Health and Safety Policy

Minster Lovell Scout Group

Document Ref: MVSG/H&S/2025/01 Date of Issue: 16th November 2025

Review Date: November 2026

Approved by: Group Executive Committee Policy Owner: Group Lead Volunteer (GLV)

1. Statement of Intent

Minster Lovell Scout Group is committed to ensuring the health, safety, and welfare of its young people, volunteers, and visitors. We recognise that Scouting involves adventure and managed risk; our goal is to provide a safe and healthy environment by managing these risks so far as is reasonably practicable.

This policy reflects our specific circumstances as a small, voluntary group operating in a rural location with minimal facilities and limited funding.

2. Responsibilities

Role Responsibility

Group Lead Volunteer (GLV) Overall responsibility for the implementation, monitoring, and annual review of this policy. Ensures all activities are covered by a suitable and sufficient risk assessment.

Section Leaders Responsible for day-to-day safety, including completing and communicating risk assessments for their activities, ensuring correct supervision ratios, and managing incidents promptly.

Executive Committee Provides necessary resources (within the limits of the Group's minimal funding) to meet health and safety obligations, and reviews the policy annually. Responsible for premises maintenance and insurance.

All Volunteers & Participants Have a duty of care to cooperate with this policy, follow safety instructions, and report any hazards or concerns to a Section Leader or the GLV immediately.

3. The Rural Site and Grass Area Hazards

Our meeting place is situated in a rural area, and the safety management must specifically address the natural hazards present, particularly those affecting the external grass area.

3.1 Wildlife and Grass Area Management

Animal Droppings (Faeces): The grass area is susceptible to droppings from local wildlife (e.g., rabbits, foxes, deer) which pose a risk of infection (e.g., E. coli O157) if swallowed.

Control Measures:

Visually check the grass area before use, and remove any visible droppings.

Strict emphasis on handwashing before eating, drinking, or after outdoor activities. Hand sanitiser to be readily available outdoors.

Footwear worn outdoors should be removed or cleaned before entering the indoor facility.

Burrows/Trip Hazards: The presence of wildlife (e.g., rabbits) can lead to holes or uneven ground.

Control Measures:

Perform a quick site check of the activity area before each session, particularly after periods of heavy rain or prolonged inactivity.

Clearly mark or cordon off any significant holes or uneven areas.

Ensure appropriate footwear is worn for outdoor activities.

Flora and Fauna: The site may contain stinging nettles, thorns, or poisonous fungi/plants depending on the season.

Control Measures:

Educate young people on identifying and avoiding common local hazards.

Cut back vegetation on main pathways as part of routine maintenance.

3.2 Weather and Environmental Factors

Mud/Slipping: Wet conditions can make the grass area and access paths very slippery.

Control Measures: Limit access or change activities to suit the conditions. Grit or clear paths where possible.

Ticks and Insect Bites: The rural location increases the risk of tick exposure (risk of Lyme disease).

Control Measures: Advise appropriate clothing for outdoor sessions (long trousers). Provide information to parents/carers on checking for ticks after outdoor activities.

4. Minimal Funding and Facilities

As a group with minimal funding, we must balance safety requirements with resource limitations.

4.1 Premises and Equipment

Maintenance: Due to minimal funding, premises and equipment maintenance is largely carried out by volunteers.

Control Measures: All volunteers conducting maintenance must be competent for the task (or supervised by a competent person). A simple maintenance log/checklist will be used for essential items (e.g., fire extinguishers, electrical equipment, structure checks).

Facilities: The toilet and kitchen facilities are minimal.

Control Measures:

Ensure frequent checks and cleaning of toilets (at least once per session) to maintain hygiene.

Food preparation is kept to a minimum and follows strict basic hygiene rules (e.g., handwashing, separate chopping boards) to mitigate the lack of commercial-grade facilities.

4.2 Emergency Provision

First Aid: The Group does not have a dedicated First Aid room.

Control Measures: A suitably stocked First Aid kit must be available at all times and taken to all activities. A designated, currently qualified First Aider will be present for all activities, or an 'Appointed Person' for minor issues. The location of the kit and the appointed person will be signposted.

5. HSE and Statutory Requirements

While many HSE regulations primarily apply to employers, Minster Lovell Scout Group upholds a common law Duty of Care to all members, volunteers, and visitors.

5.1 Risk Assessment

All activities must be assessed to identify hazards and implement control measures to make the risk As Low As Reasonably Practicable (ALARP).

Risk assessments must be suitable and sufficient for the activity and recorded.

Risk assessments must be reviewed if the activity, environment, or conditions change. If in doubt, STOP the activity.

5.2 Incident Reporting

All accidents, injuries, or 'Near Misses' (incidents that could have caused harm) must be recorded immediately in the Group's Incident/Accident Book.

The GLV will review all serious incidents and decide if a report is required to The Scout Association and, where applicable (e.g., serious injury), to the HSE under RIDDOR (Reporting of Injuries, Diseases and Dangerous Occurrences Regulations).

5.3 Fire Safety

A basic Fire Risk Assessment for the premises is completed and reviewed annually.

Clearly defined escape routes and assembly points are communicated to all participants.

Fire extinguishers are checked annually by a competent person.

5.4 DBS and Safeguarding

This policy operates alongside The Scout Association’s policies on Safeguarding and Safety. All volunteers undergo necessary Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) checks.

6. Emergency Procedures

Emergency Procedure

Fire 1. Activate Alarm/Shout 'FIRE!'. 2. Evacuate immediately via the nearest safe exit. 3. Assemble at the designated Assembly Point (outside the main gate). 4. Call 999 for the Fire Brigade. 5. Do not re-enter the building until cleared by the Fire Brigade.

Serious Injury 1. Secure the area. 2. Administer First Aid by the qualified person. 3. Call 999 if necessary. 4. Inform GLV and record in the Incident Book.

Discovery of Hazard 1. Stop the activity if necessary. 2. Isolate/Cordon off the hazard. 3. Report immediately to a Section Leader/GLV.

Appendix A: Risk Assessment Form

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Remember: A Risk Assessment must be completed before starting any activity that is not covered by the routine safety procedures (e.g., using the grass area, off-site visits, new equipment).

Activity/Event Title: Date of Assessment:

Section(s) Involved: Location:

Assessor (Leader): Date(s) of Activity:

Part 1: Initial Hazard Identification

List the potential hazards associated with this activity or location. Consider the specific rural/wildlife risks outlined in the H&S Policy.

No. Hazard (What could cause harm?) Who is at Risk? (Young people, leaders, public?) Existing Control Measures (What is already in place?)

1. Uneven ground/trip hazards (e.g., rabbit burrows, tree roots) Young people, Leaders Site check before use, appropriate footwear

2. Animal droppings/waste in grass area Young people Visual check/removal, mandatory handwashing

3. Poor hygiene in minimal facilities (e.g., lack of soap/water) All Regular facilities checks/cleaning, carrying hand sanitiser

4. Weather related (e.g., heat, heavy rain/slippery mud) All Decision to cancel or move indoors, use of appropriate clothing

5. (Add Specific Activity Hazard) e.g., using cooking stove

6. (Add Specific Activity Hazard) e.g., lifting heavy items

Part 2: Assessing the Risk

For each hazard listed above, assess the risk level, implement new control measures, and state the residual risk.

Risk Rating Matrix

To assess the risk, multiply Likelihood by Severity.

Risk Score=Likelihood×Severity

Likelihood (L) Score Severity (S) Score Risk Rating Action Required

Very Unlikely 1 Minor (Small cuts, light bruising) 1 1-2 (Low) Routine supervision.

Unlikely 2 Moderate (Sprain, minor burns, infection) 2 3-4 (Medium) Controls must be checked and managed.

Likely 3 Major (Broken bones, concussion, serious infection) 3 6-9 (High) Activity is high-risk. STOP and re-design. New controls are essential.

Risk Assessment Record

Hazard No. Likelihood (L) Severity (S) Initial Risk Score (L x S) Additional Control Measures Required Residual Risk Score (L x S)

1. e.g., Cordon off area with caution tape; use torches if dark.

2. e.g., Ensure Leaders specifically supervise handwashing before snack time.

3. e.g., Bring own emergency supply of water/soap/sanitiser.

4. e.g., Have an indoor wet-weather backup activity prepared; issue Sun Cream advice.

Part 3: Review and Communication

Section Detail

Is the residual risk acceptable? (Yes/No) If No, the activity must not proceed until further controls are added.

All leaders involved have read and understood this risk assessment. (Yes/No)

All young people have been briefed on the specific safety rules. (Yes/No)

All resources for controls are in place. (e.g., First Aid kit, barriers, gloves) (Yes/No)