

Kelvin Players Theatre Company

Health and Safety Policy Statement

(Health and Safety at Work Act 1974)

Kelvin Players will:

- Provide adequate control of the health and safety risks arising from theatre activities;
- Consult with Kelvin Members on matters affecting their health and safety;
- Provide and maintain safe plant and equipment, e.g. steel-deck, scaffolding, drills and tools;
- Ensure safe handling and use of substances, e.g. cleaning materials or chemicals and abrasives; paints, thinners and varnishes;
- Provide information, instruction and supervision for Kelvin Members;
- Ensure all Kelvin Members are competent to do their tasks, and to give them adequate training;
- Seek to prevent accidents and causes of ill health occasioned by being at Kelvin;
- Maintain safe and healthy conditions for theatrical activity; and
- Review and revise this policy on an annual basis.

This Policy Statement (and its related Guidelines and Risk Assessment procedures) will be reviewed annually by each newly elected Management Committee following the Annual General Meeting (usually held in September).

All existing and new members will be issued with a copy of this Policy Statement and related Guidelines and must sign a form to say they understand, and will comply with, these requirements otherwise their membership will become void.

Responsibilities

The Management Committee are the Trustees of Kelvin Players and have overall and final responsibility for health and safety.

The Management Committee delegate responsibility for day-to-day tasks to the following office holders to ensure health and safety standards are maintained / improved. These officers must report any concerns directly to the Management Committee.

Name	Responsibilities
Premises Manager	Building
Company Stage Manager	Overall set construction / technical issues
Director	Rehearsals
Construction Manager	Set construction; Get- In / Get-Out; Load / Unloading
Stage Manager	Performance
Front of House	Audience
Theatre Manager	All people in the theatre

All Kelvin Players Members:

- Have legal responsibilities to take care of the health and safety of themselves and others;
- Have a duty to co-operate with the Management Committee and their delegated Managers (office holders) to help them comply with the law on health and safety matters;
- Must not interfere with anything provided to safeguard their health and safety;
- Must take reasonable care of their own health and safety; and
- Must report all health and safety concerns to an appropriate person (as detailed in this policy statement).

Health and Safety Risks Arising from Theatre (work) Activities

Risk assessments will be undertaken on a regular basis, as detailed below, using pro-forma risk assessment profiles. Findings will be reported to the Management Committee who will be responsible for ensuring that any required action to remove / reduce risk is implemented.

- Building – annually
- Production – the Director of each production (in consultation with other members of the production team) will be required to complete a risk assessment.

Consultation with Kelvin Players' Members

Kelvin Players elect their Management Committee each year and, as well as office holders, three posts are designated as 'Member's representatives'. Consultation with members is made through:

- Annual General Meeting (usually held in September)
- The Jester (a club newsletter, issued six times a year)
- Individual communication through letter or e-mail
- All existing and new members will be given a copy of the Health and Safety Policy Statement and related Guidelines and will have to sign a form to say they understand, and will comply with, these requirements.

Safe Tools and Equipment

The Premises Manager is responsible for:

- Maintenance of general plant and equipment in the building; and
- Checking that new or second-hand equipment (relating to the building) meets health and safety standards before it is purchased.

The Company Stage Manager is responsible for:

- Identifying all equipment and tools for set construction needing maintenance
- Ensuring effective maintenance procedures are drawn up for all tools used during set construction;
- Ensuring that all identified maintenance is implemented;
- Checking that new or second-hand equipment (relating to set construction) meets health and safety standards before it is purchased;
- Briefing each production Construction Manager.

Any problems found with equipment should be reported to the Premises Manager or Company Stage Manager as appropriate.

Safe Handling and Use of Substances

The Premises Manager (building) is responsible for:

- Identifying all substances which need a COSHH assessment;
- Undertaking COSHH assessments;
- Ensuring that all actions identified in the assessments are implemented;
- Checking that new substances can be used safely before they are purchased; and
- Ensuring that all relevant Kelvin Members are informed about the COSHH assessments.

The Company Stage Manager (set construction) is responsible for:

- Identifying all substances which need a COSHH assessment;
- Undertaking COSHH assessments;
- Ensuring that all actions identified in the assessments are implemented;
- Checking that new substances can be used safely before they are purchased; and
- Ensuring that all relevant Kelvin Members are informed about the COSHH assessments.

Assessments will be reviewed every year or when the work activity changes, whichever is soonest. A copy of all assessments will be sent to the Management Committee.

Information, Instruction and Supervision

The Health and Safety Law poster is displayed at the Entrance Hallway and is issued by Premises Manager.

Health and safety advice is available from the Management Committee.

The Production Stage Manager is responsible for ensuring that Kelvin Members working at outside locations under the control of other employers, are given relevant health and safety information.

Competency for Tasks and Information

As part of the joining process, health and safety information will be provided for all Kelvin Members by the Membership Secretary.

Specific job training will be provided by the Company Stage Manager or Construction Manager as required. Jobs requiring special training are; working at height, set building, painting, rigging and installing lanterns.

Accidents, First Aid and Work-related ill Health

The first aid boxes are kept in the Morris Room, the downstairs kitchen and the Workshop.

A list of appointed persons/first aiders is in the Morris Room.

All accidents and cases of work-related ill health are recorded in the accident book. The book is kept in the Morris Room at the Studio.

The Premises Manager is responsible for reporting accidents, diseases and dangerous occurrences to the enforcing authority.

Monitoring

The Management Committee will:

- Have Health and Safety as a standing item on its agenda;
- Review risk assessments for current and future productions at each meeting as appropriate;
- Check rehearsal/construction working conditions to ensure that safe working practices are being followed; and
- Investigate and review procedures to prevent recurrence should an accident occur *.

* The Premises Manager is responsible for investigating accidents in the building including rehearsals and the Company Stage Manager is responsible for investigating accidents during construction and on set. Both will report findings to the Management Committee who are responsible for acting on investigation findings to prevent a recurrence.

Emergency Procedures – Fire and Evacuation

The Premises Manager is responsible for:

- Ensuring the fire risk assessment for the building is undertaken and implemented;
- Arranging for fire extinguishers to be checked annually by an approved outside contractor;
- Arranging for the security and fire alarm system to be checked annually;
- Arranging for the wiring and electrical equipment to be checked by an approved outside contractor at least once every three years (as required under its Theatre Licence); and
- Checking that emergency evacuation procedures are tested.

In addition, for every Studio production, the Premises Manager will:

- Check, along with the Front of House Manager, that escape routes are clear;
- Arrange for a Theatre Manager to be on duty at each performance and will send them a written briefing note detailing fire and evacuation procedures (this will be copied to the Front of House Manager);
- Arrange for a first aider and a steward to be on duty in the auditorium for every performance (they will also be sent written instructions about their duties).

For every production, the Production Stage Manager will:

- Ensure that the emergency lighting signs are switched on (at outside venues this is the responsibility of that theatre's staff);
- Ensure that notices are in place front of house to inform members of the audience if special effects, e.g. strobe lighting, smoke, pyrotechnics, are to be used during the performance.

The following people are responsible for ensuring that the appropriate emergency services are contacted:

- Director or Premises Manager during rehearsals
- Theatre Manager during performances at the Studio
- Production Stage Manager during performances at outside venues

This Health and Safety Policy Statement was approved by the Management Committee of Kelvin Players Theatre Company at its meeting on 24th November 2011.

**Ralf Togneri
Chairman**

Health and Safety Policy Guidelines

Introduction

These Health and Safety Policy Guidelines have been produced from the health and safety working documents, together with general and production risk assessments. Please pay attention to the Safety Guidelines.

The Health and Safety Policy is written to provide a clear guide to what is acceptable working practice under current legislation. This document contains all you need to know to start off. Please remember that the aim of Health and Safety (H&S) is not to stop you having fun or doing something completely bizarre but simply to ensure it is done in a safe manner.

This information covers you! During get-in and get-out and even during set construction, actors as well as back-stage crew will be involved in working on and with the set. If any terms in this document are unclear to you then please ask a member of the Management Committee.

IF IN DOUBT – DON'T DO IT!

Never guess with backstage work - it can be fatal. You are responsible for your own safety and the safety of people around you. Anyone deliberately or repeatedly ignoring safety guidelines will be banned from backstage work. Scary as it might sound accidents need to be reported, partly so we can learn from any mistakes to stop them happening again and partly because we have to keep an accident book. Accident reports should be filed in the Accident Book held in the Morris Room.

Keeping Yourself Healthy

Alcohol and Drugs

- Most events and productions have bar facilities. Attractive as this may be, drinking is only permitted with the express permission of the event or production Stage Manager, as appropriate, which will only be given to people who will not have to de-rig the event or be part of an emergency response.
- No backstage member is to use illegal drugs during an event, either during rigging, during the performance or during the get out. Any Kelvin member doing so shall be asked to leave.
- Any member who needs to take medication should be sure they are fully aware of the effects it produces and should not undertake duties which are against the guidelines on the medication.

First Aid

At the Studio Kelvin Players are equipped with three First Aid kits; these are in the Morris Room, Kitchen and Workshop. The workshop kit will be taken to all productions at outside venues.

First aid cover is provided by qualified members during productions at the Studio.

Medical Conditions

Any member suffering from a medical condition that could affect their ability to work on an event or production should inform the event or production Stage Manager in confidence. The manager should then ensure that the member is not asked to do something unsuitable and that they are given warning of anything which might aggravate their condition e.g. a clear warning must always be given before the use of strobes.

Any member taking medicines should follow the manufacturer's recommendations for the use of the drug and common sense e.g. those taking strong pain killers should not continue with backstage work.

Safety at Work Conditions

Ear protectors are supplied by Kelvin Players for the use of members whenever they wish to use them. Additionally Kelvin Players require members to use ear protection when the sound pressure level is 85dB or greater.

If items of first aid kits are used, Kelvin must be informed, so that they can be re-stocked. First Aid kits are maintained by Kelvin Players.

Fatigue

The main danger from fatigue is that it affects a person's ability to concentrate and to perform skilled tasks which covers pretty much everything we do. In order to combat fatigue we recommend that each member keeps themselves hydrated and gets some proper food. If you are being asked to work for more than six hours then a food break will be available; use it.

Kelvin Players will not expect members to work for more than sixteen hours in any twenty four but you should consider the effect of your day-time employment may have had on you and not work for longer than you are comfortable with. If you do work for sixteen hours then you must take a good rest break in that time,

Electrical Safety

Productions and Events

Almost all of our productions and events involve large amounts of electricity, accordingly electricity must be dealt with carefully. The best way to ensure electrical safety is to prevent faults from developing by regular maintenance of equipment and ensuring that the distribution is in the hands of an experienced individual. These guidelines do not attempt to provide an explanation as to why some things are good and others bad, the Production Stage Manager or an experienced member will do that.

The ground rules for electrical work on events are as follows:

- Always visually inspect an appliance before you use it; check that it has a valid P.A.T.(Portable Appliance Test) sticker on it, unless the item is less than one year old, and that both the appliance and its flex are in good condition.
- Theatre lanterns cannot be plugged in anywhere, a socket may already be fully loaded, or the lantern may require special power supplies. As a general rule:
 1. Most dimmers are rated at 10A -this is about 2kW of light.
 2. Most special effects lights are not suitable for running on dimmers - never change the plug on a light, it's there for a reason.
- Firmly tape down all cables, especially if they are across doorways or gangways. (Where possible run cables over the tops of doors, or use heavy duty cable covers).
- Uncoil cables completely before using. Running current through a coil of cable generates heat, on a large drum this can be enough to cause a fire.
- Do not attempt to repair appliances.
- If you are unsure of how to operate any equipment ASK!

Repair and Maintenance

Any items that require repair should be brought to the attention of the Premises Manager, Company Stage Manager or the Production Stage Manager, so that they can arrange to have it repaired if possible. Anybody asked to repair an appliance will be somebody who is knowledgeable about electrical systems and who is familiar with Kelvin H&S policy requirements. If it is not possible for the item to be repaired then the item should be removed from service.

All the electrical equipment in Kelvin's possession is serviced regularly and should have a valid P.A.T sticker on it. This sticker means that the equipment has been inspected and tested for safety and anything without one should be brought to the attention of the Premises Manager or Company Stage Manager.

Workshop Use and Carpentry

The Hall is where most of our carpentry and metalwork is done. The workshop contains an assortment of hand and power tools. It is recommended that you should not be working alone, another person should be present to summon help if necessary.

Only use tools with which you are familiar. The Construction Manager or Company Stage Manager will show you, or arrange for someone else to show you, how to use a tool properly. Tools are expensive, so please take care of them.

Any personal tools which you bring in must be approved by the Construction Manager or Company Stage Manager (i.e. no chainsaws!) and must be P.A. tested to ensure their safety. Please do not use other member's tools unless you have their permission and are familiar with the tool in question. Such tools remain the responsibility of the owner not Kelvin Players.

Special Effects

Audiences must be made aware if any of the following Special Effects are being used in a production or event. Directors planning to use such effects MUST read and comply with the relevant Health and Safety guidance in the Director's notes:

Smoke /Haze

The fog evolved by smoke machines should not cause any breathing difficulties, however, older haze machines which crack peanut oil are not suitable for use by KELVIN PLAYERS.

Pyrotechnics

Pyrotechnics are used by Kelvin Players under the control of an experienced and trained member. The storage of pyrotechnics for an event is under their control and they hold the keys for the firing desk and for the metal storage case. The store should be clearly labelled and the cast and crew informed when pyrotechnics are being loaded. A test firing should be done to demonstrate the effects.

Strobes

The use of strobes is not recommended. If the Director of a show feels that strobes are required for a play then plan their use carefully and use the minimum amount of strobing required.

Lasers

We have not yet used lasers. If a Director wishes to use lasers for a production then the Kelvin Management Committee must agree the use and lay down safety guidance before a laser is used.

Manual Handling

Anyone who has to move awkward or heavy loads is to ensure that they have appropriate footwear and gloves or other protection.

Whilst it might sound patronising to tell you how to lift objects, it is an important subject, the more so since it is easy to get wrong. We lift heavy objects fairly frequently, such as flats and steel decking, and to minimise the risk of injury it is important to do it right.

- Always plan a lift:
 1. Think about what you are lifting -how many people are required to control it?
 2. Make sure everybody knows where you are carrying the object to.
 3. Consider any aids which could reduce the effort required – e.g. Could you lift the object onto a wheel board instead of carrying it the full distance?
- Lift together when everybody is prepared and on a count.

- Lift with your legs: your back should remain straight at all times. Squat down and grip the object to be moved then rise to you feet holding the object.
- Ensure you all put the object down together and with the same care that you lifted it.
- Take care when lifting an object onto a wheeled surface - ensure that it can not escape!

Work at Height / Rigging

Working at Height (see Working at Height Guidance – Appendix 1)

Only those Kelvin members who are confident of working at height will be requested to do so. There is no compulsory 'work at height' for Kelvin Players' members. However, for those who are confident working at height there is plenty to do on gantries, ladders and scaffolding towers. An experienced Kelvin Member will give a demonstration.

When people in an area are working at height Kelvin Players require that everybody in the area is wearing a hard hat (available). If you are working at height you must take all care to avoid dropping things onto the people below, elementary precautions include; ensuring that you have nothing on you which might fall and hit somebody/thing and if you need to drop something announce clearly what you are dropping and where you are dropping it. e.g. "Heads, upstage left, rope dropping in".

Rigging

Before any object is rigged the operation should be thought through and appropriate measures taken to ensure that the object is under full control at all times. Any object, which is to be flown, must have two points of attachment to the ceiling, a primary point and a secondary, which is there to catch the object if the first point should fail. Both these flying points should be of steel (so that they won't melt in a fire). For some objects, like a flying scaffolding pole, at least three points are required to stop the bar swinging if one point fails. An experienced, nominated member should always supervise complex rigging tasks.

Emergency Procedures

In the case of an emergency contact in the following order:

- At Kelvin Players Studio: Premises Manager (building) /Theatre Manager (productions)
- At outside venues (e.g. Redgrave/QEH theatre): Production Stage Manager

The most likely emergency is fire. In the Studio, the automatic fire alarm will sound. If at an outside venue then sound the fire alarm. Alert the Premises Manager/Theatre Manager if in the Studio or the Stage Manager if at an outside venue. (See the Fire and Evacuation Procedures – Appendix 2).

Bomb threats are unusual but should always be taken seriously. The threat should be relayed to the above people as appropriate so they can start the evacuation sequence.

Emergency Services

The Theatre Manager (Studio) and the Production Stage Manager (outside venue) are responsible for ensuring the appropriate Emergency Services have been contacted.

These Health and Safety Guidelines (and appendices) were approved by the Management Committee of Kelvin Players Theatre Company at its meeting on 24th November 2011.

**Ralf Togneri
Chairman**

Working at Heights in the Broadcasting and Entertainment Industries

(This Health and Safety Executive information sheet contains notes on good practice that the Kelvin Management Committee wishes to adopt. It is reproduced in its entirety.)

Entertainment Sheet No 6 - HSE information sheet

Introduction

This information sheet is one of a series produced in consultation with the Broadcasting and performing arts Joint Advisory Committee for (BJAC).

Many activities in the entertainment industry involve working at heights. These include working in theatres, on stages and television studio lighting grids. This information is not intended to apply to the safety of performers.

Accidents

Current accident statistics do not show the seriousness of the problem. The workforce in the industry is casual, or freelance, which results in many accidents not being reported. It is felt by member organisations of the BJAC that working at heights is one of the greatest risks taken within the industry and therefore clear safety information is required.

Hazards

Falls from heights are a regular cause of fatal and serious injuries. There are three main hazards associated with work at heights:

1. Falls.
2. Falling objects.
3. Falls from collapsing structures.

Risk Assessment

Carry out a risk assessment before working at height to find out what health and safety measures need to be adopted to avoid or reduce risk. Work should be done at a safe level to minimise risk. If this is not possible, consider the following:

- the physical condition of the people involved e.g. age, fitness, pregnancy, vertigo, etc;
- the activity;
- equipment to be used;
- location, e.g. near or over water, roads, under power lines, over raked stage, etc;
- the environment, e.g. weather, temperature, lighting;
- duration of the work;
- condition and stability of the work surfaces.

Precautionary Measures

1. Falls

Precautions must be taken where a person can fall a distance of more than 2m. If there is an increased risk of injury when falling a distance of less than 2m, e.g. working near a traffic route or above a dangerous surface, then suitable precautions will also be required.

There are four ways of preventing falls of people:

- edge protection, e.g. toe boards, guard rails;
- safety harnesses;
- maintaining a safe distance from an edge;
- safety nets.

These need to be considered in the order listed above. Further information on edge protection and safety harnesses can be found in *Health and safety in construction* HSG150 and *Health and safety in roof work* HSG33. A video *High designs* covers the design of safe access at height during maintenance activities.

2. Falling objects

To prevent objects falling onto people you need a proper management system which:

- provides barriers, e.g. a toe boards or mesh guards to prevent items from slipping or being knocked off the edge of a structure;
- secures objects to the structure, e.g. lashing of scaffold boards;
- ensures that there are no loose objects and that any tools are properly secured;
- creates an exclusion zone, where necessary, beneath areas where work is taking place.

In addition, when people are working at heights above other work areas, it is advisable to provide safety helmets to protect the workers below against falling objects. Danger areas can be clearly marked with suitable safety signs indicating that access is restricted to essential personnel wearing hard hats while this work is in progress.

3. Falls from collapsing structures

This section applies equally to temporary stage sets or more permanent structures used for television and long running theatre productions.

Structures need to be designed to be safe and to be built by competent people. Regulation 13 (safe design) of the Construction (Design and Management) Regulations 1994 (CDM) applies whether or not the rest of the Regulations apply. The skills, knowledge and experience of the designer will depend upon the nature of the structure concerned and the use or uses to which it is put. See HSE's publications GS28/2 and GS28/3 on the safe erection of structures.

A competent person should inspect and attach a notice to a structure after completion and before it is put into use. Further inspections on a regular basis (at least weekly) and after severe weather (external structures) or if the structure is significantly altered, will also be needed. Competency means a person with the appropriate qualifications, knowledge and experience to identify the risks arising from a situation and the measures needed to control these.

Temporary access equipment

Temporary access equipment would include scaffolding, tower scaffolds, ladders, step ladders and trestles. The use of mobile elevating work equipment and access equipment, such as *tallescope*, will be considered in a separate information sheet.

Some general points concerning safe use of temporary access equipment are that:

- equipment should be properly maintained and regularly inspected particularly if used outside.
- defective equipment needs to be clearly identified and not be used.
- those using access equipment should be properly trained and competent

Scaffolding

The erection of scaffolding is a specialist activity. Further detailed information can be found in HSE's publication *Health and Safety in construction* HSG 150.

Tower scaffolds

Further information can be found in HSE's publication *Tower scaffolds* CIS10.

Ladders, step ladders and trestles

Further information can be found in HSE's publication *General access scaffolds and ladders* CIS49.

No ladders should be used if there is the possibility of contact with overhead electric wires or unprotected electrical equipment. Further information on electrical safety is contained in HSE's publication *Electrical safety at places of entertainment* GS50.

Theatre and studio lighting grids

An additional hazard associated with work in lighting grids is that of dropping objects such as tools. All suspended equipment should have an independent safety bond in addition to its primary means of suspension.

Remember: Make sure that no loose items are taken into the grid, e.g. by use of pocketless overalls, tie lines on tools and equipment, etc, or create an exclusion zone below the working area, e.g. by erecting a barrier.

In order to enforce this system there may be a need for some form of warning system when the grid is occupied.

Everybody working in the area should be clearly aware of the system being used.

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Kelvin Studio Theatre Fire and Emergency Procedures

During performances

1. In the event of a fire or other emergency (e.g. bomb threat) occurring, the Theatre Manager must be informed immediately. The code word '**Mr Higgins**' should be used in order to avoid the public becoming aware of the situation and causing a panic. The correct wording is, for example, "Mr Higgins is in the Morris Room".
2. If the fire alarms sounds, or if any other emergency situation should warrant it, the Theatre Manager should immediately proceed onto the stage area and stop the performance, instructing the audience to leave the premises by the nearest available exit and proceed up Wesley Road to assemble by the park on Brynland Avenue. Stewards should remain in the auditorium to assist the evacuation until all members of the public have left, unless to do so would involve placing themselves at unjustifiable risk.
3. All members of the cast, backstage crew and front of house personnel should also leave the building. The senior person at the lighting/sound control position on the balcony should ensure that anyone in the Morris room, toilets, props room, kitchen, Harrison/Morton rooms and workshop has also left the premises on his/her way out.
4. Members of Kelvin Players only may attempt to tackle any fire using the fire extinguishers provided, but only if they are able to do so without causing undue risk to themselves.
5. The Theatre Manager is responsible for contacting the Fire Brigade (and they must be called to any outbreak of fire, however slight). The public must not be re-admitted to the premises under any circumstances until the senior fire officer present has given clearance for this to happen.
6. In the event of an emergency not involving an outbreak of fire, the Theatre Manager is responsible for contacting the appropriate emergency service, depending on the nature of the emergency. The Theatre Manager must not permit the public to re-enter the premises unless he/she is satisfied that it is safe for them to do so after taking advice from the appropriate emergency personnel in the circumstances.

During rehearsals or other periods when the public are not in the building

1. In the event of a fire or other emergency becoming apparent either by the sounding of the fire alarm or by personal alert, the Director of the production (or the most senior person present if there are no rehearsals taking place in the building) must be informed immediately.
2. The Director (or the most senior person present) must stop the rehearsal and instruct everyone in the building to leave the premises and assemble in the Gloucester Road on the pavement on the opposite side of the road to the Studio. He/She should check that no-one is in a toilet, or any other area in the studio on the way out. Assistance should be given to anyone with mobility or other needs.
3. Members of Kelvin Players may attempt to tackle any fire using the fire extinguishers provided, but only if they are able to do so without causing undue risk to themselves.
4. The Director (or the most senior person present) is responsible for contacting the Fire Brigade (and they must be called to any outbreak of fire, however slight). No-one must be re-admitted to the premises under any circumstances until the senior fire officer present has given clearance for this to happen.
7. In the event of an emergency not involving an outbreak of fire, the Director (or the most senior person present) is responsible for contacting the appropriate emergency service, depending on the nature of the emergency. No-one must re-enter the premises unless the Director (or the most senior person present) is satisfied that it is safe for them to do so after taking advice from the appropriate emergency personnel in the circumstances.