

# The Positive Herd Project

## Health and Safety Policy

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### Introduction

The Positive Herd Project recognises the responsibility it has to its employees, volunteers and visitors under the Health and Safety at Work Act 1974 and the provisions of the Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999.

This policy applies to all staff and volunteers.

This policy will be reviewed annually. However as this policy is a working document, any areas identified in need of change should be noted and the policy should be reviewed at the first available opportunity.

## **Health and Safety Statement of Intent**

The Positive Herd Project is fully committed to ensuring the Health, Safety and Welfare of all our employees, volunteers and those other parties that may be affected by our activities. This statement of intent should be read in conjunction with our Health and Safety Policy and Procedures Manual.

We will endeavour to maintain a safe and healthy working environment at all times on our premises and, as far as reasonably practicable any place where we carry out work activities away from our own premises.

We will strive to provide information, instruction, training and supervision to all employees, volunteers and provide competent staff to carry out their duties within the organisation.

The Positive Herd Project requires all employees to ensure they carry out their duty under the Health and Safety at Work Act 1974 and all other relevant legislation. All employees and volunteers must co-operate with the organisation to carry out their health and safety responsibilities. To neglect these responsibilities would be seen as a direct infringement of the Health and Safety policy.

## **Responsibilities**

### **Responsibilities of the organisation**

- Provide a suitable and acceptable environment in which to work
- Provide and maintain a safe and healthy working environment
- Set and maintain appropriate standards of safety, health and cleanliness
- Carry out regular health and safety risk assessments
- Ensure that staff and volunteers are made aware of the Health and Safety policy.

### **Responsibilities of staff and volunteers**

Staff and Volunteers must take all reasonable care for their own individual health and safety, and be concerned for any other persons who may be affected by their own acts or omissions. In particular they must:

- Know, or seek explanation of, and observe the Health and Safety Policy.
- Conduct themselves as to promote and maintain a safe, healthy, clean and tidy environment in the best interests of all concerned.
- Ensure that working environments are kept tidy and are not subject to any dangerous obstructions.
- Read and follow the necessary risk assessments. Notify senior staff if an error is identified or the risk assessments need amending.
- Report any incidents, situations or any safety hazard which may lead to injury or damage.

### **Responsible Person**

The review and prioritisation of this policy is ultimately the responsibility of the trustees of the organisation. However, application of the Health and Safety procedures may be delegated to the yard manager, who is the designated “Responsible Person” for that premises.

The responsibility of the Responsible Person extends to all aspects of this policy, including information, training and induction of volunteers.

### **Concerns over safety**

All employees and volunteers have the right and responsibility to raise any matters concerning health and safety with the appropriate Responsible Person.

Any staff or volunteer, who considers that a health and safety issue has not been dealt with satisfactorily, may discuss the matter with senior staff, with a view to pursuing the matter either informally, or through the grievance procedure.

### **Training**

All staff and volunteers should attend an Introductory Training before commencing in their role. This covers the organisation’s aims and objectives, health and safety, safeguarding and responsibilities within the role. All staff and volunteers will be instructed of where to find the health and safety policy, as well as other relevant policies.

Staff and volunteers will be told the names of the appropriate Responsible Person and First Aiders on induction at their place of work.

All volunteers have the opportunity to attend the Horse Care Volunteer Training Programme which runs for a year (stage 1 compulsory for horse care volunteers). Non-horse care volunteers must attend the Introductory Training and have the opportunity to access additional training if they so require.

Staff are subject to extensive and ongoing training relevant to their position and level of experience.

### **Risk Assessments**

Risk assessments shall be carried out at all The Positive Herd Project’s premises in order to identify hazards, determine risks, and put in place any necessary preventative measures. Findings of any risk assessments shall be made available to staff and volunteers upon induction training.

Separate risk assessments shall be completed for each individual horse in The Positive Herd Project’s care, identifying any potential risk to staff or volunteers working with that animal. These risk assessments shall be the responsibility of the Equine Behaviour and Training Department.

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All other risk assessments will be conducted by the trustees or Responsible Person in consultation with the appropriate staff members.

### Risk assessment records

Risk assessments shall be recorded in writing, and be subject to an annual review. If circumstances change it may be necessary to undertake an earlier review. The process is as follows:

- Risk Assessments will be carried out on all areas where a significant risk is identified by the responsible person.
- The findings of this assessment will be reported to the CEO and trustees.
- The CEO and trustees will approve action required to eliminate, rectify or make safe any risks identified.
- Assessments will be reviewed annually or as changes to working practices or staff occur.
- Information about risk assessments will be conveyed to employees and volunteers at induction training.

### New and expectant mothers

New and expectant mothers are a key area identified in the Management Regulation updates of 1999 and require specific risk assessment to ensure that both the mother and the unborn child are not placed at risk.

## The Control of Substances Hazardous to Health (COSHH)

The use, transportation and storage of chemicals and other hazardous substances in the workplace is regulated by the Control of Substances Hazardous to Health Regulations 2002 (COSHH).

COSHH data sheets and Assessments will be kept in writing at The Positive Herd Project office.

Only competent persons may use chemicals in the work area. A competent person in this instance is someone who has been trained in the use of the specific substance.

### Encountering Hazardous substances

Within the work of The Positive Herd Project, hazardous substances might be encountered through:

- Substances used directly in work activities (e.g. powders, creams and sprays for animal use, animal medication, cleaning agents, paints);
- Naturally occurring substances (e.g. dust on hay, pollen, poisonous plants, allergens);
- Biological agents such as bacteria and other micro-organisms.

### Identification and assessment

The Responsible person shall:

- identify all substances requiring a COSHH Assessment and for undertaking such Assessments.
- inform all relevant employees about COSHH Assessments.
- ensuring that any new substances will be assessed as required and all relevant employees made aware of the findings.

### Manual Handling

The Manual Handling Regulations 1992 (amended 2002) cover all aspects of load handling in the workplace.

At The Positive Herd Project manual handling tasks will typically include:

- Moving heavy items such as buckets, hay and feed.
- Moving items using a wheel barrow.
- Reaching, lifting and carrying, such as horse tack or grooming equipment.
- Sweeping and shovelling to maintain stables and paddocks.

### Manual handling Risk Assessments and control measures

- Risk Assessments carried out will have identified those operations that include manual handling and those that require a full Manual Handling Assessment.
- The risk assessment will include identification of control measures required.
- Within the risk assessments, consideration will be given to avoiding manual handling where possible and appropriate. Where manual handling cannot be avoided, control measures will be identified in the risk assessment.
- Additional specific risk assessments will be undertaken as necessary for individual employees at risk e.g. pregnant women, those with injuries or medical conditions.
- Completed risk assessments are located at The Positive Herd Project's office, copies should be available at each yard.

### Moving and Handling People with Disabilities

The Positive Herd Project has a policy of not physically moving and handling any staff, volunteer or visitor with physical difficulties. Staff and volunteers are not provided with the appropriate training or equipment to carry out these activities, and are not permitted to do so.

Staff, volunteers or visitors who need physical help should have a Carer in attendance to give aid when necessary, and ensure that they provide all their own moving and handling equipment.

## Equipment

All equipment used or purchased must be “fit for purpose” and comply with all relevant regulations relating to the area it is to be used. This affects all pieces of equipment for use at work and these are covered by the Provision and Use of Workplace Equipment Regulations 1998 (PUWER). There are a number of other regulations which also relate to equipment used at work, including electrical safety, CE marking, machine guarding and the Road Traffic Act.

### Purchasing equipment

All equipment purchased must conform to the relevant safety standards as dictated for that equipment at the time of use.

### Existing equipment

- All existing equipment must comply with PUWER (Provision and Use of Work Equipment Regulations) ie is fit for the purpose it is intended for and complies with the current relevant legislation related to that type of equipment. Old electrical equipment may not comply with current legislation and therefore it should not be used.
- Any guards identified must be fitted before use and protective equipment must be made available.
- Before using equipment, employees/ volunteers should carry out a visual check on all equipment and notify the yard manager if a fault is spotted.
- Defective or unsafe equipment must be marked as such and removed from circulation until repaired by a competent person or destroyed.
- Instruction in the safe use of all equipment will be given in the induction training as identified in risk assessments.
- If further instruction is required, employees and staff will receive training before being signed off as a competent person in using the equipment in question.

### Testing electrical equipment

- The frequency for testing portable and transportable equipment will be determined by risk assessment. In low risk environments eg an office, a visual inspection will normally suffice, in higher risk environments (out in all weathers, or used in extremes of temperature) more frequent and thorough testing will be required.
- A scheme/ timetable for inspection and testing of electrical equipment in the workplace will be drawn up by the yard manager in conjunction with the organisation's trustees.

### Portable Appliance Testing (PAT) testing

A competent body specialist PAT company or individual, or electrician will carry out PAT inspections in accordance with the scheme/timetable devised.

### Mains electricity testing

In addition, mains electricity testing will be done on a 10 yearly basis by a competent person. Responsibility for arranging the mains testing rests with the trustees.

## **Lone Working**

The Positive Herd Project has a separate Lone Working Policy which should be referred to as part of the Health and Safety Policy and Procedures.

The Lone Working policy ensures that lone workers are not exposed to additional risks by virtue of their lone working, and identifies a process to ensure that risks are assessed and that control measures are in place.

### **Guidance for lone workers**

- Volunteers are not permitted to do any lone working at any of the premises.
- Employees may be required to carry out lone working as and when they are fully trained and deemed competent by senior staff.
- Employees that may carry out lone working are expected to follow the general advice detailed in the lone working policy to minimise risks involved in lone working.

## **Young Persons at Work**

Young workers (between the age of 13 and 18 years old) are seen as being particularly at risk in the work place because of their possible inexperience and lack of awareness of existing or potential risks.

The Positive Herd Project may consider young workers on a volunteer basis or through work experience schemes approved by the local education authority.

As required in The Health and Safety (Young Persons) Regulations 1997, our organisation will take the following measures to protect young workers:

- Assess the risks to young people before they start work.
- Take into account their inexperience and lack of awareness of existing or potential risks.
- Conduct specific risk assessments for the work they will undertake.
- As appropriate, provide information to the work experience co-ordinator/ parents about the risk and the control measures introduced.
- Take account of the risk assessment in determining whether the young person should be prohibited from certain work activities. This will include taking into account whether the task is necessary for their training, whether risks have been reduced as far as is practical and the amount of supervision to be provided by a competent person.

## **Home Working**

It is recognised that some employees and volunteers carry out work from home.

The organisation is aware that under the Health and Safety at Work Act, employers have a duty to protect the health, safety and welfare of their employees including home workers. Most of the Regulations under the HSWA apply to home workers as well as to employees working at the workplace.

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### The Positive Herd Project will take the following measures:

- Carry out risk assessments for any work required and recording the appropriate action.
- Check on assessments on an ongoing basis or if there is a change in working conditions.
- Provide necessary instruction to staff.
- Set reasonable targets for completion of work.
- Carrying out risk assessments and equipment checks on any equipment owned by The Positive Herd Project that is to be used at an employee or volunteers home.

### Employees and volunteers working at home must:

- Ensure that they take regular rest breaks and do not spend extended amounts of time in one position, for example when working at a computer,
- Complete visual checks on any personal equipment that they may be using to ensure it is in safe working order before starting work.
- Complete visual checks on any equipment provided by The Positive Herd Project to make sure it is in safe working order before starting work. Report and faults or problems to the yard manager or senior staff.
- Contact senior staff or the yard manager if there is any problem in the work load or in completing the task. Adjustments will be made to ensure the wellbeing of the employee or volunteer.

## Violence and Aggression

The Health and Safety at Work etc. Act 1974, and the Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999 impose duties on organisations, including assessing the risk of violence, such as assault or verbal abuse, and protecting employees and volunteers from those risks as far as reasonably practicable.

The Positive Herd Project will endeavour to eliminate or reduce the likelihood of violence at work, recognising its risk to the individuals concerned and the detrimental effect on staff morale and the reputation of the organisation.

We will assess the risks to all our staff and volunteers and introduce all reasonable steps to minimise and control the risk of violence, verbal abuse or intimidating behaviour. These control measures include carrying out Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) checks on all prospective employees and volunteers. DBS checks on employees and volunteers should be renewed annually. Any cause for concern raised through the DBS check will be assessed by senior staff, and where appropriate additional risk assessments will be put into place to reduce the risk.

The Positive Herd Project has a zero-tolerance policy on abusive, violent or aggressive behaviour towards any of its employees, volunteers or visitors. Reporting of such incidents will not reflect badly on employees or volunteers and all allegations will be investigated in full.

If an employee or volunteer is found to be acting in an aggressive, violent or abusive manner then disciplinary action will be taken in line with the Disciplinary Policy.

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Employees and volunteers should report to the yard manager or Safeguarding Lead if they experience any incident that subjects them to:

- Physical assault, whether or not injury results.
- Verbal abuse and shouting.
- Threatening behaviour, with or without any form of weapon.
- Anything that they feel might damage their health through anxiety or stress.

### Mobile Phones and Photography

The Positive Herd Project encourages employees and volunteers to keep their personal mobile phones on them in case of emergency. The phone should be charged and kept in an accessible pocket.

Using personal mobile phones is not permitted while working with the horses, any electrical equipment or machinery. Personal phones may be used on allocated breaks.

It is an offence to use a hand held mobile phone or similar device while driving or in certain other circumstances. The use of a hand held phone even when stationary i.e. in a traffic jam at the traffic lights is also an offence. Employees and volunteers caught breaching this ruling will be personally liable to both a fine and penalty points on their licence, as issued by statutory authorities.

Please be aware that you are not permitted to take any photographs or video footage of any of our service users or visitors under any circumstances. Please refer to our confidentiality and safeguarding policy for more details. You may only take photographs or video footage of any employees or volunteers with their permission and the permission of your supervisor.

Visitors and service users must be discouraged from taking photographs or video footage which includes any other person, due to confidentiality and safeguarding.

### Drivers

The Positive Herd Project will require competent employees to drive for work purposes, which includes providing home checks and consultations with clients or towing trailers.

Only employees who have been signed off and included on the vehicle insurance may drive any of The Positive Herd Project's vehicles. The driver must provide evidence that they hold the appropriate license and are capable of lawfully driving the vehicle in question.

Volunteers and Employees may be required to drive their own vehicle while working for The Positive Herd Project. This might include attending home checks or consultations, collecting volunteers or driving between sites. It does not include travel to and from a single place of work.

#### If using their own vehicle the employee or volunteer must:

- Ensure that their vehicle is of good condition and that it is roadworthy and safe to drive.

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- Be aware of what action needs to be taken in an emergency situation such as a breakdown.
- Contact their car insurance provider and notify them of the change in use. They will need to be covered for volunteer driver insurance.
- Ensure that they are physically fit to drive. Notify senior staff if they feel unfit for whatever reason.
- Abide by the Highway Code and drive carefully, considerately and lawfully.

### First Aid

All senior staff and yard managers at The Positive Herd Project are First Aiders, and are trained to administer first aid at work. All First Aid training shall be renewed regularly and kept in date.

All premises shall have a human First Aid Box. All staff and volunteers will be informed of the location of the first aid box at induction training.

The First Aiders will ensure that the contents of the First Aid Box are kept in good condition and any item used is replaced as soon as possible.

A leaflet giving general First Aid guidance will be available inside the First Aid Box. If an item is used please notify the Responsible Person or a First Aider so they can ensure the injury is recorded and item replaced. First aid is for minor or temporary treatment only.

No member of staff or volunteer should give first aid treatment to another person unless trained to do so.

### Accidents

In the case of a serious accident or emergency call 999 immediately and seek medical advice.

Where necessary, first aid should be administered by a trained First Aider, or by someone following instructions from a medical professional after calling 999.

Equipment that might have contributed to the accident should be isolated and any obstructions removed. The area must be made safe as soon as possible, which might mean restricting access to it until the accident has been fully investigated.

### Near Miss Incidents

A near miss incident represents an event that does not cause injury or damage to property, but has the potential to cause significant injury or property damage. The Responsible Person is responsible for carrying out investigations of near miss incidents. They should ensure other parties are informed and will monitor the progress of any actions taken to prevent a recurrence.

### **Dangerous Occurrences**

A dangerous occurrence represents an event that normally involves damage to property and has the potential to cause serious injury. Dangerous occurrences are clearly defined within the Reporting of Injuries, Diseases and Dangerous Occurrences Regulations (RIDDOR) 1995, Schedule 2.

Employees and volunteers should report dangerous occurrences to the Responsible Person as soon as practicable. Where the occurrence is reportable under RIDDOR HSE must be informed.

### **Potentially Disabling or Disabling Accidents**

Potentially disabling injuries represent any injury suffered whilst at work, which requires the injured party to seek treatment from a qualified medical practitioner.

A disabling injury represents an injury where the injured person is unfit for work on the day following that on which the injury occurred.

Potentially disabling or disabling accidents will be reported to the Responsible Person as soon as is practicable and will be the subject of an immediate investigation.

### **Major Accidents**

A major injury represents an injury resulting in broken bones (other than toes and digits) and any injury that results in a person being detained in hospital for a period greater than 24 hours. In the event of a major accident, all appropriate personnel will be informed as soon as is practicable. The Responsible Person will ensure that the Health and Safety Executive is promptly informed.

Initial investigations at the site of the accident will be carried out ensuring that there is no disturbance of evidence or items that could have contributed to the cause of the accident.

The initial investigation would be followed up by a detailed investigation. On completion of this investigation, a report of findings, including details of short and long term actions, together with time scales required to prevent recurrence, will be drawn up.

### **Fatal Accident**

In the event of a fatal accident, the area of the accident will be isolated and nothing will be moved or interfered with, except by the emergency services or where action is required to protect others who may be at imminent risk.

The Responsible Person will inform the Health & Safety authorities by telephone as soon as possible. Full co-operation will be given by personnel throughout all levels of the company to the Health and Safety Executive representatives conducting any investigations.

## Reporting Accidents

All accidents and first aid treatments, plus near misses, no matter how minor, will be reported in the accident book which is held in the office at each premises. Employees and volunteers will be shown the location of the accident book on their induction. Any accidents requiring the use of the emergency services must be dealt with prior to recording in the log book.

All minor and major accidents should be reported to the Responsible Person as soon as possible, and investigated thoroughly.

Serious injury involving emergency services or absence from work for more than 3 days should be reviewed and reported to the HSE under RIDDOR (Reporting of Incidents, Diseases and Dangerous Occurrences Regulations).

Accidents or near misses can be reported in the following ways:

Telephone	0845 3009923
Fax.	0845 3009924
E-mail	riddor@natbrit.com
Web site	<a href="http://www.hse.gov.uk/riddor/">www.hse.gov.uk/riddor/</a>

Categories of accidents covered by this reporting procedure are as specified on the HSE RIDDOR website <http://www.hse.gov.uk/riddor/guidance.htm>

**ALL ACCIDENTS MUST BE RECORDED IN THE ACCIDENT BOOK NO MATTER HOW MINOR THEY SEEM AT THE TIME.**

## Fire and Evacuation

The Responsible Person and trustees will ensure that a fire risk assessment for each premises is completed on an annual basis.

On induction training employees and volunteers will be shown where the evacuation exits for any buildings are and where the assembly point is.

If a fire is detected or the smoke alarm sounds then this procedure should be followed:

- If fire is detected then the fire alarm should be activated. Notify any people in the building.
- On hearing the fire alarm, proceed to the nearest exit and then to the assembly point.
- Do not endanger yourselves or others by stopping to gather personal possessions.
- Do not operate fire extinguishers unless you have received instruction on how to do so.
- Do not endanger yourself or others by attempting to fight the fire.
- Contact emergency services if it has not already been done.
- The senior person on site shall take a roll call at the fire assembly point.

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A full fire risk assessment for each premises will be completed by a competent, professional person or company. Precautionary measures such as fire extinguishers and alarms will be purchased, installed and maintained following professional advice.

All employees will be given full training in using the equipment and on fire awareness and safety.

### Smoking

This policy section has been developed to protect all employees, volunteers, service users, customers and visitors from exposure to second-hand smoke and to comply with the Health Act 2006.

Smoking is prohibited in all enclosed and partially enclosed premises in the workplace, and where there are flammable materials such as hay or straw. No smoking signs will be visible across site, particularly on buildings or where there are flammable materials.

Smoking, including the smoking of e-cigarettes, may only be permitted in designated smoking areas, as outlined in the induction training.

If a member of staff or volunteer does not comply with this policy this may result in disciplinary action. Those who do not comply with the smoke free law may also be liable to a fixed penalty fine and possible criminal prosecution.

### Alcohol and Drugs

It is The Positive Herd Project's aim to ensure the provision of a safe working environment and a high standard of safety for its employees, volunteers and clients. It therefore has the responsibility to recognise the potential health and safety risks within the working environment which may occur as a result of alcohol and drug abuse or the effects of long-term or temporary use of prescription medication.

Employees and volunteers must not come to work at The Positive Herd Project if they are under the influence of alcohol or drugs, or if they have been advised by a doctor not to undertake work activities whilst taking certain prescription medication. If in breach of this policy then they may be subject to disciplinary procedures.

The consumption of alcohol during working hours is not permitted. Staff or volunteers under the influence of alcohol are not permitted to carry out any work or be in the vicinity of the animals.

Alcohol may occasionally be consumed by employees, volunteers and visitors at specially organised events such as summer fairs or working parties. Alcohol may only be consumed at these events once all work related tasks are complete.

## Insurance

The following insurance cover is held by the organisation:

- Employers Liability Insurance
- Public Liability insurance
- Professional Liability Insurance
- Trustee Insurance

## Review

This policy will be reviewed on an annual basis unless we identify a need to review the policy earlier.

This policy should be read in conjunction with the following:

- Risk Assessments
- Lone Working Policy

## Employee and Volunteer Confirmation of Reading

I confirm that I have been made fully aware of, and understand the contents of, the Health and Safety Policy and Procedures Manual. Copies of the Policy and Procedure Manual are available in the office at each premises.

Name	Position	Date	Signature