

## Health and safety policy for BGS volunteers

### 1. Designated Officers

BGS's Health and Safety Officer: Overall responsibility for implementation of this policy	Mark Stewart	Office and Business Manager
Fire safety officer	Mark Stewart	Office and Business Manager
Reporting accidents	Mark Stewart	Office and Business Manager
Annual H&S risk assessments	Mark Stewart	Office and Business Manager
Office-based First Aid Officer	Mark Stewart	Office and Business Manager
Events-based First Aid Officer	Julie Gaudreau	

### 2. Why Health and Safety matters to you

Health and safety affects everyone in the workplace on a day-to-day basis.

Every BGS volunteer has a duty to ensure that their respective work areas is kept clean and tidy and free from obstructions which might prove a hazard to other employees, visitors and contractors.

Similarly, all volunteers have a duty to inform the Office Manager (Mark Stewart) of any obstruction/material/working practice which they consider to be a hazard (e.g. an item of office furniture which has become defective or unsafe). The Office Manager in turn has a duty to investigate, without delay, any such claim.

All volunteers are required to familiarise themselves with this policy. A copy of the policy is posted on the BGS noticeboard on the ground floor, along with the Health and Safety Executive's poster.

The BGS will ensure that training is provided (where appropriate) in the operation of machinery and storage of hazardous substances, to minimise risk to people.

The only potentially hazardous piece of industrial machinery on site at Marjory Warren House is the basement shredder. Any volunteer wishing to use the shredder should first obtain instruction from the Office Manager.

### **3. First Aid**

The first aid boxes are located in the basement kitchen, in the office shared by Mark and Janet on the second floor, and in the Chief Executive's office

Mark Stewart is the trained first aider and should be alerted to any injury or medical condition that may arise.

Should a serious accident or medical condition occur professional medical help should be sought immediately by dialling 999 or 112. Staff should inform the designated first aider and the Chief Executive of the accident/incident as soon as practicable.

### **4. Fire**

Anyone discovering a fire should operate the emergency alarm, located in the stairway on the first, second and third floors. The emergency services should then be called, by dialling 999.

**Under no circumstances should any volunteer place themselves at risk by attempting to deal with the fire.**

Alert members of staff/visitors/contractors and then leave the building immediately, following the assembly instructions posted next to the fire alarms. Do not re-enter the building until authorised to do so.

The Office Manager is responsible for ensuring that all staff/visitors/contractors and volunteers have reached the assembly point. The Office Manager is responsible for liaising with the fire services concerning the evacuation of the building.

#### **Fire Evacuation Procedures in Summary**

- On Hearing The Fire Alarm, Exit The Building By The Main Door.
- Do Not Stop To Gather Personal Belongings.
- The Fire Assembly Point Is "The Clerkenwell and Social Bar" on the other side of St John's Square.

Mark Stewart to ensure that the fire alarm and automatic door closers are tested on a weekly basis and to log this activity.

## **What should I do if the stairwell is blocked and I cannot leave the building?**

As at July 2017, the advice of the Islington Fire Safety Officer (via the London Fire Brigade) is that you should stay in your office with the fire door closed and ring 999 for the Fire Brigade, if you cannot leave the building. However, when consulted the Fire Safety Officer stated that such a development was highly unlikely in view of the fact that the stairway is built of concrete and metal and contains no combustible materials. The Fire Safety Officer also agreed that such a scenario was unlikely to develop in view of the fact that the building is typically evacuated in less than two minutes when the fire alarm is sounded; staff will have evacuated the building before an obstructive fire develops.

Volunteers should also bear in mind that:

- The fire doors will give a minimum of at least thirty minutes protection from fire and smoke, and almost certainly much longer than that.
- Islington Fire Station is less than two miles away and a fire engine would be on site in approximately six to eight minutes or less.
- Under no circumstances should materials (e.g. boxes, deliveries, post) be stored on the stairwell which must be kept clear and unobstructed at all times.

## **5. Our responsibility towards the environment**

All volunteers have a responsibility to ensure that waste products are disposed of in accordance both with local authority requirements and in keeping with good practice in safeguarding the environment.

- Green recycling bins are in place throughout the building for the recycling of paper, cardboard, and both glass and plastic bottles.
- Printer toner cartridges must be recycled rather than thrown away; all such items should be passed to Mark Stewart for recycling.
- Batteries can also be recycled in the same manner as toner cartridges.

## **6. Electrical Equipment**

In accordance with Health and Safety guidance, all electrical equipment is tested for safety compliance annually. Additionally, volunteers are asked to:

- Ensure that all computers, copiers and printers (with the exception of the file server cabinet) are switched off at the end of the day;
- Ensure that all office lights are turned off at the end of the day (but the security lighting on the ground floor should be switched on);

- Ensure that extension leads, where used, are not overloaded with appliances, and are not a tripping hazard.
- Ensure that fan heaters and fan coolers are switched off at the end of the day and are not left running unduly at other times.
- Naked flames are not permitted within the building, this includes any equipment requiring a naked flame along with candles, burners etc.

## **7. Safety in the workplace and external locations for work**

Lifting and carrying equipment materials: Items weighing more than 25kg should not be lifted: items over 25kg should be lifted by more than one individual.

Erection of BGS stand – to minimise risk, please follow the appropriate instructions on setting up the stand, ideally with a second person to assist you, and ensure that the equipment is of good repair before and after use, particularly the lights.

## **8. Are we meeting the basic requirements?**

According to advice given by the HSE, we must provide the right workplace facilities, specifically:

### (a) Welfare facilities

For BGS volunteers we need to provide:

- toilets and hand basins, with soap and towels or a hand-dryer;
- drinking water;
- a place to store clothing (and somewhere to change if special clothing is worn for work);
- somewhere to rest and eat meals.

### (b) Health issues

To have a healthy working environment, make sure there is:

- good ventilation – a supply of fresh, clean air drawn from outside or a ventilation system;
- a reasonable working temperature (usually at least 16 °C, or 13 °C for strenuous work, unless other laws require lower temperatures);
- lighting suitable for the work being carried out;
- enough room space and suitable workstations and seating;
- a clean workplace with appropriate waste containers.

### (c) Safety issues

To keep your workplace safe you must:

- properly maintain your premises and work equipment;
- keep floors and traffic routes free from obstruction;
- have windows that can be opened and also cleaned safely;
- make sure that any transparent (e.g. glass) doors or walls are protected or made of safety material.

So are we meeting the basic requirements? Facilities are reviewed on an ongoing basis and the Society feels it is meeting the necessary requirements. However, if you feel this is not the case, or we could be doing more, please talk to Mark Stewart or the Chief Executive Officer, Sarah Mistry.

## **9. Annual Health and Safety audits**

The Office and Business Manager will carry an audit out annually each July. The audit will consist of:

- Health and safety risk assessment, including self-assessments for workstations.
- A full review of this health and safety policy in the light of the results.

A post-audit report will be presented to the Finance, Fundraising and Corporate Affairs Committee (FFRCA) at their first meeting following the audit.

## **Appendices (where to find out more)**

### 1. Current legislation

The primary legislation covering the health and safety of employees and visitors is contained within:

(a) The Health and Safety at Work Act 1974:

<http://www.hse.gov.uk/legislation/hswa.htm>

(b) The Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999

<http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukSI/1999/3242/contents/made>

(c) The Health and Safety (Display Screen Equipment) Regulations 1992:

<http://www.compactlaw.co.uk/free-legal-articles/display-screen-equipment-regs-1992.html>

By virtue of this legislation both the employer and employees have a legal duty to ensure that all staff and visitors enter an environment that is both clean and safe to work in.