



Blake Museum

Bridgwater Town Council

with

The Trustees of the Friends of Blake Museum

STATEMENT OF SAFETY POLICY

The Bridgwater Town Council has fewer than 5 employees and the Trustees of the Friends of Blake Museum have no employees, so neither is subject fully to the provisions of the Health and Safety at Work etc Act 1974 as an employer. However, it is the desire of the Bridgwater Town Council and of the Trustees of the Friends of Blake Museum to ensure, as far as practicable, that the health, safety and welfare of volunteers and the public at the Blake Museum is maintained to a high standard consistent with the need for volunteers to be able to enjoy their hobby. All working volunteers are encouraged to study the Code of Practice and to do all they can to abide by its provisions and intentions. The Town Council Museum sub-Committee would be pleased to receive suggestions for improvement and revisions.

March 2015

Signed

Victoria Western
Chairman

for the Trustees of the Friends of Blake Museum

A Hurford
Town Clerk

for Bridgwater Town Council

CODE OF PRACTICE

First Edition

for Volunteers Working at Blake Museum

Issued jointly by FOBM and BTC(MSC) for the guidance of working volunteers.

No gender specificity is implied in the use of personal pronouns

Reviewed and updated March 2015

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1. GENERAL

1.1 Purpose and scope

1.1.1 This Code of Practice has been drawn up in order to give guidance as to how volunteers may best ensure that a safe and healthy working environment is maintained at the Blake Museum.

1.1.2 The advice and information contained herein is not exhaustive, and volunteers may need to consult appropriate references (Appendix C) kept in the filing cabinet in the Museum Office in order to carry out a procedure safely.

1.1.4 Matters relating to health, safety & welfare shall form part of the agenda for each meeting of the Museum sub-Committee. Any volunteer may give notice of such matters in writing to the Town Clerk two weeks before the meeting is scheduled to take place. At least one Museum sub-Committee meeting per year shall take place at the Museum, and working volunteers shall be invited to attend.

1.1.5 No act or omission by a working volunteer within the Blake Museum shall endanger the safe operation of the Museum

1.2 Responsibilities

1.2.1 *Clause deleted by Safety Notice 3/12.*

1.2.2 Each volunteer has a responsibility to take reasonable care for the health and safety of him or herself and of other persons who may be affected by his or her acts or omissions whilst working at the Museum.

1.2.3 Each volunteer shall sign the register *on the Custodian's Desk in the hallway* on arrival and departure. By so signing, the volunteer acknowledges he or she has read, understood and will abide by this Code of Practice.

1.2.4 When two or more persons are working in the Museum, the Person-in-Charge shall be responsible for safe working under this Code of Practice. The keyholder on duty will normally be the Person-in-Charge.

If a doubt arises as to who is the Person-in-Charge, work should not commence (or if it has commenced, it must stop) and the Town Clerk or his designated representative informed by the most practicable means.

1.2.5 The Person-in-Charge must come to a clear understanding with all those working in the Museum as to their method of work.

1.2.6 A volunteer working alone at the Museum must restrict his or her activities to those of low hazard and low risk. The volunteer should advise the Town Clerk or his designated representative or the Chairman of the Friends of their presence in the Museum. They should equip themselves with a mobile or portable telephone which should be in reach during their work.

1.2.7 At the end of the day's work the Person-in-Charge or another person nominated by him should enter a brief record of the work activities carried out in the diary kept in the Museum Office, drawing particular attention to work not completed or needing attention by other volunteers attending on future days.

1.3 Risk assessment

1.3.1 Whenever practicable, risks must be assessed and minimised. Often a small modification in procedure will result in a significant reduction in risk. Further guidance is given in the Guidance Notes cited in Appendix C

1.3.3 Guidance on making Risk Assessments involving substances is given in Appendix A.

1.3.4 Generic risk assessments are kept in the filing cabinet in the Museum Office, and must be consulted where appropriate. The Town Clerk or his designated representative must countersign any written risk assessment.

1.4 Fixtures, fittings and equipment

1.4.1 A volunteer who discovers any unsafe fixture, fitting or appliance should take steps to prevent its use, report the defect in the logbook kept in the Museum Office, and inform the Town Clerk or his designated representative.

1.5 Food and hygiene

1.5.1 Volunteers may only prepare and consume food (including drinks) in the appointed places. A high standard of personal hygiene should be maintained in order to ensure no contamination of food can occur.

1.5.2 Members of the public may only purchase and consume food in the appointed places in conformity with the current Food Hygiene (England) Regulations 2005 and the requirements of the Local Authority Environmental Health Officer.

1.5.3 Toilets, sinks and basins and tables must be cleaned at the end of each day of use by agreement with those volunteers present.

1.5.4 Smoking is not permitted within any of the Museum buildings or within 2 metre of any external door or open window. Discarded butts and matches should be placed in a designated metal bin.

1.6 Visitors

1.6.1 Visiting members of the public must not be allowed to enter areas where they may be exposed to risk from the activities of working volunteers. Such areas should be cordoned off and warning notices arranged.

1.6.2 The Person-in-Charge will be responsible for restricting areas to public access should the need arise.

1.7 Animals

1.7.1 In the interests of hygiene and for the proper protection of the Collections, Pets or wild animals may not be brought into or kept in the Museum.

1.7.2 Assistance dogs are excepted from Clause 1.7.1.

1.8 Persons in the building

1.8.1 During the times that the Museum is open to the public a numeric record must be kept by the duty Custodian of those present at any time. The record must be readily accessible for use in the event of fire and will normally be kept in the Custodian's desk in the hallway, and should be normally be taken to the Assembly Point by the duty Custodian in the event of Fire or other evacuation.

2. FIRE PROCEDURE

2.1 Procedure in the event of fire

2.1.1 The safety of visitors, volunteers and of the general public is of paramount importance.

2.1.2 The Alarm is given by a continuous *sounding of the electronic sounders* or by other practicable means (e.g. by shouting FIRE). The person nearest a telephone must call the fire brigade immediately (dial 999) and follow the instructions adjacent to the telephone. Inform the Person-in-Charge or Responsible Person that this has been done.

2.1.3 Alarm call points are provided adjacent to final exit doors and along the upstairs landings. Breaking the glass sounds the alarm.

2.1.4 The Assembly Point is on the path in Blake Gardens. If the exit route from the Museum is blocked, then exit from the building should be made to Blake Street and thence to Blake Gardens.

2.2 Procedure

When the alarm sounds,

- (1) instruct others to go outside by the quickest route;
- (2) to the Assembly Point in Blake Gardens. If on arrival at the assembly point you are the only volunteer present you are to act as the Responsible Person (see duties below);
- (3) ascertain if anyone is unaccounted for and prepare to report to the Responsible Person.

2.2.1 Duties of the Responsible Person

The responsible person will be the Person-in-Charge or the only volunteer present whose duties are as follows.

- (a) Establish that the Fire Brigade has been summoned either automatically or manually. If not, deputise a person to telephone immediately by mobile telephone or from an adjacent building.
- (b) Ascertain whether any person is unaccounted for.
- (c) Establish the location of the fire, identify any special risks (for example, the proximity to paints and solvents), and consider whether action is necessary under the Disaster Plan.

(d) Upon arrival, report to the Fire Officer.

(e) When the Fire Officer has allowed people to leave or to re-enter the building, make a written report and submit a copy to the Town Clerk at the first opportunity.

ON NO ACCOUNT SHOULD ANYONE RE-ENTER THE BUILDING UNTIL PERMISSION HAS BEEN GIVEN BY THE FIRE OFFICER

2.2.2 If you discover a fire

(1) raise the alarm

(2) send those nearest you outside to the Assembly Point

(3) attempt to attack the fire only if it is safe to do so

(4) report at the first opportunity to the Responsible Person.

2.2.3 A major incident involving suspicious packages or a bomb alert should be treated as if it was a fire, and the alarm sounded.

2.2.4 Designated exit routes from the buildings must remain free at all times: corridors and walkways must not be obstructed.

2.3 Fire Equipment

2.3.1 Fire extinguishers are provided. Volunteers must be familiar with the type, location and use of the extinguishers.

2.3.2 Fire extinguishers and glass fibre blankets are serviced annually. A record of the use, checking or replacement of equipment must be kept in the log book in the filing cabinet in the Office. Once used, equipment must be checked and replaced if necessary at the first opportunity.

2.3.3 Water should not be used to extinguish a fire where paper archives are known to be present.

2.3.4 Fire alarm call points should be tested monthly and a record made in the fire safety log book kept in the Office.

2.3.5 Where emergency lamp test points have been provided the equipment should be tested monthly and a record made in the fire safety log book kept in the Office. Where self-testing emergency lamps have been installed no manual test is required. If a green LED is flashing and the internal warning is sounding, the Town Clerk should be informed and a competent person obtained to attend to the fault.

2.4 Fire Prevention

2.4.1 Hot working (for example, welding, burning, paint stripping, grinding) is not to be undertaken in or near the Museum buildings except by express permission in writing from the Town Clerk or his designated representative and only undertaken by those with training or experience of such work.

2.4.2 Attention is drawn to Clause 7.1 below on the disposal of accumulated waste.

3. PROTECTIVE CLOTHING

3.1 Appropriate protective clothing must be worn and shall form part of the risk assessment.

Particular note should be made of the following common activities.

3.2 Eye protection must be worn for all grinding and chipping operations and other activities involving production of dusts, and is advised for intensive painting operations where more than one person is working in close proximity.

3.3 Appropriate protective gloves must be worn when handling corrosive or irritant chemicals (including oils and solvents) that are absorbed through the skin rapidly.

3.4 An appropriate dust mask should be worn when sanding or using power tools which generate wood dust and for other activities involving exposure to dry dusts.

3.5 Hard hats must be worn wherever there is lifting activity or when working beneath machinery. They are advised for other operations involving construction and maintenance.

3.6 Orange or yellow high-visibility clothing of an approved pattern must be worn when directed by the Person-in-Charge.

3.7 Volunteers must provide their own safety boots or shoes, which must be worn if required by the method of work and the risk assessment.

3.8 Overalls, if worn, should preferably be of cotton, or of fire-resistant synthetic fabric.

4. ELECTRICAL HAZARDS

4.1 Regular inspection and servicing of all electrical apparatus designed to operate above 50 V shall be carried out annually. Each piece of equipment shall be date-stamped with the date of the most recent test.

4.2 Defective apparatus must be clearly labelled as such and must be rendered inoperable until repaired or disposed of.

4.3 A visual inspection of the condition of electrical apparatus should be made on each occasion before and after it is used.

4.4 All apparatus operating at potential differences above 50 V must be satisfactorily screened so that no live part is accessible to the touch and the case must be securely attached.

4.5 The RCCD protective devices shall be tested at least quarterly, and all socket outlets tested annually, by a person or persons appointed by the Town Clerk or his delegated representative. A written record of such tests shall be kept.

4.6 Purchasers of new or second-hand electrical equipment must ensure that it bears the CE mark. A label shall be attached giving the date of purchase or date of first putting into use. When second-hand electrical equipment is purchased, it must be assessed for electrical safety by a competent person designated by the Town Clerk or his delegated representative.

4.7 Audio-visual equipment should be handled with care. Faulty equipment must not be used, and the fault reported to the Town Clerk or his delegated representative. Trailing leads must be avoided.

4.8 No alterations, adjustments or additions to the electrical services are to be made without the authorisation of the Town Clerk or his delegated representative.

4.9 Authorised volunteers should avoid using the photocopier continuously for more than 30 minute in any one hour in order to limit their exposure to ozone.

5. MECHANICAL HAZARDS

5.1 Furniture and benching must not have sharp edges, protruding legs or doors which open dangerously (for example, fouling an entrance or exit).

5.2 Clothing, boxes, rubbish or debris must not be left lying near doorways and in passages, or left on benches.

5.3 Lifting devices (for example, sack trucks) may only be used by trained volunteers in accordance with the instructions for use and after a risk assessment has been made. Only those lifting devices and associated equipment for which a current inspection and examination record has been made may be used. The record is to be kept in the filing cabinet in the Museum Office.

5.4 Care must be taken when handling or lifting heavy or awkward objects. Assistance should be sought before attempting to move such objects. When lifting, keep your feet together and bend your knees. Further guidance is available in Appendix C

5.5 Where it is necessary to work at a height greater than 2 metre and there is a risk of falling, the method of work shall comply with the provisions of the Work at Height Regulations 2005 and guidance notes (Appendix C). The guarded platform steps provided in the Museum should be used for work at picture-rail height or above on the ground floor. Volunteers using a ladder of any kind should make themselves aware of the correct use of ladders particularly in relation to stability and loading.

5.6 Ladders shall be inspected annually by a competent person and a written record kept of such inspection in the file provided in the Office.

5.7 The use of scaffolding or of a scaffold tower in excess of its third stage is only to be undertaken under the supervision of the Museum sub-Committee's designated representative.

5.8 The use of hand tools must be appropriate for the task. Particular care should be taken with saws and chisels, and with small but powerful electrical tools. If you are unfamiliar with the use of a tool, enquire first of an experienced volunteer.

5.9 Volunteers using their own tools do so at their own risk, but should endeavour to comply with the provisions of this code of practice in respect of themselves and others.

5.10 Visitors' and volunteers' bags, coats and scarves must not be left lying near doorways or in passageways. Use should be made of the lockers and pegs provided in the cloakroom area and Friends' Room. Lockers and cupboards should be kept locked except when in use. Keys should not be left in empty lockers but issued when required.

6. STORAGE

6.1 All materials for which a hazard category is appropriate must be clearly labelled and securely stored in accordance with the manufacturer's or supplier's recommendations.

6.2 Flammable liquids and paints must be stored in the approved cupboard.

6.3 High level storage should be avoided wherever possible; if unavoidable, steps must be provided and used. in accordance with Clause 5.5 above.

6.4 Care must be taken to ensure that stored equipment, artefacts and archives do not project beyond the edges of shelves, where they may become dislodged.

6.5 Benchtops should not be used for storage.

7. DISPOSAL OF WASTES

7.1 Accumulations of rubbish, paper, woodshavings, waste cleaning fluids and other materials may increase the risk of fire, encourage vermin, contribute to accidents and endanger health. All wastes must be disposed of appropriately as soon as practicable.

7.2 General and non-toxic wastes should be disposed of in the bins and bags provided and sent for disposal by the currently approved method.

7.3 Hazardous wastes should be stored appropriately and disposed of in accordance with the instructions of a Chartered Chemist or Environmental Scientist. A record of such disposal must be kept in the file in the Museum Office.

7.4 Spillages in the Museum (other than of water) can generally be dealt with using sand, and by subsequently disposing as above.

8. ACCIDENTS AND FIRST AID

8.1 Any volunteer present in the Museum who is currently qualified in First Aid should inform the Person-in-Charge on the day of work. The volunteer should hold himself in readiness to provide first aid assistance throughout his or her time in the Museum.

8.2 All accidents should be dealt with as quickly as possible using the appropriate First Aid treatment.

8.3 All serious accidents (generally anything other than a minor burn or cut) should be referred to the Accident Department at Bridgwater Hospital. If no transport is available, or in an emergency, summon an ambulance by telephone.

8.4 All accidents must be recorded in the Accident Book kept in the Office. For the purposes of recording, an accident is an event which results in an injury (however small) to one or more persons within the boundaries of the Museum.

8.5 Sudden debilitating illness (for example, fainting, fit, chest pain) whilst on Museum premises should be treated as an accident, and recorded in the Accident Book.

8.6 First Aid Boxes are to be stocked in accordance with the latest recommendations. Ointments, lotions, tablets and medicines are not to be kept, nor administered. Boxes are provided in the Museum Office and the Sales Area. The Chairman of the Friends is responsible to the Town Clerk or his designated representative for ensuring that adequate checks are made of the First Aid boxes.

8.7 All blood spills, or spills of other body fluids, should be cleared up by the person who produced them if at all possible. If this cannot be done, rubber or other impervious gloves should be worn. All blood spills (or spills of other body fluids) should have neat fresh bleach poured upon them (do not pour the bleach on living tissue).

8.8 Clean mains water should be used for eye irrigation.

8.9 Dangerous occurrences which did not cause injury to any person must be recorded in the Incident Book, kept in the Museum Office.

8.10 The Museum sub-Committee shall examine the records of accidents and incidents annually and at other times as necessary and shall determine how improvements can be made.

9. SERVICES

9.1 Details of mains, stop-cocks, fuses and switches for water and electricity are displayed in the Office. Labels are placed near to each control to make it easier for them to be found in an emergency. Volunteers should familiarise themselves with locations of essential services.

10. COMPUTERS

10.1 Care should be taken not to work at a display screen for long periods (in excess of 30 minute) without a rest.

10.2 Volunteers who work regularly with display screens and computers should familiarise themselves with the advice given by the HSE in INDG36 - Working with VDUs.

APPENDIX A

Guidance on making a Risk Assessment involving substances

The object of the assessment is the elimination or adequate control of risks to health where substances are employed

The risk assessment shall consider both the intrinsic hazard associated with the substances and the exposure potential under their proposed conditions of use. It is therefore a systematic analysis of an operation .

Hazard evaluation

The hazard associated with a substance is its potential to impair health. Some degree of hazard can be ascribed to virtually any substance although for some the toxicity or other harmful effect is not fully known. Substances which are likely to be hazardous are those which are labelled as very toxic toxic harmful corrosive irritant or which may produce dust of any kind at a substantial concentration in air (substantial concentrations are typically 10 mg/m³ total inhalable dust).

Exposure estimation

Hazardous substances vary enormously in potency. A substance with a high hazard may present an acceptably small risk if the exposure potential is low. Conversely, unacceptable risks may result from high exposures to substances with low hazard (e.g. water in a tank).

Factors to be taken into account in evaluating exposure potential relate to both substance and activity and may include:

Substance: quantity used, physical form and properties, volatility, dustiness, concentration (if in solution)

Activity: potential for exposure (e.g. production of aerosol) route of exposure (e.g dermal, inhalation, ingestion) frequency and duration of activity

A typical risk assessment might assign a score of 1 (very low) to 4 (very high) hazard and 1 (very low) to 4 (very high) exposure. The Risk is obtained multiplying the two factors together.

Risk Score

LOW 1 to 4

MODERATE 5 to 8

HIGH 9 to 12

EXTREME above 12 Operations categorised as Extreme Risk may not take place, and every effort should be made to reduce those of High Risk (to Moderate or Low Risk), by, for example, changing the method of work. The Town Clerk or his designated representative must give approval before any High Risk operation is attempted and must satisfy himself that the risk assessment has been carried out and recorded appropriately. Risk assessments should be recorded on the form provided, signed, and placed in the file kept in the Museum Office.

Appendix B

Telephone numbers and Contact details

Town Clerk Alan Hurford 01278 435299 townclerk@bridgwatertowncouncil.gov.uk

07776 216670

Appendix C

Guidance Notes

An index of Current Guidance Notes is maintained at <http://www.bridgwatermuseum.org.uk/codepage>

Copies of current guidance notes are kept in the 3-drawer filing cabinet in the Museum Office.