Health and Safety Policy for
Ipswich & Diss Area Quaker Meeting
(Charity Commission Number: 1134526)

Statement Of Intent:

Ipswich & Diss Area Quaker Meeting are committed to managing health and safety across all six local meeting locations of Bury St Edmunds, Ipswich, Leiston, Diss, Woodbridge and Felixstowe as well as throughout the culture created with Suffolk Quakers. This also includes managing aspects of health and safety that can arise within and have an impact on digital environments and online working spaces.

We aim to:

- Manage and reduce health and safety risks within the workplace, and within the environments that are accessed by Quaker friends and members of the public.
- Maintain safe and healthy working conditions; preventing accidents, incidents and cases of work related ill health.
- Provide personal protective equipment where appropriate / required.
- Implement emergency procedures, including evacuation in the event of fire or other significant incident.
- Review and revise this policy when required and update accordingly.
- Consult with other employees, volunteers and third party agencies / specialists when required such as seeking risk assessment advice from fire and rescue services.
- Provide and maintain safe equipment.
- Provide clear instructions and information, as well as adequate training / induction to ensure employees / volunteers are competent to carry out their work.
- Ensure the safe handling and use of substances.
- Seek to adapt day to day activities and review risk assessments when required to remain compliant with the current changing landscape of health and safety legislation / requirements.

Responsibilities For Health And Safety:

Whilst the Trustees of Ipswich & Diss Area Quaker Meeting have overall responsibility for Health & Safety, Local Meetings are also responsible for the day-to-day compliance with this policy and the implementation of Health and Safety procedures.

Health & Safety procedures shall be displayed prominently in Meetings Houses. Local Meetings are also responsible for making sure that hirers conform to Health & Safety procedures and conditions of hire set out in the Hire Agreement.

In addition to the above, some locations have premise committees and wardens who are jointly enabling Ipswich & Diss Area Quaker Meeting to ensure their responsibilities towards maintaining good health and safety practises / standards are being met and reviewed.

Arrangements For Health And Safety:

Below are some of the practical arrangements Ipswich & Diss Area Quaker Meeting have in place to enable the standards set out within this policy to be maintained.

- An annual Health and Safety risk assessment of our properties and grounds shall be carried out to ensure that all defects or shortcomings are properly considered and repairs / improvements implemented. The 'compliance with regulations document' shall be completed annually by those Local Meetings with property and returned to the Administrative Assistant, for Trustees consideration. This process also includes a formal premises meeting held annually in November. Where local meetings can discuss issues raised, explore and discern solutions, co-influence the revision of health and safety protocols for Trustees discernment.
- The Compliance with Regulations document itself is reviewed and updated so that it incorporates revised or new legislation such as Asbestos compliance was an additional section added to the form for 2026.
- As an employer, Ipswich & Diss Area Meeting has specific responsibilities towards our employees to ensure a healthy and safe working environment is maintained. This not only features the visible aspects associated with Health and Safety; it also includes unseen contributing factors such as collaboratively creating a safe work culture. As we recognise that this can directly impact on an employee's mental health and wellbeing. Ipswich & Diss have allocated line managers for employees and also additional protocols in place such as the Grievance Procedure, Sick Policy and Procedure and Equal Treatment and Diversity feed into promoting a positive supportive work culture.

- The core values of the Quakers, that members and attendees seek to live by and uphold also positively contribute to our commitment to maintaining health and safety standards such as Integrity, Equality and Community.
- In concern for the wellbeing of everyone using Ipswich & Diss Area Meeting properties, care shall be taken to ensure that buildings, grounds and equipment are in a safe condition and that all equipment and hazardous materials are stored safely.
- Ipswich and Diss Area Meeting shall ensure quinquennial surveys of meeting houses, full electrical checks and, where relevant, tree inspections are carried out by qualified professionals with the relevant insurance cover. Similarly, all repairs and improvements shall be carried out by qualified professionals.
- Ipswich and Diss Area Meeting shall ensure emergency evacuation procedures are regularly reviewed, fire equipment is checked annually and safety notices and signage are displayed prominently.
- Ipswich and Diss Area meeting shall ensure that a first aid kit is provided at each Meeting House and that its location is clearly visible. A record of accidents or incidents shall be kept and reported to Trustees annually. Any major accidents/incidents must be reported to the Trustees immediately.
- User Groups and organisers of events using Ipswich & Diss Area Meeting premises and grounds must seek permission from the Local Meeting regarding the use of candles and naked flames. Alcohol and the use of controlled substances is not allowed anywhere on our premises or grounds.
- Local Meetings shall ensure that windows and doors are securely locked when not in use and that keys to the property are returned promptly to those responsible for them. A record of keyholders shall be kept.
- This policy will be displayed in all Meeting Houses, posted on the Ipswich and Diss Area Meeting website and made available to all employees. It will be reviewed triennially. Local Meeting procedures and working arrangements will be reviewed annually.
- Humanity is collectively facing new challenges in health and safety directly associated with Climate change. Quakers both globally and locally are committed to highlighting these issues, working towards solutions and will seek to be responsive in integrating newly identifying risks and ways to lessen their impact within our risk assessing and day to day activities.

Further information and guidance are also available from:

HSE: Information about health and safety at work - https://www.hse.gov.uk/

Communities | Quakers in Britain - https://www.quaker.org.uk/communities

Health & Safety News — UK & Ireland - https://www.healthandsafetynews.net/