

Policies

The Policies that are enclosed are:

1) Access Policy	Page 2-3
2) Child Protection Policy	Page 4-5
3) Adult Protection Policy	Page 6-7
4) Data Protection Policy	Page 8
5) Education Policy	Page 9
6) Environmental Policy	Page 10
7) Equal Opportunities Policy	Page 11
8) Governance Policy	Page 12
9) Health and Safety Policy	Page 13
10) Fire Policy	Page 14-15
11) Complaints Policy	Page 16

These are reviewed at yearly to ensure that they comply with current legislation and good practice.

1. Access policy

Strathglass and Affric Community Company aims to reflect a cohesive community in which neither race, colour, ethnic or national origin, disability, sex or sexual orientation, religion or belief, social status or age forms a barrier to participation in community life.

The Company recognises that the key to becoming accessible and inclusive is to engage with people through learning opportunities and to offer as wide a variety of these as possible.

The Company aims to:

- Provide a building fully accessible to all throughout and with additional provision to aid all those who are physically or sensually impaired;
- Provide technical equipment at a level accessible to all abilities for both touring and local groups;
- Provide a performing area accessible to all;
- Adopt a “Buddy” system for visitors with hearing or visual disabilities where that person is accompanied throughout the duration of his/her stay;
- Provide easy access to the main hall for large and heavy equipment;
- Provide a disabled parking area;
- Provide clear signage to enable easy access and in English/Gaelic where possible;
- Provide accessible and lifelong learning opportunities which include approaches for all learning styles;
- Increase awareness of the local cultural, architectural, environmental and social heritage of the community in a relevant and meaningful way easily accessible to all;
- Develop a range of participants in events from pre-school, school age, adults, families, older people, and visitors through a range of initiatives which can be accommodated in the new building;
- Increase opportunities for volunteers from within the community and further afield;

- Identify and reduce the barriers which discourage people from becoming involved in the community;
- Provide training and networking opportunities for members and volunteers;
- Provide clearly presented information to the local community and visitors through a variety of media;
- Continue to communicate clearly within the community by means of newsletters, posters displayed in prominent positions, and more widely through the Company Website;
- Continue to make every effort to keep charges for community hires and events as low as possible, particularly when young people are receiving learning or recreational opportunities provided by volunteers and to encourage those organising events to offer discounted admission charges to young people, students, families and other financially disadvantaged people;
- Develop a long-term marketing strategy;
- Monitor a “feedback” strategy to address issues raised by users and identify any perceived gaps in provision, to include questionnaires and interviews (where appropriate) and a suggestion box;
- Ensure the Directors review the access policy on a regular basis;

This policy is closely allied to our Education Policy.

2. Child Protection Policy

The Company recognises that child protection should not be treated in isolation - we will take on board guidance given by Highland Child Protection Committee and will address recruitment and selection of volunteers and paid employees by doing the following:

- a) We accept that it is our responsibility as a group to check that all adults in positions requiring disclosure checks are members of the appropriate Protection of Vulnerable Groups Scheme and have been appropriately vetted;
- b) We will ensure the every new volunteer or member of staff will complete a Personal Profile Form;
- c) We will make a request for previous addresses on volunteer/ job application forms;
- d) We will ask for the names of two referees who will be prepared to provide a written reference;
- e) We will follow up each reference with a telephone call or personal contact during which we will discuss the applicant's suitability to work with children. A record of this discussion will be kept in the applicant's file;
- f) We will interview prospective volunteers and staff;
- g) We will note at interview all previous experience of volunteers and staff in working with children;
- h) We will carry out a probationary period for all volunteers and staff of at least 3 months.
- i) We will notify Disclosure Scotland if anyone on the Disqualified from Working with Children List applies to work for or volunteer with our group;
- j) We will ensure that all staff are given Codes of Practice to work to;
- k) We will remove from unsupervised contact with children any member of staff or volunteer whom we know or suspect to have caused harm to a child or to have placed a child at risk of harm and we will notify Disclosure Scotland of our actions and the reasons for them, even if that person has left our group.

We believe that every child regardless of age has, at all times and in all situations, a right to feel safe and protected from any situation or practice which results in a child being physically or psychologically damaged. In our group, if we have suspicions about a child's physical, sexual or emotional well-being, we will take action.

All volunteers and staff are encouraged to share concerns with the group's Child Protection Lead/Designated Person. If the situation is clearly an urgent case, the child is too frightened to go home or we have very serious doubts about the child's safety, we will contact Social Work Services or Police immediately.

If our concerns are more general about a child's welfare, then we will discuss these with our group's Child Protection Lead/Designated Person, who would then make a referral to an appropriate professional for assessment of the child's needs. It is important that all volunteers and staff communicate concerns accurately. To this end, volunteers and staff will follow the procedures below:

- a) Upon the receipt of any information from a child or suspicions, it is necessary to make an accurate and detailed written record of what they have seen, heard or know, at the time the event occurs;
- b) Share their concerns with the Child Protection Lead/Designated Person for the group and agree what action to take;
- c) Avoid asking any more questions than are necessary to clarify whether there is a concern. Always REFER to statutory services to undertake in depth INVESTIGATION of any suspicions or allegations about abuse.

If we have concerns we must act - it may be the final piece of the jigsaw that is needed to protect that child - or we may prevent, further children from being hurt.

Both the local Area Social Work Office and Police Office telephone numbers are to be found in the telephone directory. For ease of reference note them below

Area Social Work Office	01463 724219
Local Police Station	0845 600 5703
Out of hours Social Work Emergency Service	08457 697284
General Child Protection Enquiries	01463 703488

3. Adult Protection Policy

The Company recognises that adult protection should not be treated in isolation - we will take on board guidance given by Highland Adult Support & Protection Committee and will address recruitment and selection of volunteers and paid employees by doing the following:

- a) We accept that it is our responsibility as a group to check that all adults in positions requiring disclosure checks are members of the appropriate Protection of Vulnerable Groups Scheme and have been appropriately vetted;
- b) We will ensure the every new volunteer or member of staff will complete a Personal Profile Form.
- c) We will make a request for previous addresses on volunteer/ job application forms;
- d) We will ask for the names of two referees who will be prepared to provide a written reference;
- e) We will follow up each reference with a telephone call or personal contact during which we will discuss the applicant's suitability to work with protected adults. A record of this discussion will be kept in the applicant's file;
- f) We will interview prospective volunteers and staff;
- g) We will note at interview all previous experience of volunteers and staff in working with protected adults;
- h) We will carry out a probationary period for all volunteers and staff of at least 3 months.
- i) We will notify Disclosure Scotland if anyone on the Disqualified from Working with Adults List applies to work for or volunteer with our group;
- j) We will ensure that all staff are given Codes of Practice to adhere to;
- k) We will remove from unsupervised contact with protected adults any member of staff or volunteer whom we know or suspect to have caused harm to a protected adult or to have placed a protected adult at risk of harm and we will notify Disclosure Scotland of our actions and the reasons for them, even if that person has left our group.

We believe that everyone regardless of age has at all times and in all situations a right to feel safe and protected from any situation or practice that results in a protected adult being physically or psychologically damaged. In our group, if we have suspicions about a protected adult's physical, sexual, emotional or financial wellbeing, we will take action.

All volunteers and staff are encouraged to share concerns with the group's Adult Protection Lead/Designated Person. If the situation is clearly an urgent case, the protected adult is too frightened to go home or we have very serious doubts about the protected adult's safety, we will contact Social Work Services or Police immediately.

It is important that all volunteers and staff communicate concerns accurately. To this end, volunteers and staff will follow the procedures below;

- a) Upon the receipt of any information from a protected adult or suspicions, it is necessary to make an accurate and detailed written record of what they have seen, heard or know, at the time the event occurs;
- b) Share their concerns with the Adult Protection Lead/Designated Person for the group and agree what action to take;
- c) Avoid asking any more questions than are necessary to clarify whether there is a concern. Always REFER to statutory services to undertake in depth INVESTIGATION of any suspicions or allegations about abuse.

If we have concerns we must act- it may be the final piece of the jigsaw that is needed to protect that adult - or we may prevent, further protected adults from being hurt.

Both the local Area Social Work Office and Police Office telephone numbers are to be found in the telephone directory. For ease of reference note them below

Area Social Work Office	01463 724219
Local Police Station	0845 600 5703
Out of hours Social Work Emergency Service	08457 697284
General Adult Protection Enquiries	0800 902 00 42

4. Data protection policy

The Company will adhere to the Principles of Data Protection, as set out in the Data Protection Act 1998.

We regard the lawful and correct treatment of personal information as very important to successful working, and to maintaining the confidence of our local community and those with whom we deal.

To this end we will:

- Observe fully conditions regarding the fair collection and use of information;
- Meet our legal obligations to specify the purposes for which information is used;
- Collect and process appropriate information only to the extent that it is needed to fulfil our operational needs or to comply with any legal requirements;
- Ensure the quality of information used;
- Ensure that the information is held for no longer than is necessary;
- Ensure that the rights of people about whom information is held can be fully exercised under the Act (i.e. the right to be informed that processing is being undertaken, to access one's personal information; to prevent processing in certain circumstances, and to correct, rectify, block or erase information that is regarded as wrong information);
- Take appropriate technical and organisational security measures to safeguard personal information;
- Ensure that personal information is not transferred abroad without suitable safeguards.

5. Education policy

The Strathglass and Affric Community Company aims to enable and encourage learning through the provision of facilities suitable for a wide range of educational, personal development and health-improving opportunities in partnership with agencies and other education providers. In addition, it will provide:

- Skills and Customer Care training for staff and volunteers;
- Labels and interpretation panels;
- Information and activities which promote health and well-being;
- Arts events and workshops;
- Temporary exhibition space;
- Resources such as periodicals and access to the internet.

This policy is closely allied to our Access Policy.

6. Environmental policy

The Strathglass and Affric Community Company strives to prevent pollution and minimise its environmental impact through operating, maintaining and managing the hall to the highest environmental standards. The Company is committed to environmental improvement and has set the following objectives to achieve these aims:

- We will encourage all our user groups to:
 - ✓ Reuse, segregate and recycle waste materials;
 - ✓ Consider energy conservation by switching off lights and equipment when not in use;
 - ✓ Use locally sourced or recycled materials for projects wherever possible;
 - ✓ Care for the garden, car park and areas surrounding the hall.
- Promote the care and improvement of the local environment through landscaping and biodiversity projects;
- Provide education and awareness of environmental matters pertaining to the use and enjoyment of the hall for the whole community;
- Monitor the use of energy and water;
- Monitor our Environmental Action Plan;

The Company will seek the advice of environmental organisations and appropriate individuals to enable us to meet these objectives. This will be documented in the Environmental Action Plan.

This policy is available to all interested parties on request and will be prominently displayed on the Strathglass and Affric Community Company website.



7. Equal opportunities policy

The Strathglass and Affric Community Company is committed to equality of opportunity and non-discrimination in all aspects of its operation.

The Company promotes opportunity for all to be involved in its community activities, without discrimination on grounds of race, colour, ethnic or national origin, disability, sex or sexual orientation, religion or belief, social status or age.

The Company requires its Directors, members and volunteers to behave and communicate in non-discriminatory ways and to support, implement and develop practices and procedures that promote and reinforce equality of opportunities and treatment for all.

8. Governance policy

The Strathglass and Affric Community Company undertake:

- To adhere to the terms of the Company's Memorandum and Articles in all its operations;
- To adhere to its policies;
- To be open and transparent in all its dealings with its members, the Community, other Stakeholders, Funding Agencies and the wider public;
- To ensure that its annual meetings and their agendas are timeously and widely publicised so that individual members of the Company and the wider Community have the opportunity to participate.
- To ensure that decisions are made fairly and responsibly.
- To ensure inclusivity in all its deliberations and activities.
- To consult and report via published minutes of meetings, public notices, the company website and press releases.

9. Health & Safety policy

The Strathglass and Affric Community Company undertakes to:

- Comply with the requirements of the Health and Safety at Work etc. Act 1974 and other relevant acts, orders, regulations and codes of practice relating to health and safety.
- Maintain safe and healthy conditions for the users of our building, volunteers and staff.
- Provide adequate control of the health and safety risks associated with our building and facilities.
- Provide and maintain safe equipment.
- Ensure safe handling.
- Provide information, instruction and supervision for the users of our building, volunteers and staff and ensure that adequate training is given in order to maintain a high level of health and safety.
- Regularly identify and record risk and where appropriate ensure that action is taken to reduce risk.
- Ensure that users of our building are aware of the location of Health and Safety information (including fire procedures) and location of the first aid provision.
- Ensure that at all times whilst on our premises that contractors comply with such rules, regulations and requirements relating to health & safety arrangements as may be in force from time to time.

10. Fire policy

The safety and welfare of all persons using the hall is paramount. The Company will assess the Hazards and Risks to all persons using the hall and apply procedures to minimise the risks to the users, employees and contractors.

Fire procedures

Applicable to:

- All persons using or hiring the Hall;
- Directors;
- Caretaker/Cleaner;
- Contractors carrying out work.

Hazard (Burns, asphyxiation and death).

Controls measures to minimise risk:

- A Risk Assessment will be completed and recorded by a person appointed by the Company.
- All combustible materials will be kept away from heaters;
- Products that give off inflammable vapours will be stored safely and no be kept in the same room where naked flames are exposed, or where ignition could occur;
- 3) Containers that have held flammable liquids will be treated as though they are full.
- Exits and Emergency escape routes will be kept free and unobstructed at all times and clearly marked. There may be a requirement for an emergency lighting system
- Fire doors will not be propped open or locked at any time.
- Self-closing doors must not be jammed open.

- Appropriate fire extinguishers will be provided.
- Fire extinguishers will be checked and recharged annually and replenished when used.
- Fire extinguishers will be placed close to hand and where the risk is significant.
- Personnel are instructed in what to do and how the alarm will be raised.
- Equipment will be tested and any necessary maintenance carried out and recorded on a routine basis e.g., alarm, fire fighting equipment, emergency doors, emergency lighting, if applicable electrical appliances.
- In the event of the alarm sounding, a person will take charge, ensure emergency services are informed, ensure safe evacuation from the premises to the rendezvous point and ensure all personnel are accounted for.
- Persons/ Hirers of the hall will be issued with copies of this Procedure and the Emergency Evacuation Strategy.

Monitoring

Recording - The Hazard and Risk for the premises will be reviewed periodically and when any; significant change is made to the premises, its use, and changes in legislation.

Records and relevant documents will be kept in the Hall filing system.

11. Complaints policy and procedure

We aim to deal with any complaints as quickly and efficiently as possible. If you have a complaint, please follow these simple steps:

The Strathglass and Affric Community Company (SACC) Board has a sub-group who are the first point of contact for dealing with all complaints. In the first instance, please get in touch with one of the members of this sub group and the group will work with you to try to resolve the matter informally.

SACC's complaints sub group members are:

Liz Balharry: Tel (01456) 415450, Email: lizbalharry@btopenworld.com

Alex Henderson: Tel (01456) 415454, Email alexhender@hipplanet.com

Roni Smith: Tel (01456) 415440, Email roni.smith05@btinternet.com

If however the matter cannot be resolved in an informal way by the sub-group you will be asked to put your complaint in writing and within 14 days to SACC's Secretary who will then refer your complaint to the Board of Directors for consideration and a decision.

SACC's Secretary is:

Gary Butler, 12 Tomich, Cannich, IV4 7LZ, Email: garybutler868@btinternet.com