



Health & Safety Policy

A. General Statement

A.1. It is the policy of Interest Link Borders to comply with the terms of the Health and Safety at Work Act 1974 and subsequent legislation, to provide and maintain safe and healthy working conditions, equipment and systems of work for all our employees and volunteers and to provide such information, training and supervision as they need for this purpose.

A.2. Interest Link Borders also recognises and accepts its responsibility to protect the health and safety of all visitors to the workplace (including Volunteers, Service Users, Carers, contractors, temporary employees and any members of the public) who might be affected by our activities. Interest Link Borders will also co-operate on health and safety matters with other organisations with whom it shares premises.

A.3. A copy of this policy will be issued to all employees and volunteers. The policy will be kept up to date and the way in which it has operated will be reviewed each year.

A.4. The specific arrangements for the implementation of the policy and the personnel responsible are set out below.

Signed:

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Kermit Wood', is written over a faint, light blue rectangular background.

Convenor, Interest Link Borders

Dated: January 2023

B. Responsibilities and Arrangements for Health & Safety Management

B.1 The Interest Link Borders Project Committee

- ◆ The Health and Safety at Work Act 1974 places a statutory duty on all employers to ensure, so far as is reasonably practicable, the safety, health and welfare of all its employees at work and other people who may be affected by their activities, e.g. Volunteers, Service Users and members of the public.
- ◆ The Interest Link Borders Project Committee, as the employer, has overall and final responsibility for health and safety matters at Interest Link Borders, and for ensuring that health and safety legislation is complied with.
- ◆ The Interest Link Borders Project Committee will review the operation of its health and safety policy periodically and will ensure:
 - ❖ Employees and volunteers as appropriate receive sufficient information, training and supervision on health and safety matters.
 - ❖ A risk assessment is undertaken and the results written up and made available to all employees.
 - ❖ Accidents are investigated and reported to the Management Committee
 - ❖ There are arrangements in place to monitor the maintenance of premises and equipment.
 - ❖ There are adequate arrangements to liaise and co-operate on health and safety matters with landlords, and other employers who share premises with Interest Link Borders.
- ◆ Day-to-day responsibility for ensuring this policy is put into practice is delegated to the Project Co-ordinator.

B.2. All Employees and volunteers must:

- ◆ Co-operate with supervisors and managers on health and safety matters
- ◆ Not interfere with anything provided to safeguard their health and safety
- ◆ Take reasonable care of their own health and safety
- ◆ Report all health and safety concerns to an appropriate person (as detailed in this policy).

B.3. Fire Officers. (Also see Fire Safety below.)

- ◆ Each Branch Co-ordinator is responsible for ensuring that they are familiar with the landlord's fire safety arrangements for the building housing their office.
- ◆ They must assist the landlord's fire drills and testing of fire alarms and ensure other staff and volunteers are aware of the emergency fire arrangements for the building.

B.4. First Aiders (Also see First Aid and Accident Reporting below.)

- ◆ At the time of issuing of this policy, the Project Co-ordinator and Branch Co-ordinators have all undertaken recognised training courses approved by the Health and Safety Executive.
- ◆ Each Branch Co-ordinator is the first aid person for their office and will ensure that the first aid box is kept in an appropriate and accessible place, contains the items laid

down in the Code of Practice and Guidance Notes published by the Health and Safety Executive and is regularly checked and restocked.

B.5. Risk Assessment

- ◆ Interest Link Borders will ensure that risk assessments of its activities are carried out in accordance with the 1992 Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations and the Approved Code of Practice (ACOP). These risk assessments will be written up, and be made available to all relevant employees and volunteers.
- ◆ The written risk assessments will be reviewed and updated annually to ensure they cover all employees and volunteers against all risks, and to ensure that any action identified as needed in the risk assessments has been carried out. The risk assessments will also be updated as necessary every time that there is a major change in working practices. The risk assessments will cover all employees and volunteers of Interest Link Borders, wherever they may be based, and will cover all aspects of their work.
- ◆ A risk assessment template is attached to this policy.

B.6. Training

- ◆ Interest Link Borders will ensure that new employees and volunteers receive information on health and safety as part of their induction.
- ◆ Interest Link Borders will organise training for employees and volunteers on health and safety matters as appropriate, including: general health and safety training, first aid and risk assessment. Interest Link Borders will also organise any special training needed to ensure safe systems of work.
- ◆ If employees and volunteers consider they have health and safety training needs they should inform their line manager.

B.7. Transport

Guidelines for transport of all kinds are attached as an Appendix

C. Premises and venues.

- Interest Link Borders has a responsibility to provide a safe and healthy environment for employees and volunteers.
- All Interest Link Borders employees and volunteers are responsible for spotting hazards or potential hazards. If a hazard is seen, it should be removed or dealt with as soon as possible. If this is not practical, it should be reported to the local Branch Co-ordinator and (if concerning fabric of the building, or non-Interest Link Borders equipment) the landlord.
- Examples Of Hazards:
 - ❖ Things out of reach: Chairs or other furniture must not be used to stand on for the purposes of replacing light bulbs, reaching for things off tops of cupboards etc. A properly maintained, undamaged step ladder must be used.
 - ❖ Damaged Equipment: Regular checks must be carried out on furniture and equipment for damage which leave sharp edges protruding or other hazards.
 - ❖ Damage to Fabric of Building, Windows etc: All such damage must be reported immediately to the landlord.
- Guidelines on the use of venues by groups are attached as an Appendix

D. Good Housekeeping

- ◆ Gangways must be kept clear from obstructions and materials must be stored in safe areas. Under no circumstances must goods or materials be stacked immediately in front of or obstructing fire doors, fire exits, fire alarms or fire equipment.
- ◆ Smoking is not allowed in any premises Interest Link Borders uses.
- ◆ Interest Link Borders will avoid unhealthy and overcrowded working conditions, and will consult employees on any changes in office layout.
- ◆ Interest Link Borders will endeavour to provide a well ventilated workplace in which employees have control over their local level of ventilation.
- ◆ In office workplaces a minimum temperature of 16°C must be maintained, Efforts will be made so far as is reasonably practical to ensure the workplace temperature does not rise to an uncomfortable level.
- ◆ Adequate lighting must be provided. If lights are found to be out of order, the fault must be corrected as soon as reasonably possible.
- ◆ Interest Link Borders will endeavour to ensure that noise in its offices is kept to as low a level as is practicable.
- ◆ Office equipment such as photocopiers and printers can emit pollutants into the atmosphere. Interest Link Borders will take reasonable precautions in ensuring that these levels are kept as low as is possible. Employees will not be expected to work in enclosed spaces with equipment that emits atmospheric pollutants. Spaces where these pollutants are present shall be kept well ventilated.
- ◆ Equipment
 - ❖ Equipment must not be left lying around but must be suitably stored.
 - ❖ No wires must be left trailing across floors.
 - ❖ Non flammable rubbish bins must be positioned at various points.
 - ❖ Except in emergencies, and with the permission of the Branch Co-ordinator, no paraffin, bar electric or bottled gas fires will be used.
 - ❖ All building maintenance such as electrical work, carpentry, painting etc should be carried out by skilled people. Employees should not endanger themselves or others by carrying out such work.
 - ❖ Broken, ineffective or damaged electrical equipment must be reported to the Branch Co-ordinator and (if appropriate) the landlord.
 - ❖ Employees and volunteers should use electrical equipment in accordance with instructions

E. Welfare Arrangements

- ◆ Interest Link Borders will seek to ensure that suitable and sufficient toilets and washing facilities are provided for all employees and volunteers in accordance with the minimum requirements of Health and Safety legislation.
 - ❖ Each toilet will be in a separate, lockable room.
 - ❖ Washing facilities will include a supply of clean hot and cold water, soap and suitable means of drying.
 - ❖ All areas must be kept clean and tidy.
 - ❖ Toilets must be washed regularly and kept clean.

- ❖ Vending machines for sanitary products and disposal bins should be provided. Bins should be emptied and sanitised regularly.
- ◆ An adequate supply of drinking water will be provided for all employees and volunteers.
- ◆ So far as is reasonably practicable Interest Link Borders will provide employees with seating in a rest area, where they may rest during normal work breaks. Suitable rest facilities will be provided for pregnant employees.
- ◆ Interest Link Borders employees should not work excessively long hours, and should take adequate breaks for meals and rest as indicated within their statements of terms and conditions of employment.

F. Personal Safety

It is in the nature of Interest Link Borders' work in the community that employees and volunteers may, rarely, find themselves in potentially dangerous situations whilst on Interest Link Borders business. This section aims to minimise this risk.

F.1. Office security

- ◆ Employees who are working on their own at an Interest Link Borders office should not allow access to casual visitors who have no appointment. Such callers should be encouraged to make an appointment.
- ◆ Where employees are dealing with an individual but feel uneasy about being alone with him or her they have the right to refuse to make an appointment or give access if it would put them in that position.
- ◆ All office windows and entry doors must be lockable.

F.2. Holding or Carrying Money or Valuables.

- ◆ Employees and volunteers who carry money for Interest Link Borders have the right to be accompanied by another person.
- ◆ Large amounts of cash, over and above petty cash should not be kept on Interest Link Borders' premises.
- ◆ Under no circumstances should volunteers or employees put themselves at risk on account of Interest Link Borders' property. If money is demanded with threats it should be handed over.

F.3. Working away from the office

- ◆ Employees and volunteers should ensure that another person knows where they are going, how long for and how they can be contacted.
- ◆ Employees and volunteers should make clear who they wish to be informed (outside of work) in the event of an emergency and how they can normally be contacted.

F.4 Personal Awareness

◆ Whilst Out And About:

- ❖ Trust your intuition and listen to your feelings. If you sense something is wrong, it probably is. Acting on intuition may prevent an aggressive situation.
- ❖ Be prepared. Check you know whom to contact and what to do if a difficult situation arises.

- ❖ Make sure you have all relevant information with you. If relevant, check whether there is a known problem with the person or place you are visiting.
- ❖ Never stay in a situation where you think you may be at risk. Don't feel you have to stay because of your work.
- ◆ **Dealing with Aggression**
 - ❖ Try to stay calm if someone is starting to get angry. Your body language, voice and response can help to defuse a situation. Do not touch someone who is angry.
 - ❖ Offer an angry person a range of options from which they can choose the one they prefer.
 - ❖ Are you the best person to deal with this situation, or is there someone else who can help?
 - ❖ Never remain alone with an actively violent person.

F.5. Reporting And Recording

- ◆ All incidents of aggression or violence should be reported to the line manager and recorded on an Accident Form (sample form attached to this policy).
- ◆ Employees and volunteers should report any current or potential situation at work which is a threat to personal safety.

G. Homeworking

- ◆ When employees are carrying out work for Interest Link Borders at home all health and safety rules and guidance in this policy apply in the same way that they do in the workplace.
- ◆ It is the responsibility of the employee to ensure that their home working environment and equipment used in the home is safe. A risk assessment in accordance with the guidance given in this policy should be carried out.
- ◆ The employee will be asked to indemnify the organisation from damages caused by accidents in the home.

H. Visual Display Equipment

- ◆ It is the policy of Interest Link Borders to comply with the law as set out in the Health and Safety (Display Screen Equipment) Regulations 1992.
- ◆ Interest Link Borders will conduct health and safety assessments of all workstations staffed by employees who use VDU screens as part of their usual work. All workstations must meet the requirements set out in the Schedule to the Regulations.
- ◆ Appropriate seating must be available to all users.
- ◆ Employees will take regular breaks (at least 10 minutes away for every hour at the screen). Short frequent breaks are more satisfactory than occasional longer breaks.
- ◆ Interest Link Borders will endeavour to provide:
 - ❖ VDUs with a detachable and adjustable screen, i.e. in height, swivel etc, to allow for the individual preference of the operator.
 - ❖ Computer cleaning supplies.
 - ❖ A wrist and foot rest at each workstation
 - ❖ An anti-static mat at each workstation.
 - ❖ Keyboards which are separate from screens.
 - ❖ Anti glare screens, where direct light cannot be prevented from falling on the screen.

- ❖ Adequate workstation space.
- ◆ The Project Co-ordinator should hold copies of manufacturers' detailed instructions on the maintenance of equipment, and will ensure that maintenance contracts are adhered to and, where appropriate, renewed.
- ◆ Eyesight.
 - ❖ Where an employee is experiencing eyesight problems attributable to their work with VDUs she/he will be entitled to have an eyesight test paid for by Interest Link Borders.
 - ❖ Where a test shows that as a result of work with Interest Link Borders VDUs an employee needs to purchase special corrective appliances (usually glasses) Interest Link Borders will pay for these. This excludes those normally used for purposes other than work with VDUs.
- ◆ Work Related Upper Limb Disorders (also known as Repetitive Strain Injury) are often associated with keyboard work. It is the intention of Interest Link Borders, by following best advice to provide VDU/keyboard equipment and furniture which help prevent the development of these musculoskeletal disorders. Employees however should contribute to their own safety and welfare by:
 - ❖ Avoiding sitting in the same position for long periods
 - ❖ Adjusting equipment and furniture to appropriate/comfortable positions
 - ❖ Taking a rest break from VDU work (at least 10 minutes away every hour) by doing some other work.

I. Fire Safety (Also see Fire Officers above)

- ◆ **General**
 - ❖ It is the responsibility of all employees and volunteers to be aware of fire hazards at offices and venues, to know the location of fire exits and the assembly point. Everyone must know the fire drill instructions, and these will be part of the induction process for all new employees and volunteers.
 - ❖ Access to escape doors, extinguishers and other fire fighting equipment must not be obstructed.
- ◆ **Fire Drills**
 - ❖ The landlord or manager of the premises will be responsible for carrying out fire drills at offices and should arrange these to take place at regular intervals.
 - ❖ The Interest Link Borders Branch Co-ordinator is responsible for ensuring that employees are aware of the evacuation procedures.
 - ❖ The Branch Co-ordinator should give feedback after each evacuation to review the success or otherwise of the evacuation and to make recommendations for improved practices.
 - ❖ Visitors and all employees, must be made fully familiar with the escape routes and the Interest Link Borders assembly points.
- ◆ **If a Fire is Discovered.**
 - ❖ Raise the alarm by operating the break glass switch at the nearest Fire Alarm Call Point.
 - ❖ Evacuate the building immediately by the nearest exit and go to the assembly point.
 - ❖ Do not re-enter the building for any reason until the Office Manager or fire brigade confirm that it is safe to so.
 - ❖ Do not put yourself at risk.

J. First Aid and Accident Reporting

J.1. First Aid (Also see First Aiders above.)

- ◆ In all Interest Link Borders premises, it will be the responsibility of the Branch Co-ordinator to ensure that a first aid kit is kept in an appropriate and accessible place which they make known to employees.
- ◆ The first aid kit must contain the items laid down in the Code of Practice and Guidance Notes published by the Health and Safety Executive and be regularly checked and restocked.
- ◆ The Project Co-ordinator and all Branch Co-ordinators will receive appropriate first aid training.
- ◆ As part of their induction, all new employees will be told of the location of first aid kit and that Branch Co-ordinators have received first aid training.
- ◆ A record of all first aid cases treated will be kept in the Accident File.

J. 2. Accidents and Emergencies

- ◆ All employees and volunteers must report all accidents which resulted or could have resulted in personal injury to themselves or others, to their Branch Co-ordinator who will ensure the Accident is recorded on an Accident Form which will be added to the Branch's Accident File.
- ◆ A copy of the Accident Form should also be sent to the Project Co-ordinator. . An example form is attached to this policy.
- ◆ It is the responsibility of the Branch Co-ordinator and Project Co-ordinator to ensure that any necessary follow up action is taken to reduce the risk of the accident or near accident reoccurring.
- ◆ The Project Co-ordinator is responsible for reporting incidents which come within the Reporting of Injuries, Diseases & Dangerous Occurrences Regulations (RIDDOR), to the Scottish Borders Environmental Health Department. RIDDOR covers the following incidents:
 - ❖ Fatal accidents
 - ❖ Major injury accidents\conditions
 - ❖ Dangerous occurrences
 - ❖ Accidents causing more than 3 days incapacity for work
 - ❖ Certain work-related diseases.
- Emergency guidelines for staff and volunteer are attached as an Appendix

Hazardous Substances

- ◆ Under the 1992 COSHH (Control of Substances Hazardous to Health) Regulations, Interest Link Borders has made an assessment of the risks related to hazardous substances.
- ◆ As at the date of this policy no such risks exist in connection with Interest Link Borders's activities.
- ◆ The risk assessment will be repeated annually. If any risks are discovered, Interest Link Borders will remove any hazardous substances, find a substitute for them, enclose them within a safe environment or provide protective equipment to ensure the safety of employees and volunteers.

Lifting and Handling

- ◆ Interest Link Borders' employees and volunteers should avoid manual lifting. In particular, they should not be involved in lifting and handling in relation to Interest Link Borders Service Users.
- ◆ However, employees and volunteers may occasionally be required to manually lift and handle loads, for example in the receipt and storage of stationary orders. In this case, loads should be divided into smaller quantities, any lifting aids available should be used and the assistance of other employees and volunteers should be sought.
- ◆ Any employees or volunteers feeling a strain should stop immediately and record the incident on an Accident Form.

Stress Management

- ◆ Stress at work can result in severe medical problems and is a workplace hazard that must be dealt with like any other. Thus the responsibility for reducing stress at work lies both with employer and employee.
- ◆ Interest Link Borders will do all it can to eradicate problems relating to stress at work. In particular it will:
 - ❖ Ensure close employee involvement, particularly during periods of change.
 - ❖ Give opportunities for employees to contribute in the planning and organisation of their own jobs.
 - ❖ Ensure employees have work targets that are stretching, but reasonable.
 - ❖ Implement effective policies and procedures for dealing with bullying and any form of harassment
 - ❖ Encourage good communications between management and employees
 - ❖ Promote the maintenance of a supportive culture in the organisation.
 - ❖ Where appropriate, take into consideration employees personal problems/problems at home.
 - ❖ Ensure employees avoid working long and unsocial hours.
- ◆ Interest Link Borders will ensure as far as practicable that its policies, working practices, conditions of employment. do not contradict the above.
- ◆ Employees should ensure that they do not work in a way which could cause them to suffer an increase in stress, nor cause an increase in stress on others.
- ◆ Employees must respect other employees and volunteers, and ensure that interpersonal conflicts are avoided or dealt with sensibly.
- ◆ Employees must not make unrealistic demands of other employees by imposing impossible deadlines and/or increasing others' workloads to a level they cannot cope with.
- ◆ Employees should participate with Interest Link Borders's intention to maintain a co-operative, supportive workplace environment.
- ◆ If a employee or volunteer is suffering from stress at work, they should discuss this with their Branch Co-ordinator or line manager at the first opportunity. Where practicable and reasonable, Interest Link Borders will seek to provide assistance to employee or volunteer.



General Risk Assessment Form

Adult Service YPS Children's Service

Date of Assessment: _____

Branch: _____

Review Date: _____

Assessed and shared by (include all those consulted): _____

Signatures: Branch Co-ordinator: _____

Principal Carer or Care Professional: _____

ACTIVITY/TASK: _____

TOTAL NUMBER EXPOSED TO RISK: _____

- ◆ Interest Link Borders takes every effort to ensure that its activities are safe, and risk assessments highlight areas where risks are involved and describe measures taken to address them. It will never be possible to entirely eliminate some risks, and by signing the risk assessment, carers acknowledge this.
- ◆ If harm comes to a service user during an activity and Interest Link Borders is at fault, the service user will be covered by Interest Link's public liability insurance. However carers should be aware that Interest Link Borders cannot insure against simple accidents suffered by service users: this cover can only be taken out by service users or their carers.
- ◆ Individuals subject to a specific additional risk are included as an extra hazard ◆ At least one person who has a professional duty in respect of any service users will always be consulted. ◆ Control Measures must be suitable, sufficient and reasonable in order to be adequate. ◆ Risk assessments and insurance cover of venues must be confirmed.
- ◆ If the activity is new or unusual, Project Co-ordinator must confirm it is covered by Interest Link's insurance policy.

REF NO.	HAZARDS	PERSONS AT RISK						LIKELIHOOD				SEVERITY				TOTAL RISK	CONTROL MEASURES	ADEQUATE CONTROL?
		Serv	Vol	Emp	Pub	Y/P	Mthr	Impr	Rem	Poss	Prob	No Inj	Min	Maj	Fatal			
								1	2	3	4	1	2	3	4			
1																		
2																		
3																		
4																		
5																		
6																		
7																		
8																		
9																		

Key: "Serv" = service users; "Vol" = Volunteers; "Emp" = Employees; "Pub" = Members of the public; "Y/P" = Young persons (under 18); "Mthr" = New (6 mths) or expectant mother
TOTAL RISK CALCULATION = Likelihood value x Severity value; 1-4 = "L" = Low risk; 6-9 = "M" = Medium Risk; 10-16 = "H" = High Risk

Appendix 1

Accident & Incident Form

Branch:

Date:

- This form should be completed by a Branch Co-ordinator whenever an accident occurs which resulted or could have resulted in personal injury to anyone at Interest Link premises or during befriending activities.
- It should also be used to record any incidents which present a challenge to employees or volunteers, which are out of the ordinary or for which the actions of employees or volunteers may be called into question by another individual(s), group or organisation.
- Please include as much detail as possible: if the form is completed on-screen, rows will expand to fit content, or new rows can be added.
- The report should be added to the Accident & Incident File maintained by the Branch, and a copy sent to the Project Co-ordinator.
- If it is a Notifiable Accident, the Project Co-ordinator must report it to the Scottish Borders Environmental Health Department. Notifiable Accidents include those which result in death or major injury to any person, more than 24 hours hospitalisation or more than 3 days incapacity for work.
- Major injuries include
 - ❖ Fractures of skull, pelvis, spine, arm or leg,
 - ❖ Amputation of hand, foot, finger, thumb or toe,
 - ❖ Loss of sight, penetrating injury or burn to the eye
 - ❖ Loss of consciousness resulting from electric shock, lack of oxygen
 - ❖ Acute illness from absorption of substances by inhalation, ingestion or through the skin and/or believed to have resulted from exposure to pathogen or infected material

Accident & Incident Form

Accident/Incident No.	
Who was involved in the accident/incident?	
Name, Address & Tel no.	
Name, Address & Tel no.	
This report is made by:	
Name	
Address:	
Status (e.g. Branch Co-ordinator, Volunteer) :	
Signature:	
Date of accident/incident:	
Date of report:	
Location:	
Full description including cause, nature of any injury, witnesses, referral to doctor, reports given to other agencies and action needed to prevent future recurrence.	

Appendix 2: Group Venue Health & Safety Guidelines

Risk Assessment: Confirm the hirer has carried out a risk assessment of the venue for the purposes for which you are hiring it. If the organisation or venue is not well-established, or if the activity to be done is unusual, ask for a copy of the assessment.

Insurance. Confirm the hirer has appropriate public liability insurance cover for the activities to be done. If the organisation or venue is not well-established, or if the activity to be done is unusual, ask for a copy of the policy. If the activity to be done is unusual, contact the Project Co-ordinator to confirm it is covered by Interest Link's insurance policy.

Conditions of Hire. Ensure the Conditions of Hire are checked before making a booking. These will also indicate if, for example, rubbish bags, tea towels etc will need to be provided by Interest Link.

Contact details: Ensure all relevant Interest Link staff and volunteers have the contact details of the venue's caretaker/booking secretary in case they need to be contacted during use of the venue for advice/or in an emergency.

Access: The venue should have adequate access, i.e. ramp fit for purpose. If the venue only has a makeshift ramp, this should be highlighted on the risk assessment and those attending the venue should be told in advance. There should be clear signs, which ILB Staff may need to provide, e.g. "Take Care" "Makeshift Ramp" "Use with Care". Where possible venues with permanent ramps should be used.

Steps/Stairs: Staff to ensure that steps and stairs are not uneven, and that they have safe handrails. Where possible venues without steps and stairs should be used.

Hazards: Staff should identify potential hazards and do everything that is reasonably practical as required e.g. keeping entrances/exits clear, ensuring adequate space between tables, not leaving bags/equipment on floors where they might be a hazard, avoiding use of trailing cables.

Emergency Exits: The venue should have emergency exits which are kept clear and which should be clearly marked. Interest Link staff must familiarise themselves with fire evacuation procedures, which should be on display.

Toilets: There should be adequate toilet facilities, including a disabled toilet. There should be hot & cold water, soap and towels provided in each toilet.

Kitchen: Kitchen facilities should be clean and safe to use. Staff to ensure that they are given instructions for use of water heaters, cookers, etc. and that there are at least tea/coffee making facilities and washing facilities. There should be a first aid kit in the kitchen and a 'fit for purpose' fire extinguisher.

Heating: Staff to ensure that the venue has safe, adequate heating which is easy to use. There should be clear printed/verbal instructions for use if necessary. The venue should be well ventilated.

Lighting The venue should have adequate lighting throughout, including all exits.

Appendix 3: Emergency Guidelines

1. All staff and volunteers should receive awareness training on appropriate action to take in the event of an accident and be given a copy of these emergency guidelines.

2. A Consent Form must be received from a service user, and risk assessments for travel, venue and activities must be in place, prior to befriending activities starting.

3. Wherever possible, during befriending activities volunteers and staff members should carry:

- Mobile phone.
- First Aid kit (either group or individual).
- ICE Card with the following emergency contact details:
 - ❖ Branch Co-ordinator
 - ❖ Service user carer/ emergency contact,
 - ❖ Interest Link 24hour contact number
 - ❖ NHS 24,
 - ❖ Police,
 - ❖ Social Work (Day and Night)
- Service user Consent Form
- Any specific health protocol for the service user involved

4. If an accident occurs during befriending activities:

a. If anyone is injured:

- First aid must be given and, if necessary, 999 called.
- The person injured may need to be driven to a doctor or to A&E by car or in an ambulance. If a service user has to go to hospital in an ambulance, a volunteer or branch co-ordinator should travel with them.
- Branch Co-ordinator and carer/emergency contact must be contacted as soon as possible.
- An accident and incident form must be filled in by volunteer and/or Branch Co-ordinator and a copy sent to Project Co-ordinator.

b. If only property is damaged, and/or there was a danger of personal injury, an accident & incident form still needs to be completed.

Appendix 4: Interest Link Borders: Transport Guidelines

1. A General Consent Form must be received from service users before any travel associated with befriending activities begins. In addition, any special arrangements, such as health protocols must be fully discussed with parents/carers and transport provider, and details carried by Interest Link staff or volunteer.
2. Branch Co-ordinators must be satisfied that volunteers, taxi firms, hire companies and community transport services have appropriate comprehensive insurance in place before travel is undertaken. Taxis, hire companies and community transport services should also have breakdown cover in place.
3. Responsibility for passenger safety:
 - Taxi drivers are responsible for service users only when in the vehicle, and this includes ensuring that seat belts are safely fastened.
 - Community transport drivers are not responsible for service users at any time: responsibility rests solely with volunteers and staff.
 - Staff or volunteers driving hired or community transport vehicles are responsible for the safety of passengers at all times once they are in the vehicle, including ensuring all passengers fasten safety belts securely.
 - It is the responsibility of staff and volunteers to position themselves within the vehicle so they can observe passengers at all times and ensure they remain seated, with seat belts fastened securely.
 - Volunteers and staff should offer guidance to passengers about any adverse behaviour when travelling that may disrupt driver's concentration.
 - All passengers under the minimum height require adjusted seat belts or booster seats. Staff must check with taxi firm, vehicle hirer or community transport service to make sure these are provided.
4. If a Branch Co-ordinator is not travelling in the vehicle, they must ensure that the driver (and/or any volunteer travelling on the vehicle) has access to the Branch Co-ordinator's contact number as well as clear instructions regarding picking up and dropping off passengers and details of destination venue.
5. First Aid kits
 - ◆ These must be carried by all taxis, hire vehicles or community transport vehicles by law.
 - ◆ Wherever possible, Branch co-ordinators or volunteers will also carry Interest Link group first aid kits when travelling in these vehicles also.
 - ◆ Volunteers using their own cars should carry the individual first aid kit issued to them by Interest Link.
6. If a service user has a blue badge this can be carried and displayed in volunteer's car on a one-to-one link.