

Our Health & Safety Statement outlines West Heanton's commitment to providing safe environments for residents, visitors, team members and others across the home and our community services. We recognise that effective health and safety arrangements are essential to protecting people from avoidable harm, supporting wellbeing and maintaining a safe, caring and well-managed service.

This statement sets out our overall approach to health and safety and applies to all areas of West Heanton, including the home, grounds, vehicles where applicable, activities, visiting arrangements and community-based support. It applies to residents, team members, volunteers, visitors, contractors, professionals and anyone else who may be affected by our work.

Our Health and Safety Commitment

- We will take reasonable steps to protect the health, safety and welfare of people who live at, work at, visit or receive support from West Heanton.
- We will assess risks to people's health and safety and put proportionate measures in place to reduce or manage those risks.
- We will maintain premises, equipment and working practices that are safe, suitable and appropriate for their intended use.
- We will promote a positive safety culture where concerns are reported, listened to and acted upon.
- We will review our arrangements regularly and learn from incidents, feedback, audits and changes in guidance or legislation.

Our approach is based on prevention, good communication, clear responsibilities and practical risk management. We aim to support people's independence, choice and community involvement while managing safety in a sensible and proportionate way.

Responsibilities

West Heanton's management team has overall responsibility for ensuring suitable health and safety arrangements are in place. Day-to-day responsibility is shared across the service, with everyone expected to act safely and raise concerns promptly.

- Managers are responsible for providing leadership, safe systems of work, risk assessments, training, supervision and monitoring.
- Team members are responsible for following safe working procedures, using equipment correctly, attending training and reporting hazards, incidents or near misses.
- Visitors, contractors and professionals are expected to follow site safety instructions, sign in and out where required, and cooperate with any reasonable health and safety measures.
- Residents and people using our services will be supported to understand and follow safety arrangements in a way that respects their needs, rights, capacity and preferences.

Health and safety is everyone's responsibility. We encourage open communication so that risks can be identified early and addressed before harm occurs.

Risk Assessment and Safe Care

We assess and manage risks connected with care, support, premises, activities, equipment, transport, community access and individual needs. Risk assessments are intended to promote safety while supporting independence, choice and quality of life.

- Individual care and support risks are assessed, recorded and reviewed as part of care planning.
- Environmental risks are assessed through checks, audits, maintenance arrangements and reporting systems.
- Moving and handling, falls, medicines, nutrition, infection prevention, behaviour-related risks and community activities are managed through appropriate procedures and staff guidance.
- Where risks cannot be removed, we aim to reduce them as far as reasonably practicable and keep arrangements under review.

Safe Premises, Equipment and Environment

We aim to provide premises and equipment that are safe, clean, suitable and properly maintained. This includes the home, grounds, communal areas, private rooms, team areas and areas used for activities or services.

- Regular checks are carried out on the environment, equipment, utilities and safety systems.
- Maintenance issues, hazards and defects should be reported promptly and acted upon according to risk.
- Contractors are expected to work safely, provide relevant information where required and follow site procedures.
- Access routes, emergency exits and essential safety areas must be kept clear wherever possible.

Our safety arrangements include attention to slips, trips and falls, lighting, heating, water safety, electrical safety, gas safety, hazardous substances, waste, cleaning, outdoor areas and vehicle movement where relevant.

Fire Safety and Emergency Preparedness

We maintain fire safety and emergency arrangements to help protect people in the event of fire, severe weather, utilities failure, infection outbreak or another emergency affecting the service.

- Fire risk assessments, evacuation arrangements and fire safety checks are kept under review.
- Team members receive fire safety information, instruction and training relevant to their role.
- Residents' individual evacuation needs are considered and recorded where required.
- Visitors and contractors must follow fire safety instructions and sign in and out where required so that people on site can be accounted for.
- Business continuity and emergency procedures are reviewed so that essential care and support can continue as safely as possible.

Infection Prevention and Control

- We promote hand hygiene, cleanliness, safe waste management and appropriate use of personal protective equipment where required.
- People who are unwell with symptoms of infectious illness may be asked not to visit until it is safe to do so.
- Outbreaks or increased infection risks are managed through proportionate measures, communication and review.
- Team members follow infection prevention procedures relevant to care, cleaning, laundry, food, clinical waste and personal care.

Infection prevention arrangements are designed to protect residents, team members, visitors and others while maintaining dignity, compassion and meaningful contact wherever possible.

Training, Communication and Consultation

We provide team members with health and safety information, instruction, training and supervision appropriate to their role. We also communicate key safety information to residents, visitors, contractors and professionals where relevant.

- Health and safety training is included in induction and refreshed as required.
- Team members are encouraged to raise concerns, suggest improvements and report hazards without delay.
- Safety information is shared through meetings, supervision, handovers, notices, policies, direct guidance and our internal online team portal.
- Where changes affect people using the service, we aim to explain these clearly and support people to understand what they mean in practice.

Good communication helps us maintain a safe service and ensures health and safety remains part of everyday practice rather than a separate activity.

Incident Reporting, Learning and Improvement

Accidents, incidents, near misses, hazards and safety concerns should be reported promptly. We use reporting and review processes to understand what happened, reduce the likelihood of recurrence and support continuous improvement.

- Incidents are recorded and reviewed according to their seriousness and potential impact.
- Immediate action is taken where necessary to protect people from further harm.
- Relevant notifications and reports are made where required.
- Learning is shared with team members and used to update risk assessments, procedures, training or environmental arrangements.

We aim to create an open learning culture in which reporting is encouraged and improvement is valued.

Safeguarding, Wellbeing and Personal Safety

Health and safety arrangements work alongside our safeguarding, dignity, mental capacity, equality and wellbeing responsibilities. We aim to protect people from avoidable harm while respecting their rights, preferences, independence and relationships.

Community Services and Activities

Where support is provided in the community or away from the main site, we consider risks linked to travel, lone working, access, activities, public spaces, weather, communication and individual support needs.

- Community-based support is planned with attention to the person's needs, preferences and assessed risks.
- Team members follow lone working, travel, communication and emergency arrangements where relevant.
- Activities are supported in a way that encourages participation while managing foreseeable risks.
- Changes in circumstances, environment or health are considered and acted upon promptly.

Our aim is to enable people to live active and meaningful lives while ensuring support is planned and delivered as safely as possible.

Monitoring and Review

We monitor health and safety through checks, audits, maintenance records, incident reviews, risk assessments, team feedback, resident feedback and management oversight. Findings are used to identify improvements and ensure arrangements remain effective.

This Health & Safety Statement will be reviewed at least annually and sooner if there are significant changes to legislation, guidance, service arrangements, premises, equipment, incidents or identified risks.