



HEALTH & SAFETY POLICY



Health and Safety Policy			
Last Reviewed	September 2024	Next Review	February 2026
Responsible Officer	Chief Executive		

Policy Statement: The promotion of effective health and safety practice is the responsibility of all colleagues, with clearly defined responsibilities to ensure that it is appropriately resourced. All colleagues will have the necessary information, training, instruction, and supervision to enable them to carry out their duties in a safe and effective manner. Freebridge aim to ensure all legislation, regulations and codes of practices relating to health and safety at work are known and complied with and to regularly assess and review the health and safety effectiveness of operations to ensure continuous improvements.

Freebridge aims to give and maintain the highest priority to the health and safety of all colleagues and to carry out operations without creating an unacceptable risk to human health. We will therefore do all that is reasonable to prevent injury and to protect everyone from reasonably foreseeable work hazards, including all those who may come into contact with the organisation, as required by the Health and Safety at Work etc. Act 1974 and Regulations made under the Act, in addition to the Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999.

Overall responsibility for the health, safety, and welfare of Freebridge's colleagues and undertakings rests with the Board, including responsibility for:

- Promotion of good health and safety practice.
- Monitoring the implementation of good health and safety practice; and
- Ensuring the allocation of resources to implement the Health and Safety Policy
- Ensuring that the organisation embeds good practice and provides resources towards the investigation of events and the learning that can be gathered to inform best practice relating to Health and Safety

The Chief Executive acts with the authority and on behalf of the Board.

The Chief Executive shall establish the overall Health and Safety Policy for Freebridge and is responsible for:

- Implementing and monitoring the Health and Safety Policy and associated procedures.

- Delegating the performance of this task to the Leadership Team of Freebridge; and
- Further delegates the performance of tasks required to meet these responsibilities, as appropriate.

The Chief Executive and Leadership Team are committed to working with colleagues to support the management of health and safety and to provide appropriate information, instruction, supervision, and training.

Policy Detail:

We aim to give and maintain the highest priority to the health and safety of all colleagues and to carry out its operations without creating an unacceptable risk to human health. We will therefore do all that is reasonable to prevent injury and to protect everyone from reasonably foreseeable work hazards, including all those who may come into contact with the organisation, as required by relevant legislation.

The promotion of effective health and safety practice is the responsibility of all colleagues. Freebridge has the following objectives in relation to health, safety, and welfare.

We shall:

- Establish health and safety responsibility as a primary function of all colleagues, with clearly defined responsibilities (see overleaf) and to ensure that it is appropriately resourced to maintain Health and Safety standards.
- Provide all colleagues with the necessary information, training, instruction, and supervision to enable them to carry out their duties in a safe and effective manner.
- Provide colleagues with adequate welfare facilities, as well as safe systems of work methods, work areas, premises and plant, including safety equipment.
- Safeguard colleagues, tenants, visitors, contractors, and the public from any hazards and/or activities resulting from the use or disposal of substances, processes or equipment from Freebridge operations or instructions.
- Provide colleagues with such information, instruction, training and supervision as is necessary to secure their Health and Safety at work and that of others who may be affected by their actions.
- Maintain programs which ensure that all legislation, regulations, and codes of practices relating to health and safety at work are known and complied with.
- Consult and communicate constructively with colleagues to improve the health and safety aspects of the work environment.
- Regularly assess and review the health and safety effectiveness of operations to ensure continuous improvements; and
- Maintain procedures for communication and consultation between all colleagues on matters of Health, Safety and Welfare through the Health and Safety Committee.

- Effectively investigate all safety events to develop best practice and learning.

Roles and Responsibilities

Overall accountability for Health and Safety lies with the Chief Executive.

The Responsible people are Leadership Team; the below table describes the responsibility of each Leadership Team member regarding supporting the policy aims.

Role	Responsibility
Director of Service (DLO)	The owner of this policy who will ensure delivery of the Health and Safety Policy and Procedures relating to the management of Freebridge properties.
Director of Service (New Homes and Commercial)	To ensure the delivery of FCH's Health and Safety Policy and Procedures regarding new build homes and commercial properties.
Director/Deputy Chief Executive (Corporate Resources)	To ensure the appropriate finances are available to achieve FCH's Health and Safety Policy and Procedure outcomes.
Head of Service (People)	To provide a training framework to support colleagues across FCH to deliver the Health and Safety Policy and Procedures objectives.
Director of Service (Operations)	To provide second and third line of defence assurance to the business that the Health and Safety Policy and Procedures objectives are being met.

The Accountable Person(s) defined below are accountable for the following:

- Being personally aware of this policy
- Being aware of the Health and Safety procedures relating to the Building Type listed; and
- Reporting any concerns to the Health and Safety team and monitoring until completion

Building Type	Role
Sheltered Schemes	Support Manager
Offices	Facilities Manager
Community Centre	Placeshaping Manager
Voids	Operational Delivery Team Leader
Domestic General Needs Properties	Operational Delivery Team Leader
Commercial Properties	Head of Service (New Homes)
Leasehold Properties (Commercial/Residential)	Leaseholder

Colleague roles listed in the Accountable Person section must be familiar with the contents of this Policy and have had documented instructions and training on their responsibilities under the policy.

Authority to amend can only be undertaken by the Policy owner with the relevant Delegated approvals.

For information on interpretations and instructions, colleagues should contact the Subject Matter expert or Policy owner and under no circumstances should any deviation be permitted without prior approval as above.

Defined Responsibilities

Leadership Team (LT)	Has responsibility for ensuring that good health and safety management and practice is promoted and that this policy and strategy underpins all aspects of our operations. Effective risk mapping process to identify, mitigate and budget for risk balanced against the corporate pressures on the organisation.
The Chief Executive	Overall responsibility for the implementation of this policy and strategy.

Head of Service (Safety)	Ensures that Freebridge has appropriate competent advice to support the organisation, oversees the administration of accident and incident procedures and the provision of appropriate occupational health advice and guidance. Responsible for: - The provision of timely health & safety advice - Providing expert input into health & safety inspections, audits, reviews and investigations - Supporting the organisation in the production and maintenance of policy and procedure. - Providing assurance on all health and safety related matters
The Health and Safety Committee	Influence the development of health and safety policy and promote co-operation amongst colleagues in instigating, developing and monitoring health and safety measures including the review of accident statistics and trends.
Managers/accountable persons	Responsible for ensuring that policies are enforced, and the health, safety and welfare of colleagues remains at the forefront of the planning and organisation of work. Engage in all process and embed a good health and safety culture. Ensure workplace health and safety assessments are completed to comply with legislation Complete relevant self-reflection through investigating safety events and develop risk assessments and SSOW for practices within their remit. Understand their responsibilities under legislation regarding the properties they manage or oversee.
All colleagues	Have a responsibility to: - Co-operate with management on health and safety matters - Not interfere with anything provided to safeguard their health and safety - Take care of their own health and safety - Report all health and safety concerns to their manager, including all incidents and near misses that should be reported officially - Use all tools and equipment in accordance with the training provided and to report anything

	which may present a danger to themselves or others. Deliberate or negligent breaches of this responsibility may result in disciplinary action being taken.
Contractors and other persons working on Freebridge premise.	All such persons must comply at all times with the local health & safety rules as well as those of their parent organisation. Where the Freebridge requirement is the more onerous, this must take precedence. Failure to comply with this requirement will be deemed to be a serious breach of trust and may result in the contractor's employee/s being barred from work on Freebridge premises.

Risk Management and Risk Assessment

All Managers shall:

Identify those aspects of our operations which could pose a risk to the health, safety and well-being of colleagues, customers, and members of the public. Matters connected with the health and safety of our customers are referred to within customer safety policies elsewhere in this handbook (eg Asbestos Policy).

Undertake an assessment of activities and workplaces where there is the potential for harm, supported by our nominated competent person/s. These are to be reviewed on an annual basis, or following any accident or incident, or when work practices change.

Assessments must consider the diverse needs and circumstances of people we employ and those who will visit our premises and seek to accommodate these where it is reasonably practicable to do so.

For some hazards such as hazardous substances, manual handling, lone working, machinery, and fire, specific risk assessments will be carried out by competent persons.

Where the risk assessment identifies hazards which require specific control methods such as inspection and testing regimes i.e., lifts and lifting equipment or safe systems of work i.e., handling of hazardous substances or working in noisy environments these shall be developed.

Record the findings of all risk assessments and the measures drawn up to eliminate, reduce or control any significant and unacceptable risks.

Service Directors shall:

Lead on the measures to manage, mitigate, reduce, or eliminate risks.

Accidents and Incidents

All accidents and incidents should be reported, recorded and where appropriate investigated. Managers are responsible for ensuring that the relevant procedures are followed.

The Head of Service (Safety) shall:

- Report to enforcement agencies under RIDDOR (the Reporting of Injuries, Diseases and Dangerous Occurrence Regulations 1995), as appropriate.
- Provide the Health and Safety Committee with accident and incident statistics and information.

The People Team shall:

Collate information on all accidents and incidents provided by colleagues and managers.

Service Directors shall:

- Review the outcomes of investigations; and
- Ensure that any learning is shared with management colleagues.

Emergency procedures including fire and first aid**We shall:**

Appoint adequate numbers of trained colleagues to provide support and leadership in the event of emergencies, including:

- Fire Wardens and Marshals; and
- First Aiders.

Fire and emergency procedures will be available to all colleagues, appropriate to their place of work and will take account of the diverse needs of the range of people we employ.

The Fire Safety Policy will provide guidance on the procedures to manage fire risk throughout the organisation. It is found in this Policy and Procedural Handbook.

Occupational Health

The People team shall:

- Ensure that appropriate arrangements are in place for the provision of occupational health advice and guidance, including routine medical surveillance where required, such as for vibration white finger, noise induced hearing loss and respiratory problems.
- Make appropriate provision for the management of stress and other occupational conditions; and
- Ensure procedures are in place in relation to the employment and retention of people with disabilities.

Training

Managers shall ensure that:

All new starters receive health and safety induction training as soon as they start work, which will include the following information in an appropriate format for their needs:

- Health and Safety Policy and safety rules/procedures applicable to their place of work and job role
- Fire safety and evacuation
- First aid arrangements and accident reporting procedures
- Specific hazards about the job
- Safety equipment and clothing
- How to report faults/hazards and get advice

Colleagues whose job roles involve a variety of high-risk activities will receive, in addition to the above, specific training in the risk assessment process and hazard identification.

When equipment is identified that requires specific training, including vehicles, colleagues receive the required training from a competent person.

The People team are informed of any training provided so that accurate records are kept, in order that refresher or update training is carried out in good time. The People Team will support managers in this process.

We shall:

Provide accredited training, as appropriate, for those managers and colleagues who may be required to undertake specific health and safety activities, such as accident investigation, risk assessment or the training and assessment of colleagues, so that they are deemed to be competent.

Communication and consultation

We shall:

- Encourage the creation and maintenance of a positive health and safety culture amongst all colleagues, with consultation on health and safety matters at all levels;
- Ensure that such matters are a standing item on management and colleague meeting agendas.
- Consultation and all information provided will be in appropriate formats for the diverse range of people we employ.
- Establish a Health and Safety Committee, chaired by the Head of Service (Safety).

This committee will meet regularly to consider both corporate and local health and safety matters.

Union Health and Safety representatives will be members of the Committee and we will ensure we comply with the requirements of the Health and Safety (Consultation with Employees) Regulations 1996.

Make all colleagues aware of any changes or additions to:

- Policy and procedure,
- Legal requirements
- Recommended best practice,
- Planned safety training applicable to them; and
- Instruction on any new technology, equipment or changed working practice.

Establish a dedicated area of the company intranet on Health and Safety and Fire Safety.

Monitoring

We shall:

- Undertake an annual audit of all health and safety practices and compliance with relevant legislation and approved codes of practice by an appropriate measure (Internal review or external audit).
- Report the findings to the Management Team and Health and Safety Committee; and
- Report annually to the Board on health and safety activity, to include:
 - Accident statistics,
 - Key actions undertaken in the year to reduce or eliminate risks highlighted at the previous audit; and
 - New areas highlighted for action in the coming year.