

Overall responsibility for health and safety is that of: - The WBCS committee

Day-to-day responsibility for ensuring this policy is put into practice is delegated to: - The task and activity leaders running events “on the day”.

Statement of general policy	Action / Arrangements / Explanatory notes
Overall objectives 1. To prevent accidents and activity related ill health. 2. To provide adequate control of health and safety risks arising from Society’s events and activities. 3. To encourage all participants to be responsible for their own and other’s health and safety.	• The WBCS committee and the leaders of the constituent groups should review compliance with this H&S Policy annually. • A Combines Safety Plan & Risk Assessments (SPRA) will be carried out prior to an activity taking place. • For practical volunteer group tasks/activities, the Task or Activity Leader will liaise with the work site owner /client prior to the work to assess site specific risks to enable relevant information to be included in the RA. The RA will be available on the day from the activity leader. • Barn Owl monitoring does not require specific landowner meetings. • On the day of the event the SPRA should be reviewed and modified if necessary. • A briefing will take place at the start of the event if there are site specific issues to highlight. • The Task or Activity leader on the day has the authority to stop a task or change a method of working if he/she considers it to be unsafe.
Training 4. To ensure participants are adequately trained and competent to carry out the planned activities. 5. To maintain safe and healthy working conditions.	• Volunteers will receive Safety briefings appropriate to their experience. The briefing will identify hazards and controls related to the activity and this will include the safe use of tools and equipment as well as highlighting safe methods of working. • Similar briefings will be given at the start of walks and talks to identify hazards and controls. • The committee will have responsibility for ensuring that training is provided for high risk activities. For example, the use of petrol power tools. • Specific training by competent / accredited external training organisations will be arranged, where necessary, for these high-risk activities. This training should be recorded and refresher courses arranged every three years. • For practical activities, the pairing of newcomers with experienced members is recommended. • Risks associated with ‘Lone Working’ will be considered in the SPRA.
Consultation 6. To engage and consult with participants and members on day-to-day health and safety conditions, including any personal capability limitations.	• Group views should be welcomed and feedback responded to.

Emergencies 7. To implement emergency procedures - evacuation in case of fire or another significant incident.	• There will be an Emergency Plan as part of the SPRA that will include emergency procedures and actions that will depend upon the severity of the emergency. • A register will be kept of those attending and their emergency contact phone numbers. This register should be available “on site” should those contact numbers be needed. • Where relevant the post code (and if appropriate, OS map reference) for the site should be noted should emergency services need to be summoned.
Equipment 8. To provide and maintain equipment and machinery, and ensure its safe storage. 9. To provide, maintain and use appropriate PPE.	• Maintenance of all work equipment including powered machinery will be in accordance with the manufacturers’ recommendations • Relevant PPE will be identified and provided.
First Aid, Accidents and Incidents 10. To ensure that a qualified first aider is present at practical activities and walks. 11. To provide First Aid equipment. 12. To provide the means of recording accidents or incidents including “near misses”.	• A first aider must as a minimum requirement have completed a one-day emergency first aid course in the last three years. • First aid courses should be offered with competent / accredited external training organisations. This training should be recorded and refresher courses arranged every three years. • First Aid kits are provided and will be kept fully provisioned by the barn owl group leaders or the volunteer group tools coordinator. • An accident / incident report form will be available with each first aid kit and will be distributed to the task/activity leaders. • In the event of an incident/accident a copy of the completed report form should be sent to the Society secretary to log in the Society’s accident book. It is recommended that a “follow up” should take place to determine if any changes to current practice are needed. This process should include the follow up of “near misses”. • In the event of a serious incident a RIDDOR report may be required and the site owner / client advised to identify the ‘responsible person’ to notify the relevant authority. RIDDOR: (Reporting of Injuries, Diseases and Dangerous Occurrences Regulations) Forms from www.hse.gov.uk/riddor

West Berkshire Countryside Society WBCS is a voluntary organisation which promotes the understanding, appreciation and conservation of the countryside including practical activities to further these aims. In doing so, work is carried out on behalf of various land owners and organisations who may make voluntary contributions towards our costs. However, we remain a voluntary organisation and this policy reflects our commitment to implement good practice for the health and safety of our members and others who may be affected by our activities. Further detailed guidance on specific health and safety issues is available on the WBCS website at http://www.westberkscountryside.org.uk	Policy Adopted and Date
	Revision(s) and date(s)