

# **Merseyside Mountaineering Club Health and Safety Policy and Procedures**

## **1. Policy**

Merseyside Mountaineering Club (MMC) Committee is committed to safeguarding the health and safety (H&S) of club members and visitors using the facilities and, or attending club meets at Cae'r Fran (the hut), so far as it is practicable and within its power to do so, without breaching H&S legislation.

The MMC encourages people to take care on the hills and crags particularly when attending club meets. We expect all club members to accept the principles of the MMC health and safety participation statement (paragraph 3) and that they and visitors act in a safe and responsible manner when on the club's premises.

It is the agreed policy of the MMC to protect all persons including members, temporary employees, volunteers, visitors, guests, contractors and members of the public from potential injury and damage to their health, which may arise while they are on the club's hut premises known as Cae'r Fran. The club will provide and maintain safe conditions, equipment and systems for all authorised hut users. It will also provide information, advice and occasional supervision as may be required for this purpose. The club will give a high level of commitment to improving health and safety practices and awareness. The club will comply with all statutory requirements, particularly relating to fire, electrical and water safety.

Hut users are expected to comply with the H&S instructions provided.

The Committee assumes collective responsibility for H&S matters and will discharge its responsibilities and duty of care as described in the following paragraphs.

## **2. Merseyside Mountaineering Club**

The MMC engages in mountaineering activities and leases Cae'r Fran in Llanberis Wales, as a home base for the purposes of undertaking activities. The club is managed by an elected committee made up of officers and ordinary members and supported by four Trustees. The Committee and Trustees are reviewed and re-elected at the annual general meeting each year. Full details of the Committee structure and Trustee role are provided in the MMC Rules, which can be found on the MMC Website. The MMC rent out the hut to other groups for the purpose of undertaking mountaineering or associated activities.

## **3. Health & Safety Participation Statement**

The MMC recognise that climbing and mountaineering are activities with a danger of personal injury or death. Participants in these or any other dangerous sports should be aware of and accept these risks and be responsible for their own actions and involvement.

## **4. Hut Risk Assessment**

The MMC will seek to identify hazards and assess the risk in order to reduce or eliminate these hazards. To facilitate this Health & safety risk assessment including fire safety shall be undertaken annually and published on the noticeboard at Cae'r Fran. A copy will also be kept in the handbook in the hut.

## **5. Maintenance of the premises**

*The Committee* will ensure general maintenance and up-keep of the hut through scheduled work meets each year. The maintenance activity to be undertaken will be determined in advance of each work meet.

*Hut Warden:* will be appointed to collate information on what maintenance work needs to be undertaken at the hut and will provide a list of jobs to the work meet organiser. The role of the Hut Warden is outlined in the MMC Rules. The Hut Warden, or other delegated person, may undertake ad hoc maintenance activity in between work meets, where it is appropriate for them to do so.

*Scheduled or ad hoc work:* The work meet organiser, Hut Warden (if in attendance) or other nominated responsible person, will delegate tasks, to those on the meet outlining any obvious H&S considerations as necessary or appropriate. All parties in attendance at work meets or undertaking work at the hut are expected to be responsible for their own safety and wellbeing and that of others by ensuring they conduct themselves and use tools, equipment and or substances (e.g. cleaning fluids) in a safe manner.

*Non-routine maintenance, repairs or replacement tasks:* where the MMC do not have the skills, knowledge or equipment to fix, the MMC will engage an appropriate service provider or contractor to undertake the works as necessary and appropriate.

*Members and visitors* are expected to follow the guidelines provided in the hut and leave it clean and tidy. They should report any faults or breakages to the Hut Booking Secretary at the earliest opportunity to enable action to be taken. Relevant contact details will be provided to visitors with their booking confirmation, or hut information leaflet in advance of their visit.

## **6. Maintenance of services**

For any problems with mains services such as gas, water, electric the MMC will undertake repairs and maintenance activity as and when required. The MMC will use suitably qualified individuals or companies to comply with UK legislation. If there is a need to display the certification of services, this will be done on the hut notice board or in the handbook at the hut as deemed appropriate.

## **7. Water Safety**

There is a need to follow safety instructions at certain times of the year and specifically in winter. Instructions on how to use the water supply and winter safety precautions are displayed on the notice board at the hut. A copy of the instructions will also be kept in the handbook in the hut.

## **8. Electrical Safety**

There is an isolator switch to turn on the mains when hut users arrive at the hut and it should be turned off when the hut is vacated at the end of the visit. Instructions on using the isolator switch are provided in the handbook in the hut and in information sheets issued to meet organisers and visitors. In the event of a fault the electrical system has automatic cut off for the affected zone. The heaters in each room are manually operated to switch them on, however they are installed with timers to automatically turn off the power after 30 minutes.

## **9. Fire Safety**

*Smoking:* This is not permitted on the premises or in the adjacent barn. Any cigarettes (or similar), should be extinguished properly and disposed of safely.

*Fires and matches:* There are no open fires within the hut and users of the hut are not permitted to light fires outside the premises or on the adjoining farmland. If using a BBQ this should be lit and extinguished safely. Any ash or used coals should be disposed of/removed when leaving the premises. Matches should be fully extinguished and safely disposed of, this also includes lighters.

*Safety equipment:* To comply with UK legislation a range of safety equipment and features have been incorporated into the hut. These include fire doors to the dining area, fire extinguishers on upper and lower floors, smoke alarms on upper and lower floors, fire alarm system, manual fire alarm triggers at each exit point, fire blanket, outside lights, emergency lighting on stairs, and an axe. This list may change or be added to if the committee determines changes or improvements are required and or to remain compliant with legislation.

*Checking regime:* The fire alarm system at Cae'r Fran will be checked twice yearly by an outside contractor. Other safety equipment is checked annually as part of the fire safety audit by an external contractor. The electrical system is checked every 5 years.

*Fire alarm tests:* From April 2019 the fire alarm test will be undertaken a minimum of once per month and on all scheduled meets in any given month. The test will be conducted by the meet organiser/trained person in attendance, and by any attending committee member outside of scheduled meets. Meet Organisers and committee members will be trained how to test the fire alarm system at the hut. Instructions on how to conduct the test and reset the alarm will be available at the hut along with a register to record the actions taken.

The frequency of testing will be reviewed by the committee quarterly from September 2019 (or the nearest committee meeting to this) to ensure the frequency of testing is enough to maintain H&S of members and visitors. The committee will use information on hut usage to inform their decisions.

Visitors (or untrained club members) are not expected to undertake the fire alarm test, but they are encouraged to check the fire alarm system for any fault lights. They must report or escalate faults as outlined in the instructions at the hut.

## **10. Evacuation procedures**

An evacuation plan is provided on the notice board and on the doors of each room showing the emergency exits. Instructions are also in the handbook in the hut. The muster point is the gate post and tree in the field to the left of the front entrance of the hut and directly opposite the side entrance gate.

It is the responsibility of meet organisers, visiting group leaders or lone visitors to ensure they and their group are aware of the H&S and evacuation procedures.

In the event of the fire alarm failing to discharge, we expect people to revert to an appropriate verbal call to raise the alarm and instigate evacuation of the premises where it is appropriate to do so. In all circumstances, evacuation should be conducted in an orderly and safe manner.

## **11. First Aid**

The MMC will provide basic first aid equipment at Cae'r Fran. A fire blanket is provided in the kitchen and a wooden first aid box is on the wall outside the drying room in the common room (the central part of the hut).

## **12. Use of chemicals and gas on the premises**

There are a variety of cleaning products retained in the hut, for member and visitor use. It is the responsibility of hut users to ensure the products are stored safely and securely i.e. close lids/screw tops, when not in use.

Any gas appliances or cookers not provided or checked by the MMC or persons authorised by the MMC are not permitted.

## **13. Young Persons**

Young People for the purpose of staying at Cae'r Fran are deemed to be under the age of 18 years. They are not allowed access (off limits) to either of the Members rooms unless they have been specifically booked out to their parent or group.

Members' children (aged under 18 years) will be allowed to use Cae'r Fran if accompanied by a parent. They are not allowed to use Cae'r Fran during official meets.

Visiting group leaders with young people as described above, are responsible for the health, safety and wellbeing of those within their charge. Group leaders should ensure young people as well as adults are aware of the health and safety instructions and fire safety procedures.

For safeguarding reasons, e.g. if a vulnerable group has hired the hut, there may be times when we restrict members access to the members room. Members should use the hut calendar and book in before staying at the hut. The Hut Booking Secretary will advise of any date restrictions on attending the hut.

If members are staying at the hut and young people are present, the member should ensure they have permission to be unaccompanied in the presence of the young person or people. If the member does not have permission to be unaccompanied with the young person, they should ensure a parent/leader is present in the room or, is within sight of the young person or people.

Members should not invite a young person/young people, in to, or give access to, rooms that are deemed 'off limits' unless they have permission from the parent or group leader, or they are accompanied by the parent or leader.

*The MMC H&S Policy was adopted at the AGM on 25/10/2019*

**Amendment September 2020 COVID 19 Pandemic:** The Hut was closed April to August 2020. Use of the hut has been risk assessed and UK Government, Welsh Assembly and BMC guidelines have been considered to inform reopening the hut. New Hut booking conditions and usage measures are introduced from September 2020 and supersede any other instructions where there is a conflict of information within the MMC Hut information pack or H&S Policy.