

# Report

# Providing a Safe Environment for Practical Volunteering on Community and Private Sites

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## Providing a safe environment for practical volunteering on community and private sites

Have you ever thought about asking volunteers to carry out practical work on your site/land or considered starting a community group? But got put off by the thought of all that legislation, insurance, health and safety and risk assessments? The aim of this document is to provide an easy guide to all these thorny issues. It will cover these topics:

#### CLICK ON THE HEADINGS BELOW TO GO DIRECTLY TO A SPECIFIC PART OF THE DOCUMENT

- PUBLIC LIABILITY INSURANCE
- LANDOWNERS
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  - Health and safety
- HEALTH AND SAFETY
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  - First aid training
  - First aid kit
- RISK ASSESSMENT
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  - How to carry out a risk assessment
  - How to calculate risk
  - Risk mitigation
- PERSONAL PROTECTIVE EQUIPMENT (PPE)
- DATA PROTECTION
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#### PUBLIC LIABILITY INSURANCE (PLI)

First off, it not a legal requirement to have PLI. But it is highly recommended for any group, charity or landowner that has contact with members of the public. Whenever groups of people get together, especially out of doors, there is always a chance that someone might have an accident. Someone trips over a tree root or walks into a twig. You can't always predict what people will do or when accidents will happen. So, who is liable when one of these accidents happens? It could be the landowner, the Trustees of a charity or the leaders of a community

group. To stop such people being personally liable for damages we have Public Liability Insurance (PLI). PLI protects you from being personally liable for third-party damages.

Public liability insurance covers you or your group for any accidents you and your members, volunteers or visitors may have. It can also cover your legal fees if your case is taken to court. Surprisingly this is much less expensive than you might imagine.

When you take out PLI you will need to know some basic facts about your activity and your group. For example:

- How many members/visitors do you have?
- What activities will they carry out?
- Will they be using tools, if so what kind?
- Where do they carry out these activities?
- What are the risks? More on that later.

There's one more thing you need to know, and that is how much you want to insure for. Your insurance can cover you for almost any amount. To work out how much you cover you need, try and think of the very worst accident that could happen and what that might cost to put it right. The figures can be frightening. How much is a life or a limb worth? If these kinds of accidents are possible you can ask your insurance provider what they think a suitable insurance sum would be.

To put your mind at rest, accidents like these are extremely rare. PLI for charities and community groups are more affordable than you might imagine and usually cost around £64 a year for £1,000,000 cover. While this level of cover may seem high, you need to remember that if a case is taken to court costs can run many thousands of pounds. It makes sense to consider Public Liability Insurance.

## **Keep Wales Tidy**

One of the best providers for new community groups is Keep Wales Tidy. They offer groups doing no more than 16 hours per month FREE basic cover of £5m for Public Liability with a £250 excess for new groups in the first year, £75 in subsequent years. It also includes Employers Liability £10m, Personal Accident £20,000 Death and Capital Benefits, and £200 per week Temporary Total Disablement. For groups doing a maximum of 40 hour per month the cost for the same cover is £11.40 per annum. Please see attached PDFs for more details.

# **LANDOWNERS**

# **Land Liability Insurance**

Like PLI, Land Liability Insurance covers landowners for negligence or liability related to the land you own. For example, someone trips over and breaks a leg while walking on your land, or a tree falls on a neighbouring property. Landowners are responsible for these types of accident. Even if an individual is not invited on to your land and has no right to be on your land, you are still liable if they have an accident. This raises important aspects of risk assessment and health and safety which will be dealt with in the Health and Safety section.

If you own a lot of land or your land is farmed it is likely that your existing insurance includes some kind of liability insurance. If, however, you are a small holder or you just have a large garden, you may not have thought about Land Liability Insurance. Always check your existing policy to see if you are already covered.

If you own a piece of land that is not on the deeds of your home, you will need separate liability insurance. Land Liability insurance starts at around £71 per annum for a 2-acre site.

If you are allowing community groups or volunteers on your land, even if they have their own insurance, you still need Land Liability Insurance. In short, you are liable for any accident that occurs on your land.

#### **Health And Safety**

When allowing people on your site, you have a duty of care. This means you should make all reasonable efforts to ensure their safety. This is achieved by assessing any risks and taking steps to reduce the risks or advising users what the risks are. It is not necessary to remove all risks, but you must identify any risks present. You can find out more about assessing risks in the Risk Assessment section of this document

Health and safety can also include providing for basic needs, such as water for drinking, hand washing facilities and toilets, or providing shade in hot weather. It is worth remembering that people generally work well when their basic needs are met. Tea and cake go a long way to making people feel welcome and appreciated.

#### **HEALTH AND SAFETY**

Like landowners, community groups leaders must also consider the health and safety needs of their members. Ensuring that basic needs are met can improve the outcome of any activity. If you are out and about with a group, having extra supplies of drinking water, a spare set of dry clothes or a spare sunhat are sensible and very welcome if needed.

# Pre-existing medical conditions, allergies and medication

It is important to know if any of your members have any medical conditions, allergies or emergency medication such as EpiPen, GTN spray or insulin. Your membership form should include a section for this to be declared. When working out of doors check that your first aider, or a responsible, designated adult, is aware of any problems and knows where to find any necessary medication. Please refer to the section on Data Protection to find out how to store and share this information.

# First Aid training

While voluntary organisations are not legally required to have a qualified first aider, it is clearly good practice. Some situations do require a qualified first aider, such as firework displays.

If you are working out of doors it is advisable to have at least one person who has completed an out of doors first aid course. An important aspect of out of doors first aid training is knowing what to do in remote locations where it can sometimes take a long time to summon help. Being able to give a casualty the best chance of survival is reassuring. A typical outdoor first aid course is 16-hours. Some local providers can be found in the Appendices.

#### First aid kit

A basic first aid kit should always available during outdoor activities. You can provide members with individual first aid kits or you can designate a responsible person, or first aider, to carry one. A list of what to put in your first aid kit can be found in the Appendix.

It is always sensible to know where the nearest defibrillator is kept in case of heart attack or cardiac arrest, especially if you are going to be in an area with no mobile phone connection. Defibrillators come with full instructions, so no previous training is needed. When you dial 999, they can also tell you where your nearest defibrillator is kept. If you normally work in very remote locations with volunteers, it may be worth purchasing a portable defibrillator. However, these are very expensive from around £700 +VAT.

# **RISK ASSESSMENT**

Is that a communal sigh of dread? People often think "why do we need risk assessments? Why can't we just use our common sense?" That is a very valid point, but, unfortunately, when someone has an accident people will ask, who is responsible? Do not panic! Risk assessments are much easier than you think and require a lot of common sense. Let's break it down.

A risk assessment is a document that states what all the risks are, how likely they are to happen, the consequences if they do happen and mitigation, how the risk can be reduced.

Let's look at an example.

Risk: Tripping over a tree root in a woodland

Likelihood: Quite likely if you don't look where you are going or if you are running

**Consequences:** Anything from a bruised knee to a broken leg

Mitigation/risk reduction: There are different solutions depending on what is practical

- 1. Put a fence round the tree and the root so people can't trip over the root
- 2. Change the route to avoid the root
- 3. Put a big red arrow right by the root

These are all a bit extreme. It's a woodland, you cannot fence off all roots. Likewise changing the route will not remove the risk. It's a natural area, no one wants to see big red arrows everywhere. So, what is the solution?

Simple, warn people in advance that there is uneven ground and that there is a risk of slips, trips and falls. This could be a in a chat before you head out, on a notice board at the start of the trail and on the risk assessment itself. The risk assessment helps to let people know where the risks are.

Risk assessment is not necessarily about removing the risk, it is about recognising the risk and taking appropriate action to mitigate the risk.

Let's look at a more extreme example. An oak tree has large branch which has split and is hanging over the footpath.

Risk: Branch may fall on passers by

Likelihood: High, it is hanging by a thin piece of bark. A small amount of wind may cause it to

fall.

**Consequences:** Death or serious injury if it falls on someone

Mitigation: Close the footpath until the branch and the risk has been removed. Then re-assess

the risk.

# Calculating the risk

To help us work out the risk, there is a simple formula:

# LIKELIHOOD OF ACCIDENT OCCURRING X SEVERITY OF INJURY = RISK RATING

Both likelihood and severity are on a scale of 1-5. The lower the number the less likely and the less severe the consequences. The lowest risk rating is 1x1=1 and the highest risk rating is 5x5=25.

The severity of injury is assessed by looking at the recovery time.

HOW SEVERE ARE THE CONSEQUENCES OF THE ACCIDENT								
Minor	Significant	Serious	Major	Fatality - 5				
injury – 1	injury – 2	injury – 3	injury – 4	·				
Recovery time:	Recovery time:	Recovery time:	Recovery time:					
minimal	up to 7 days	over 7 days	weeks or months					
			Example injury:					
Example injury:	Example injury:	Example injury:	Broken arm or					
Scratch or a bruise	Cut or bruise with	Sprained ankle	leg					
	swelling	or a cut requiring						
		stitches						

The risk rating can be described by a series of words. Here is a summary of the risk ratings.

RISK RATING: Likelihood of accident X Severity of injury									
RISK	Minimal	Low	Medium	High	Extreme				
RATING	1 - 2	3 - 9	10 - 15	16- 20	25				

In the accident examples above the risk assessment would look like this:

Risk	Likelihood	Severity	Risk rating	Mitigation
	(1-5)	(1-5)	Likelihood x severity	
Tripping over a tree reet	2	4	Low	Warn users in
Tripping over a tree root	2	4	(2x4=8)	advance
Pranch hanging by a				Close path until
Branch hanging by a	4	г	High	the branch is
piece of bark over a	4	5	(4x5=20)	removed.
footpath				Re-assess

# Creating a risk assessment

You will need to assess the risk of each of the activities the users/volunteers will be carrying out. Whether it's a bit of scrub bashing or doing arts and craft. If you are writing a risk assessment for outdoor conservation tasks, all the tasks can go on the same chart as above.

Follow these steps to create your own risk assessment.

- 1. Identify the tasks.
- 2. Identify the steps involved in carrying out the tasks.
- 3. Identify any tools and PPE required for the tasks.
- 4. Identify the hazards/risks in each step.
- 5. What are you already doing to minimize the risk?
- 6. Fill in your risk assessment form.
- 7. Provide details of entrances and exits to the site and access for emergency services.
- 8. Provide the location of the nearest phone.
- Provide details of nearest hospital, contact details for mountain rescue and or coastguard, if applicable. (NB you can request mountain rescue or coastguard when you dial 999.)
- 10. Contact details for the site manager or responsible individual.
- 11. Sign and date. Date of next review.
- 12. Make your risk assessment available to your staff/volunteers.

# In Appendix you can find

• An example risk assessment containing some common tasks

- A blank risk assessment form with suggested categories
- A full chart showing the calculation of risk ratings
- Information about where to seek advice on risk assessments

# **PPE - PERSONAL PROTECTIVE EQUIPMENT**

You may have heard these initials, PPE, bandied about. It simply means any protective equipment used or required when carrying out tasks. For example, if you are using a chainsaw, you need a helmet, goggles, cut proof trousers and gloves. Some PPE is required for simple hand tools such as thick gloves. Even a sunhat could be considered PPE. In your risk assessment all you need to do is make a note of any PPE required and then make sure you provide it and that your volunteers use it.

# **DATA PROTECTION**

Let's demystify another area of concern. The new Data Protection Act 2018 sets out rules for individuals and those who collect their data. The rules are there to prevent the misuse of people's personal data.

# **Collecting data**

To be legal, your group should only collect, keep or use personal data if you are doing so to fulfil a purpose which fits into one of the following lawful bases:

- a. To serve your group's "legitimate interests", or
- b. Because you have explicit consent from the person whose data it is, or
- c. To fulfil a contract with the person whose data it is, or
- d. To meet a legal obligation, or
- e. To protect someone's life, or
- f. To perform a public task.

Most community groups will be collecting data for reasons a and b and will not be sharing this data with third parties. This document deals only with keeping personal data for your group's own purposes.

# **Storing information**

Community groups can store personal data for the following reasons:

- To keep a record of their members
- For general communication
- To provide newsletters and updates

It will be your responsibility to keep any data you collect in a safe place such as:

- a password protected folder on a computer
- a Google drive folder or similar
- as a paper document in a locked drawer

#### Health data

Health data can be collected to comply with health and safety obligations, such as the administration of first aid, keeping members safe and enabling reasonable adjustments to be made.

Medical data is sensitive data, and you should include a statement on how you will use medical data in your Privacy Notice. For example:

We will use your data.....

In particular, with your consent, where it is needed to assess your volunteering capacity
on health grounds, subject to appropriate confidentiality safeguards, we will use
information about your physical or mental health, or disability status, to ensure your
health and safety in the workplace and to assess your fitness to work and to provide
appropriate workplace adjustments.

and

 Where we need to protect your interests (or someone else's interests), such as in a medical emergency.

#### **Privacy Notice**

When you collect an individual's data you will need a privacy notice. A privacy notice is a piece of written information which tells people why you need or have their data. It should include:

- the name of your group
- the name and contact details of the Data Controller the person who will control access to the data
- what data you will collect, e.g. name and contact details, medical data
- what the data will be used for
- which legal basis you have for using the data
- how long the data will be kept

- whether the data will be shared with a third party, including if it will be stored on a third-party website (e.g. in Google Drive or Dropbox)
- that individuals can ask to have their data removed or amended at any time, and contact details to use to do this

#### Consent

You must ask for an individual's explicit consent if you wish to store and use their data. In other words, you must tell them exactly what you are going to use their data for and ask for their consent to do so.

When you request details of someone's personal details you should provide them with a privacy notice. For example:

Anytown Community Association needs your name and email address in order to send you information about group activities. Please tick the boxes below to give consent for us to use your details.

I consent for Anytown Community Association to store my contact details

I consent for Anytown Community Association to store my contact details
I consent for Anytown Community Association to store my medical data and use it for
I consent for Anytown Community Association to send me details of their events and meetings.
☐ I consent for Anytown Community Association to send me information about their campaigns.
I consent for Anytown Community Association to send me fundraising appeals.

Your details will be stored securely online in our Google Drive folder and will be removed within one month if you end your membership of Anytown Community Association. You can withdraw your consent for us to use your information, or ask us to amend or delete your details, by emailing secretary@anytown.org.uk.

A copy of our Privacy Notice can be found on our website, or you can request a copy by emailing secretary@anytown.org.uk.

A record of this permission must be stored in a safe place such as locked filing cabinet, or a password protected file on your computer.

We hope this information is useful to you. You can find more information and links to relevant websites in the Appendix below.

#### APPENDIX

- PUBLIC LIABILITY INSURANCE PROVIDERS
- LAND LIABILITY PROVIDERS
- FIRST AID PROVIDERS
- RISK ASSESSMENTS
- USEFUL ORGANISATIONS
- SUMMARY OF DATA PROTECTION RIGHTS

## **PUBLIC LIABILITY INSURANCE PROVIDERS**

https://keepwalestidy.cymru/caru-cymru/community-action/community-groups/community-insurance-group/

https://www.policybee.co.uk/charity-insurance/community-group-insurance https://www.zurich.co.uk/charity-insurance/community-groups-insurance

#### LAND LIABILITY PROVIDERS

https://www.nfumutual.co.uk/farming/smallholder/ - specific insurance for small holders https://www.farmcover.co.uk/smallholding-small-farms?gclid=EAIaIQobChMIrL-CiY7V-QIVUNTtCh0I7A WEAMYASAAEgIORPD BwE - specifically for small holders https://thehomeinsurer.co.uk/land-insurance-thi/ - land liability insurance

#### **FIRST AID PROVIDERS**

https://gov.wales/save-a-life-

cymru?utm source=google&utm medium=cpc&utm campaign=SaveALifeCymruGS — You can find out basic information about giving first aid from this free Welsh Government website <a href="http://www.strata-medical.co.uk/medical/index.phpcv">http://www.strata-medical.co.uk/medical/index.phpcv</a> a local company providing outdoor first aid training

http://nationalschooloffirstaidtraining.co.uk/course\_type/outdoor-first-aid/ providing out of doors first aid training in Powys

https://wilderness-project.org/outdoor-first-aid/ Providing out of doors first aid training

# First Aid kit

A typical out of doors first aid kit could include:

- Primary care leaflet and Scissors
- Microporous tape
- Safety pins and Vinyl gloves
- Tweezers
- Triangular bandage
- Crepe bandage and a woven bandage
- Paracetamol tablets
- Blister plasters
- Antiseptic wipes
- Gauze swabs
- Low adherent dressing
- Assorted plasters

# RISK ASSESSMENTS

# Calculating risk ratings based on recovery time

HOW SEVERE ARE THE CONSEQUENCES OF THE ACCIDENT								
LIKELIHOOD OF ACCIDENT HAPPENING	Minor injuries –  1  Recovery time: minimal	Significant injury – 2  Recovery time: up to 7 days	Serious injury – 3  Recovery time: over 7 days	Major injury – 4  Recovery time: weeks or months	Fatality - 5			
Very unlikely, has never happened before - 1	1	2	3	4	5			
Slight, rarely occurs - 2	2	4	6	8	10			
Possible, but not common - 3	3	6	9	12	15			
Likely, has happened before and will happen again - 4	4	8	12	16	20			
Very likely, happens often - 5	5	10	15	20	25			
RISK RATING: Likelihood of accident X Severity of injury								
RISK	Minimal	Low	Medium	High	Extreme			
RATING	1 - 2	3 - 9	10 - 15	16- 20	25			

# **EXAMPLE RISK ASSESSMENT**

	Risk assessment					
Date:	Location:	Assessor:				

Risk	Who is at risk	Risk likelihood	Risk severity	Overall risk	Risk Management
<b>General Safety</b>					
Emergencies	All Users				Notices say that no unaccompanied children are allowed on site.  A nominated volunteer will have a mobile phone at all public events.  This number will be posted in a prominent place. (Most volunteers always carry a mobile phone.)  First Aiders are located:  Nearest A&E:  Nearest phone:
Car parking	All users	2 (Low)	5 (High)	10 (Medium)	No car parking on site at events open to general public. On other occasions car drivers to watch out for pedestrians and other cars.
Fire	All users	2 (Low)	5 (High)	10 (Medium)	Evacuation process and assembly points clearly signed.  Assembly point is:  All volunteers are familiar with these procedures. Fire extinguishers checked annually. Electrical equipment PATS tested.  Volunteers are required to check wiring on electrical equipment before each use. Defective appliance to be disconnected immediately and reported to committee member.
Cleaning materials	All users	2 (Low)	3(Medium)	6 (Low)	Bleach and other cleaning material stored in bolted cupboard opposite the main door.
Sun burn/heat stroke	All users	4 (Medium)	2 (Low)	8 (Low)	All users advised to use sun cream, wear hats, to refrain from wearing sleeveless tops. All users advised to bring water in refillable bottles. Drinking water should be available to all users. In very high temperatures, especially out of doors, consider cancelling activities.
Young People					

Risk	Who is at risk	Risk likelihood	Risk severity	Overall risk	Risk Management
(vulnerability)	Young people and vulnerable adults	1 (Low)	1 (Low)	1 (Low)	No volunteer should be alone with a child or vulnerable adult.  Volunteers are referred to the code of behaviour and safeguarding policy.  The safeguarding officer is XXXXXXXXXXXXXXXX and in their absence concerns should be reported to another named Trustee.
Site visits					
Slips, trips, falls Spillages Wet footwear Uneven paths Obstacles on paths (cuts, scratches, bruising, broken limbs)	All users	3 (Medium)	2 (Low)	6 (High)	Volunteer sessions begin with a talk by Task Organiser to advise on safety precautions e.g. keep to paths, no eating, work in sight of another person. Volunteers and users are advised to clean spillages and muddy floors immediately. Access to wet floors blocked with appropriate notice. Paths are checked for obstacles before each activity by a volunteer. Publicity advises visitors to wear suitable clothing and footwear when appropriate.  First Aid: Qualified First aider on site. First Aid kit available for volunteers to use.  Unaccompanied children: Notices say that no unaccompanied children are allowed on site.
Refreshments Boiling water (scalds) Food hygiene	All users	2 (Low)	3 (Medium)	6 (Low)	Refreshments at open days are served from behind tables which separate users from hot water. There is sufficient space for volunteers to move around easily without obstructing each other.  Volunteers to wash hands and not handle money and unwrapped food consecutively. No perishable food products are stored at the centre. All food products are freshly provided for each event.
Allergies to plants and insects	All users	3 (Low)	6 (High)	18 (High)	Yew and spindle trees on site. No picking of berries allowed. Beehives are kept in an area closed off to the general public. Advise users to cover up and use insect repellent.  Anaphylaxis: Ensure EpiPen is carried by affected user and that someone other than the affected person knows where it is and is trained to use it.
Craft activities Painting, collage, clay work, Papier	Children and their parents/car ers	1 (Low)	1 (Low)	1 (Low)	Volunteers are experienced and competent in their subjects. Groups are always supervised. Materials and equipment are chosen to minimise harm. For example: where scissors are employed users are given instructions in careful manipulation. When making bird cake no fat is heated on site.

Risk	Who is at risk	Risk likelihood	Risk severity	Overall risk	Risk Management	
Mache, making bird cake.					Peanuts will not be used in craft activities. At public events children may only attend when accompanied by an adult.	
Grounds Maintenance						
Use of hand tools (strains, backache, cuts)	Volunteers	3 (Medium)	2 (Medium)	6 (Low)	PPE: Protective gloves will be worn.  Tools of the correct handle size, weight and length for a person are used. Tools are not left in a position where they may cause an acciden Sharp tools should not be carried in a pocket and should be carried safely. Frequent breaks are taken to prevent injury.	
Lifting	Volunteers	3 (Medium)	3 (Medium)	9 (Low)	Follow general advice. Bend knees when lifting. Two people to lift heavy objects. Sackbut to be available if needed.  Consider providing heavy lifting training to volunteers	
Use of power tools	Volunteers	3 (Medium)	4 (High)	12 (Medium)	Electrical tools used by specific users only. Electrical tools are not used in wet weather. No use of power tools by volunteers under 18.  Appropriate PPE (footwear, clothes and goggles should be worn). See specific tool handbooks and procedures for advice on safe use.	
Ride on machinery	Volunteers	3 (Low)	5(High)	15 (Medium))	The mower is only used by a trained, experienced person. See "ride on mower safety" for advice on safe use.	
Pond Maintenance:	Volunteers				Appropriate footwear and gloves will be worn. Volunteers will work in groups of two or more. Care is taken lifting heavy pond plants and debris from the pond.	
Leptospirosis		3 (Low)	3 (Medium) 5 (High)	9 (Low)	Cuts and open wounds to be covered with waterproof plasters or waterproof gloves.	
Drowning Nearest A&E:		1(Low) Emergency a	ccess:	5 (Low)	Rescue pole available by water. Work in pairs.  Emergency Contact details: Risk Assessment review date:	

# RISK ASSESSMENT FORM – BLANK (Add lines where needed)

	Risk assessment							
Date:	Location:			Assessor:				
Risk	Who is at risk	Risk likelihood	Risk severity	Overall risk	Risk Management			
<b>General Safety</b>								
Emergencies	All Users					ed children are allowed on site. a mobile phone at all public events. rominent place. (Most volunteers		
Young People								
Site visits								
Grounds Maintenance								
Nearest A&E:		Emergency ac	ccess:		Emergency Contact details:	Risk Assessment review date:		

#### **USEFUL ORGANISATIONS AND PUBLICATIONS**

#### **HSE** Website

https://www.hse.gov.uk/guidance/index.htm - good, clear advice on all aspects of health and safety including risk assessments.

# **HSE Leaflets in Welsh and English**

https://www.hse.gov.uk/languages/welsh.htm

Lots of downloadable PDFs on many health and safety topics. Most issues are covered. Here a few that are relevant.

#### Risk Assessments pdf download

https://www.hse.gov.uk/pubns/welsh/indg163.pdf

https://www.hse.gov.uk/simple-health-safety/risk/index.htm

# **Manual Handling pdf download**

https://www.hse.gov.uk/pubns/indg143w.pdf

https://www.hse.gov.uk/pubns/indg143.pdf -

# First Aid at work pdf download

https://www.hse.gov.uk/pubns/welsh/indg214.pdf

https://www.hse.gov.uk/pubns/indg214.pdf

#### **SUMMARY OF DATA PROTECTION RIGHTS**

https://www.resourcecentre.org.uk/information/data-protection-for-community-groups/ https://ico.org.uk/for-organisations/sme-web-hub/how-to-write-a-privacy-notice-and-what-goes-in-it/