

Chatterley Carvers Health and Safety Policy

Draft for adoption by the club committee. This policy covers club meetings, demonstrations and organised carving activities. It should be read with a venue specific risk assessment and any rules set by the premises owner.

Our commitment

Chatterley Carvers will take reasonable steps to make its activities safe for members, visitors and anyone affected by them. Carving uses sharp tools and may involve wood dust, finishes and electrical equipment. Everyone must take care of themselves and others, follow this policy and stop work when conditions are unsafe.

Responsibilities

- The committee appoints a safety coordinator, reviews risk assessments and incidents, provides suitable arrangements and checks that insurance matches the activities actually undertaken.
- The session leader checks the room, access, equipment and emergency arrangements before carving starts; explains any local rules; and may stop an unsafe activity.
- Members use equipment within their competence, follow instructions, report hazards and near misses, and tell the session leader if a condition or medication may affect safe tool use. They need only disclose information relevant to safety, in confidence.
- Visitors and new members receive a brief induction before using tools. Children or vulnerable participants attend only under a separately agreed supervision and safeguarding arrangement.

Before each session

- Confirm the venue, exits, assembly point, first aid kit and means of calling 999. Keep doors, walkways and exits clear. Record attendance so everyone can be accounted for.
- Check that benches and lighting are adequate, workpieces can be secured and tools are in sound condition. Remove damaged equipment from use.
- Review the activity and any new materials or demonstrations against the risk assessment. Do not introduce power tools, machines, open flames or hazardous finishes until separately assessed and authorised by the committee and venue.

Safe carving practice

- Secure work with a suitable vice, clamp, bench hook or other support. Keep the free hand and all other body parts out of the likely path of a slipping edge. Cut away from people and avoid excessive force.
- Carry sharp tools with edges protected and pointed down. Pass them handle first; sheath or put them down safely when not in use. Keep edges sharp and handles secure.
- Allow enough space between carvers. No horseplay, distractions, alcohol or impairment while tools are in use. Pause work if tired or unable to concentrate.
- Wear suitable closed footwear. Tie back long hair and secure loose clothing and jewellery. Use appropriate eye protection where chips may fly; choose task specific protection for demonstrations. Do not wear gloves where they impair grip or introduce a snagging hazard.

- Use mallets, sharpening equipment and hot or chemical products only after suitable instruction and assessment. Follow labels and safety data sheets for glues, finishes and solvents. Store and dispose of them safely.

Dust and housekeeping

Prefer low dust methods. Control sanding and machine dust at source with suitable extraction if those activities are authorised. Ventilate the room, use suitable respiratory protection where an assessment requires it, and avoid dry brushing or compressed air that disperses dust. Clean benches and floors regularly; keep drinks away from chemicals and wash hands before eating. Wood dust can cause asthma and other illness.

Electrical equipment and manual handling

Only authorised, competent people may use electrical equipment. Inspect leads and plugs before use; keep cables clear of blades and walkways, and use the venue's safe supply arrangements. Disconnect before changing accessories. Lift timber and equipment within your ability, obtain help for awkward loads and store heavy items securely.

First aid, fire and incidents

At each session identify a first aid contact and accessible kit. For serious injury call 999, give the venue address and follow the dispatcher's advice. Apply first aid only within training, preserve access for responders, and inform the emergency contact if appropriate. On hearing the fire alarm, stop work, leave tools safely, evacuate by the designated route and meet at the assembly point; do not re-enter until permitted.

Record injuries, near misses and hazards promptly and tell the committee. The committee investigates proportionately, updates controls and determines whether a statutory report is required. Do not assume that every incident involving a member is reportable.

Review and adoption

Review this policy and the activity and venue risk assessments at least annually, after a significant incident or when activities, equipment or premises change. The committee will circulate changes to members.

Approved by the committee on: _____ Next review due: _____

Chair or authorised officer: _____ Signature: _____