the requirements of this policy and identified health and safety risks and actions arising from risk assessment will be provided for all new staff and volunteers by the Deputy Director.

6.2 Job-specific training will be provided by the appropriate person, according to the nature of the task.

## **7. Accidents, First Aid and Action to Prevent Work-related Ill-Health**

7.1 Health surveillance is required for employees lifting heavy loads and working with VDU's and will be arranged by the Deputy Director.

7.2 First aid boxes are kept in the office area and in the kitchen.

7.3 All accidents and cases of work-related ill health are to be recorded in the accident book. The book is kept with the office area first aid box.

7.4 St John's Ambulance accredited Appointed Persons will be trained and their names made known to staff and volunteers.

7.5 All accidents will be investigated, by the Director or Deputy Director, who will also be responsible for taking action to minimise the risk of recurrence.

## **8. Emergency Procedures – Fire and Evacuation**

8.1 The Deputy Director is responsible for ensuring the fire risk assessment is undertaken and implemented. The Administrator will make daily checks to ensure that the escape routes are clear, undertaken by the Librarian in the Deputy Director's absence.

8.2 Fire extinguishers are maintained and checked by Forth Fire Protection (arranged by the Deputy Director or Director annually)

8.3 Alarms are tested by all members of staff in rotation every three weeks.

8.4 Emergency evacuation will be tested every year.

## **9. Policy Monitoring and Review**

9.1 The Director has overall responsibility for implementing, monitoring and reviewing this Policy. It will be reviewed formally at least every three years, to reflect organisational changes, best practice, operational experience and legislative updates, and in order to maintain its effectiveness.

Author: Director, Scottish Poetry Library (based on previous draft dated 2009)

Date: October 2016

Review Date: October 2019

## **'Risk Assessment as revised in July 2009'**

### **1. In the building**

#### Storage of metal bookends on top of bookshelf fixtures.

Staff have been reminded of this incident and new members of staff will be warned against this during induction training.

- The Librarian will be asked about using the lighter plastic bookends.

*Action: Actioned*

### **2. The Basement**

This area constitutes a serious risk as regards health and safety due to the cluttered floorspace, the storage of unused paper and cardboard products and the occasional occurrence of trailing wires. The cluttered floorspace and trailing wires could cause trips or constitute obstacles in an emergency. This is especially dangerous as two fire escape routes are situated in this area. The storage of large quantities of paper/cardboard objects is a fire-risk, especially when placed near electrical wiring and installations.

*Those at risk: visitors, staff, outside maintenance consultants, cleaners.*

- It has been proposed that staff devote a day together tidying up and disposing of unwanted objects/material.
- The storage of empty cardboard boxes and paper products must be limited in future.
- Staff have been reminded about the dangers of trailing wires and new staff members are warned of them during induction training.
- Staff will be encouraged to store material/objects on the shelves and not to place them on the floor around the shelves. If this is not possible somewhere safer can be negotiated.
- Staff have been reminded that rubbish be disposed of via the bags provided and not to be placed on the floor near the rubbish bags.
- The Director and the Administrator have agreed to store paint and other flammable material in the garage – similarly two bicycles which are being stored in the basement.
- Staff are aware of the fire-escape routes and the Administrator ensures that these are clear at all times through daily inspection. The Librarian has been asked to do this in the absence of the Administrator.

*Action: Staff regularly tidy up the basement. Unwanted items/materials are disposed of, floor spaces cleared, and shelves rationalised.*

#### Metal piping near fire exit in plant room.

It has been noted that a large section of piping hangs low in the corner near the fire exit. This impedes inspection of the heating system and could cause difficulties during an emergency exit. There is a potential for head injuries.

*Those at risk: staff, visitors and outside maintenance consultants.*

- A warning sign should be placed on the piping.

*Action: a sign is now in place.*

### **Current issues**

This Risk Assessment has been circulated and discussed at a staff meeting, as was the Health & Safety Policy

**Aly Barr, Deputy Director/Head of Operations**