POLICY

•	**Policy Name**	Core Health & Safety Policy
•	**Policy Reference**	H&SP001
•	**Date of Publication**	13.12.23
•	**Review Date**	30.06.24
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•	**Date Signed**	25th June 2024

Core Health & Safety Policy

Scope

This policy applies to all colleagues based in the UK and Northern Ireland, including secondees, agency workers, volunteers, student placements, work experience, or contractors. This policy applies as appropriate to visitors who may be present at Business in the Community (BITC) sites or to others who may be affected by BITC. This policy also applies to those colleagues (and secondees, consultants, workers, and volunteers) who work from home, another BITC office or remotely.

This policy may be subject to change at the discretion of management and in consultation with our recognised union Community, where changes are required.

The purpose of this policy

The purpose of this policy is to evidence BITC's compliance with all relevant Health & Safety legislation, which includes but is not limited to the Health and Safety at Work Act 1974, The Health and Safety at Work (NI) Order 1978 (for our Northern Ireland offices), The Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005, and The Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999.

It is the policy of BITC to maintain safe and healthy working conditions, equipment, and systems of work for all its employees, and to provide such information, training, and supervision as they need for this purpose. BITC also accepts its responsibilities for the health and safety of others who may be affected by its activities.

The primary responsibility for safety rests with line management and ultimately the Executive Directors. We all, however, have an individual responsibility for our own health and safety, for that of our colleagues and for anyone else who may be affected by our acts or omissions. We must all work together to maintain and improve health and safety standards.

The allocation of duties for safety matters and the arrangements which BITC will make to implement the policy are available on SharePoint. The policy will be kept up to date, particularly to reflect changes in BITC. To ensure this, the policy will be reviewed every year.

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Health & Safety Statement

Business in the Community are committed to meeting its legal obligation to ensure, so far as is reasonably practicable, the Health, Safety, and Welfare of all employees at work.

Each manager has a duty to take care of the health, safety, and welfare of their colleagues and to report and investigate any accident or incident to help prevent a recurrence. Business in the Community requires all its colleagues (and secondees, consultants, workers, and volunteers) to co-operate in establishing and maintaining safe and healthy working conditions and to avoid any action which may adversely affect the health, safety and welfare of themselves or others.

In fulfilling its obligations, Business in the Community will:

- Provide adequate control of health and safety risks arising from our work activities.
- Consult with our employees on matters affecting their health and safety.
- Provide and maintain safe plant and equipment.
- Ensure safe handling and use of hazardous substances.
- Provide appropriate information, instruction and supervision for employees relating to health and safety issues.
- Ensure all employees are competent to do their tasks and to give them adequate training (including training for line managers).
- Prevent accidents and cases of work-related ill health.
- Maintain a safe and healthy working environment.
- Review and revise this policy as necessary at regular intervals.

Health & Safety Arrangements

Organisation and responsibilities
Chief Executive Officer
The Chief Executive has overall responsibility and final accountability for Health and Safety, including fire safety.

Health and Safety Officer
The Chief Executive has formally appointed Sean Bridge (Head of Facilities) as the Health and Safety Officer for Business in the Community.

Day-to-Day responsibilities
Day-to-day responsibility for ensuring that the Health and Safety Policy is put into practice is delegated to the Head of Facilities for all UK offices, with assistance of the facilities coordinator

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and designated team members from the larger regional offices. These colleagues have a functional responsibility to the Health and Safety Officer for their health and safety responsibilities.

Delegated responsibilities

To ensure Health and Safety standards are maintained/improved, responsibilities have been delegated as follows:

Health and Safety Officer Sean Bridge, Head of Facilities	**Delegated corporate responsibility including:** ● Policy formulation and development. ● Planning and review of health and safety activities. ● Implementing plans to maintain and/or improve standards, monitoring, and report on performance. ● Appointing competent individuals with specific health and safety responsibilities. ● Ensuring that all employees understand their responsibilities. ● Ensuring that effective systems are in place for: workplace inspections; accident reporting; auditing safety management system; induction and training of colleagues; and the identification of hazards and assessments of risks, including fire safety risks. ● Preparing an Annual Report to the Board.
Sean Bridge, Head of Facilities and Facilities Coordinator	**Specific responsibilities including:** ● Plan and undertake risk assessments. ● Analyse and report risk assessment findings; and identify / implement corrective actions. ● Plan and arrange equipment maintenance and keep appropriate records. ● Ensure that COSHH requirements are met. ● Provide advice and guidance to managers and colleagues on all health and safety matters. ● Be the appointed person to take charge in the event of injury or illness and ensure that appropriate first aid equipment is always readily available. ● Ensure sufficient resources are available for Health and Safety matters. ● Publicise the names/locations of First Aiders and Fire Marshals and ensure that they are suitably trained. ● Make statutory health and safety returns. ● Investigate and report on all accidents and apparent near misses meeting the requirements of RIDDOR. ● Plan, communicate and test emergency evacuation procedures. ● Ensure that appropriate systems are in place to secure the safety of visitors. ● Establish effective liaison with site buildings management or agents.

Head of Human Resources	• Ensure that there is effective consultation with colleagues on relevant matters. • Collaborate with Directors/Facilities Manager to provide training for new and existing colleagues.
Directors and Managers	**All Directors and Managers are responsible for:** • Fostering positive attitudes to health and safety. • Ensuring that there are safe systems of work in their work areas. • Ensuring that risk assessments are undertaken. • Informing / consulting the Directors / Facilities Manager as appropriate on any health and safety matters. **Directors and managers must consult with employees on matters to do with their health and safety at work, including:** • Any changes which may significantly affect their health and safety. • The arrangements for appointing competent people. • The information to be given to employees on likely risks and dangers from their work. • The planning of health and safety training. • The health and safety consequences of introducing new technology.

Responsibilities of all employees, homeworkers, secondees and consultants, interns, and other work experience

All salaried employees, secondees and consultants and other workers have responsibilities for ensuring the health and safety of themselves and others, and for co-operating with Business in the Community in fulfilling its legal obligations. They must:

- Co-operate with managers on health and safety matters.
- Co-operate with any measures put in place to safeguard their own and others' health and safety.
- Take reasonable care of their own and others' health and safety.
- Promptly report to their line manager, or their director, or the Facilities Manager or an employee rep all health and safety concerns, or if they experience any health problems, temporary or permanent, that may be work related.
- Immediately follow instructions given to them to evacuate the building (whether or not a test) or to take other measures in response to an internal or external threat.

The health and safety responsibilities of employees and secondees working from home are described in Business in the Community's Home Working Policy and Procedures, which are found on SharePoint.

Health & Safety Management System (HSG 65)

Business in the Community complies with HSG 65 - "Successful Health and Safety Management" by ensuring that effective health and safety policies set a clear direction for the organisation to follow and that an effective management structure together with appropriate safety arrangements and resources are in place for delivering the safety policy. Safe methods of work are detailed in each safety policy and combined procedure.

There is a planned and systematic approach to implementing the health and safety policy through an effective health and safety management system which is set out in this policy. Performance is measured against agreed standards in each safety policy and combined procedure to reveal when and where improvement is needed. BITC are committed to learning from all relevant experiences and applying the lessons learned.

Health & safety policies and procedures

Safety policies and combined procedures (see below) are available on SharePoint (they can be made available in hard copy upon request to the facilities team). These policies and combined procedures specify responsibilities and include guidance where necessary. They also set out the actions that must be taken to ensure safe practices are followed and performance indicators for standards of performance. Copies of relevant safety documentation are provided for the use of contractors, consultants, service providers and other agents engaged by the organisation, where necessary. The Core Health & Safety policy is reviewed annually, all other policies and procedures are reviewed every two years, if there is a legislation change/update or an incident which requires policy or procedural changes.

Policy reference	Policy name	Issue date	Policy details
H&SP001	Core Health & Safety Policy	1st July 23	Core policy includes statement, organisation, responsibilities
H&SP002	Fire Safety Policy	1st July 23	Fire safety management
H&SP003	Safe Plant & Equipment Policy	1st July 23	Electrical, gas, water, maintenance programmes. Contractor management
H&SP004	Accident, Incident & First Aid Policy	1st July 23	First aid, accident reporting
H&SP005	Risk Management Policy	1st July 23	Risk management principles, processes, events, external locations
H&SP006	Training, Information, & Instruction Policy	1st July 23	
H&SP007	Personal & Office Safety Policy	1st July 23	Mobile working, international travel, insurance, driving, workstation assessments, manual handling, general office safety

Emergency procedures, fire, and evacuation

Business in the Community ensure that the requirements of the Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005 are consistently implemented through the Fire Safety Policy. Fire safety performance is regularly reviewed and improved where necessary by the Facilities team. All locations have a fire risk assessment and emergency/evacuation plans in place which is reviewed annually. Information on the findings of risk assessment together with the recommendation will be made available to relevant persons working in or using the premises to which the risk assessment relates.

All employees are trained in fire safety so that they know what to do in the event of a fire. Adequate numbers of fire wardens are trained in all our office locations. In the event of the fire alarm being activated, or in any other emergency situation (such as a bomb scare), all employees must leave the building(s) by the nearest available exit and assemble at the designated assembly point(s). The designated assembly points for each site are detailed on the fire notices posted adjacent to each alarm call point in every area of the building and on every floor.

Where BITC are responsible, we will practice emergency evacuations at least once every six months to ensure employee familiarity with the procedures. Where we are in occupation of a building where the landlord owns that responsibility, the Facilities team or relevant responsible person will ensure this is conducted. Specific details of each office location are found in the fire safety policy and procedures document.

Where BITC is responsible, specialist contractor(s) are appointed for the maintenance of fire detection equipment and fire extinguishers. Where we are in occupation of a building where the landlord owns that responsibility, the Facilities team will ensure this is conducted. Fire training will be included in health and safety induction programmes for all new starters. Fire action notices will be posted on all meeting rooms and in lobbies and adjacent to fire exits. The health and safety officer will produce fire procedures for all regional offices. These must be renewed annually at a local level.

Fire risk assessments

The health and safety officer will arrange for the risk assessments to be undertaken on all BITC premises. The Facilities team liaise with properties whereby BITC does not have a requirement to undertake a fire risk assessment.

Safe plant and equipment

BITC ensure that work equipment used by employees and others authorised by the organisation, is suitably risk assessed, maintained, and inspected in accordance with manufacturer's instructions and regulatory requirements, where applicable. We ensure employees using work equipment are suitably trained and instructed and that where work equipment is faulty, working incorrectly or in a dangerous condition, it is taken out of use immediately. More information is in H&SP003 Safe plant & equipment Policy.

Competency for tasks and training
The Facilities and HR Teams in conjunction with line managers will plan and provide induction training relating to health and safety for all employees. This will include a walk-through of the building evacuation procedures.

Colleagues' health and safety awareness programmes will be planned and initiated by the Health and Safety Co-ordinator, based on analysis of risk assessment and other safety reports. Training records are kept by the Facilities Team, Human Resources Team and/or by the individual.

Information, instruction, and supervision
A Health and Safety Law poster is displayed at all office locations. Managers are responsible for ensuring that employees carrying out hazardous tasks are given appropriate instruction and are adequately supervised.

All employees shall receive appropriate information and instruction to ensure that they understand BITC's fire precautions and the action to be taken in the event of fire.

The Events team will ensure that organisers are provided with fire safety information for event organisers and visitors attending events at BITC are made aware of the arrangements for fire and other emergencies. Departments are responsible for ensuring that any visitors to their departments evacuate safely in the event of a fire.

Monitoring and inspection
Inspection requirements are set out in individual safety policies and combined procedures to meet health and safety and fire safety legislative requirements. Managers and facilities are responsible for ensuring that inspections take place for the areas under their control.

Consultation with Employees
Any material changes to Health and Safety provisions will be communicated in the H&S Committee and once agreed it will be communicated to all colleagues via email, letter, other electronic communication channels (SnapShot, SharePoint etc.) and in person by the facilities team. Employees are encouraged to bring to the attention of The Facilities Team or their line manager any H&S concerns they may have. Consultation on policies and procedures will also be consulted with Community Union Representatives on behalf of employees.

Risk assessments
BITC will arrange risk assessments of employee workstations at their contracted place of work (office/home) in order to identify hazards and assess the degree of risk that the hazards represent. Risk assessment processes will also involve the fire safety and the general fire precautions which need to be in place. Risk assessment procedures will be written, implemented, and reviewed by the Health and Safety Co-ordinator.

Computer usage and eye tests
Those employees who use a computer screen on a regular basis for more than two hours per day are formally classed as 'VDU Users'. In line with BITC's responsibilities to provide eye tests for colleagues who work with visual display screens we have established an agreement with

Specsavers. Colleagues will be provided with a voucher for a full eye exam at any Specsavers store in the UK. Details of store locations are available on SharePoint.

The voucher will also cover payment for basic glasses specifically and solely for VDU use. BITC will not pay for glasses for normal use (i.e., not just VDU use) but you may still take advantage of discounts through Specsavers. Colleagues requiring an eyesight test should contact HR who will provide a voucher. Eye tests are usually annual or as advised by your optician.

Team members in NI should in the first instance claim for eye tests via the Westfield Health scheme.

Insurance

Business in the Community holds an Employer's Liability Insurance Policy in respect of all its employees and a copy of this must be displayed in each of our premises. BITC also holds various corporate insurance policies which cover cyber security, contents, public liability etc. details are held within the CEO directorate. Contact Sean Bridge for more details.

First aid

Business in the Community has a duty as an employer to assess its requirements for first aid and ensure that there is adequate provision to meet those requirements. H&SP004 Accident, incident and first aid policy set out, in more detail, BITC's approach and management structure to implement and administer first aid provisions across all offices.

The Facilities Team will liaise with colleagues to ensure full coverage of appropriate first aid training is implemented in all office locations. First aid boxes should not contain any medication, tablets, creams, or ointment.

Accidents, incidents relating to first aid or ill-health

The Facilities Manager and line managers of colleagues are responsible for investigating accidents and incidents and their causes and submitting reports on each incident to the Health and Safety Co-ordinator for further review and investigation.

The Head of Facilities and line managers of regional colleagues are responsible for meeting statutory obligations under the Reporting of Injuries, Diseases and Dangerous Occurrences Regulations 1995. Any event requiring notification under RIDDOR will be immediately reported to the Health and Safety Officer.

Hazard reporting

If you identify a hazard or an unsafe system of work, you should report it to your line manager in your department or the Health & Safety officer. You should take steps to isolate the equipment or work area in question and to warn others of the dangers by posting warning notices. Maintenance issues include electrical faults, fire extinguishers discharged, trip hazards, fire doors not closing properly and missing fire exit signs.

Contractor management

Contractors wishing to work on either electrical, water, gas or at height must provide the relevant paperwork prior to starting work. Contractors must not carry out work on BITC premises without providing a Permit to Work certificate.

Contractors must agree to always work within BITC's Health & Safety policy. Contractors must report to the Health & Safety officer upon arrival. No work must be undertaken without agreement from either the Health & Safety officer or the UK directors.

Evidence of insurance is also required to be submitted before work begins, and method statements and risk assessments should be provided prior to any work commencing.

Safety inspections

The Health and Safety officer, in conjunction with the facilities coordinator, will plan regular safety inspections of all BITC's offices, to identify hazards and unsafe situations and take appropriate remedial action. The frequency of inspections will depend on the activity being undertaken and hazards present. Hazardous workplaces such as kitchens will need to be inspected at a greater frequency than less low risk environments such as offices.

Event safety

Events must be planned and organised to ensure the safety of colleagues, and other users of BITC premises as well as persons attending the event. Event organisers should ensure that a risk assessment is completed; the model risk assessment can be used for this purpose. Where an event is organised jointly with an external organisation, the external organisation must be provided with essential health and safety information regarding the BITC fire safety and first-aid procedures. Risk assessments can be completed with the assistance of the Health & Safety Officer where required.

A copy of the event risk assessment is held on the Health & Safety Hub.

Lone working

BITC has a separate Lone Working policy which provides details on risk assessments, reporting incidents and general advice around BITC's potential lone working situations. This policy is owned by Facilities with input from HR, the H&S committee, and Community Union, the policy is available on SharePoint.

Risk management

BITC has a duty to undertake assessment of its work activities to identify significant risks and determine what measures are required to manage these risks.

Our risk management policy sets out the management processes and responsibilities to ensure assessments such as fire, workplace, workstations, manual handling etc. are undertaken and managed appropriately. Details on special considerations and reasonable adjustments are in the Office & Personal Safety policy, which is available on the Health & Safety Hub.

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Reporting to Executive team

Business in the Community considers that the health and safety of its colleagues is of great importance in terms of its corporate social responsibility. To help fulfil this commitment, the Health and Safety Officer is line managed directly by the Company Secretary. The Executive Team meet weekly and there is a rolling agenda item covering Health & Safety, the H&S Officer feeds into this via the Company Secretary. There is a formal written report on a six-monthly basis reviewing all H&S aspects, including any concerns/issues that should be brought to the attention of the Executive Team. The H&S Officer provides a detailed annual report to the Chief Executive and the Executive Team on Business in the Community's health and safety performance; on BITC's compliance with current UK legislation; and to recommend any policy or procedural changes to further improve performance.

Associated policies

BITC has a collection of policies which overlap with Health & Safety, these are available to all colleagues on SharePoint and have input from the Head of Facilities and Union representatives to ensure collaboration and consultation takes place with all policies. The policies that are associated with Health & Safety include, but are not limited to, Safeguarding, Well Being, Driving, Maternity and Speak Up.

Review

This policy will be reviewed annually or in response to changes in legislation, regulatory guidance, good practice, or changes in other BITC policies. All other Health & Safety policies will be reviewed every two years, unless there is an accident, incident or legislation change during that period. Supporting policies and combined procedures are reviewed annually. Health and Safety documentation is available on SharePoint.

Further Support

Community members can contact Community on 0800 389 6332 or e-mail servicecentre@community-tu.org