

# AGHALEE VILLAGE HALL

## STRESS AT WORK POLICY

### General statement

We are a responsible organisation / employer and are aware of our duty of care regarding the mental health and welfare of our staff and volunteers. For this reason, we will take all reasonable steps to ensure that staff and volunteers are not placed under excessive stress by their work.

#### 1. Legal position

The Health and Safety at Work Act 1974 requires us to take reasonable steps to look after our employees' and volunteers' mental health and welfare. This means that we need to ensure that staff and volunteers do not have excessive demands placed on them by their job. As stress is also caused by bullying, harassment and violence, we are required by law to provide a working environment which is as far as is reasonably practicable, free from these influences. However, we are entitled to assume that all staff can cope with the normal day-to-day pressures of their job. If this is not the case, staff and volunteers have a duty to inform us.

#### 2. Definition of Stress

The Health & Safety Executive has defined stress as follows: *"The reaction people have to excessive pressures or other types of demands placed on them. It arises when they worry that they cannot cope"*. In other words, stress occurs when the pressures on a person exceed their ability to deal with them.

#### 3. Procedures

Should any volunteer or member of staff feel that they are suffering from an unacceptable level of work-related stress the following procedures should be implemented:

- 3.1 In the first instance, the employee or volunteer should inform their line manager. He or she will treat the matter with sympathy and in confidence.
- 3.2 If necessary, we will carry out a stress risk assessment. This will include a review of the employee's or volunteer's actual duties against those described in their job description.
- 3.3 The findings of the risk assessment will be discussed with the employee or volunteer. If appropriate, changes will be made to their role in order to reduce the levels of stress experienced.
- 3.4 If appropriate, the employee or volunteer will be referred to a doctor of the company's choice for a medical assessment. Alternatively, the employee or volunteer may be offered counselling.

#### 4. Non-work Problems

Whilst we are not responsible for causes of stress outside the working environment, we recognise that it can impact on an employee or volunteer's attendance and work performance. Therefore, we would encourage them to make us aware of any problems which are causing them concern.