BRENTWOOD THEATRE

Health & Safety Policy

2026 Edition

For employees, casual workers, volunteers, contractors, visiting companies and hirers.

This policy sets out Brentwood Theatre Trust's approach to managing health and safety at Brentwood Theatre. It should be read alongside venue risk assessments, fire and emergency procedures, safeguarding arrangements, technical rules and hire terms.

Organisation	Brentwood Theatre Trust
Address	15 Shenfield Road, Brentwood, Essex CM15 8AG
Company / Charity	Company No. 1669034 | Registered Charity No. 285716
Policy version	2026
Review	At least annually and after significant change, incident or relevant legal/guidance update

1. Statement of Intent

Brentwood Theatre Trust is committed to providing, so far as is reasonably practicable, a safe and healthy environment for everyone affected by its activities. We will manage health and safety as an integral part of the operation of the Theatre and will take proportionate action to prevent injury and work-related ill health.

- provide and maintain safe premises, plant, equipment and systems of work;
- identify hazards, assess risks and implement suitable control measures;
- provide appropriate information, instruction, training and supervision;
- consult workers and encourage the reporting of hazards, near misses and safety concerns;
- provide suitable welfare, first-aid and emergency arrangements;
- manage contractors, visiting companies and hirers so that relevant risks are shared and controlled;
- review this policy and supporting risk assessments regularly and following significant change or incident.

The Board of Trustees retains overall responsibility for health and safety. Day-to-day implementation is delegated through the Theatre's management structure.

Approved by (Chair/Trustee): _____

Signature: _____

Date approved: _____

2. Responsibilities

2.1 Board of Trustees

The Board provides governance oversight, ensures suitable resources are available and receives assurance that significant health and safety risks are being managed.

2.2 Theatre Manager

The Theatre Manager has day-to-day responsibility for implementing this policy, coordinating risk management, ensuring incidents are reviewed, arranging appropriate training and escalating significant matters to the Board.

2.3 Technical Manager / Duty Technician

Responsible within their remit for safe technical operations, equipment, electrical and stage activities, work at height, visiting technical teams and stopping work where an unsafe condition exists.

2.4 Duty Manager / Front of House

Responsible within their remit for audience safety, public areas, emergency response, evacuation arrangements, incident reporting and maintaining clear escape and access routes during events.

2.5 Employees, casual workers and volunteers

Everyone must take reasonable care of themselves and others, follow training and safe systems of work, use safety equipment correctly, report defects and hazards promptly, and not interfere with anything provided for health or safety.

2.6 Hirers, visiting companies and contractors

Hirers and contractors remain responsible for the safety of their own activities and people. They must provide suitable risk assessments, method statements, insurance or competence evidence when requested, cooperate with Theatre staff and comply with venue rules and emergency procedures.

3. Risk Assessment and Safe Systems of Work

Suitable and sufficient risk assessments will be completed for significant Theatre activities and reviewed when circumstances change, after relevant incidents or near misses, or where controls may no longer be effective. Significant findings and required actions will be recorded. Task-specific method statements or safe systems of work will be used where appropriate.

Higher-risk or unusual visiting activity may not proceed until the Theatre is satisfied that appropriate controls, competence and documentation are in place.

4. Training, Competence and Supervision

People must only undertake work for which they are competent, trained or appropriately supervised. Induction and role-specific instruction will be provided as appropriate. Specialist equipment, electrical work, rigging, access equipment and other higher-risk tasks may be restricted to authorised competent persons.

No person should continue with a task they believe to be unsafe. Work must stop and the matter must be referred to the Duty Technician, Technical Manager, Duty Manager or Theatre Manager.

5. Personal Protective Equipment (PPE)

PPE will be selected from the relevant risk assessment and used where risks cannot be adequately controlled by other means. This may include safety footwear, hard hats, high-visibility clothing, gloves, eye protection, hearing protection, respiratory protection or fall-protection equipment.

PPE must be suitable, maintained in good condition and used in accordance with instruction. Theatre-owned PPE must be reported if damaged or defective.

6. Workplace, Slips, Trips and Housekeeping

- Work areas, access routes, stairs, fire exits and escape routes must be kept clear.
- Spills and trip hazards must be removed, made safe or reported immediately.
- Cables crossing routes must be suitably routed, covered, secured or protected.
- Temporary work areas accessible to the public must be appropriately controlled using barriers, signs or supervision.
- Adequate lighting, ventilation and reasonable working conditions must be maintained for the task.

7. Work Equipment and Machinery

Work equipment must be suitable for its intended use, maintained in a safe condition and used in accordance with manufacturer instructions and Theatre procedures. Users must carry out appropriate pre-use checks and report defects immediately. Defective equipment must be taken out of use where necessary.

Unauthorised repair, modification, bypassing of safety devices or use of Theatre equipment is prohibited.

8. Manual Handling

Manual handling should be avoided where reasonably practicable. Where it cannot be avoided, the load, task, environment and individual capability must be considered. Mechanical aids, team lifts and suitable routes should be used where appropriate.

No one should attempt a lift they cannot safely control. Large, heavy or awkward items require sufficient competent people, clear communication and a planned route. Loading and unloading vehicles must be controlled and people kept clear of moving loads and tail-lifts.

9. Work at Height and Access Equipment

Work at height must be properly planned, appropriately supervised and carried out by competent people using suitable equipment. Work at height should be avoided where reasonably practicable and collective protection should be considered before personal fall protection.

- Ladders, steps, towers and mobile elevated work platforms must be suitable for the task and checked before use.
- Equipment requiring specialist competence or training may only be used by appropriately competent persons.
- Areas below overhead work must be controlled where there is a risk from falling objects.
- Weather and environmental conditions must be considered for outdoor work at height.
- Emergency and rescue arrangements must be considered where relevant.

10. Electrical Safety

Electrical systems and equipment must be maintained so as to prevent danger. Equipment must be visually checked as appropriate and subject to inspection and testing at intervals determined by risk, use and environment. A current PAT label is not, by itself, a substitute for checking that equipment is safe.

Only competent and authorised persons may undertake electrical work or alter electrical systems. Damaged plugs, cables, connectors or equipment must not be used. Visiting electrical equipment may be refused where its safety cannot be demonstrated.

11. Lighting, Rigging and Stage Technical Safety

- Lighting, rigging and suspended equipment must only be installed or altered by competent persons.
- Suspended luminaires and equipment must use appropriate primary and secondary suspension where required.
- Hot equipment must be allowed to cool and appropriate PPE used when necessary.
- Rigging, suspended loads and unusual technical installations require suitable planning, equipment and risk controls.
- The Theatre's standard technical rig and permanently positioned equipment must not be moved or altered without Theatre authorisation.

12. Noise

Noise exposure will be assessed where work may expose people to harmful sound levels. Controls may include reducing level or duration, increasing distance, limiting access, providing hearing protection and communicating hearing-protection requirements. Emergency alarms and safety communications must remain audible or alternative arrangements provided.

13. Hazardous Substances (COSHH)

Hazardous substances, including cleaning products, paints, aerosols, dusts, fumes and theatrical products, must be assessed and controlled. Safety data sheets and COSHH assessments will be obtained or prepared where appropriate. Exposure should be prevented or adequately controlled, with suitable storage, handling, ventilation, PPE and emergency arrangements.

Contractors and hirers must inform the Theatre before bringing hazardous substances onto site where they may affect others.

14. Fire Safety and Emergency Arrangements

The Theatre will maintain fire and emergency arrangements appropriate to the premises and activities. Everyone must follow safety briefings and instructions from authorised Theatre staff.

- Fire exits, fire doors, escape routes, call points and firefighting equipment must remain unobstructed.
- Fire doors must not be wedged or held open unless an approved system permits it.
- On discovering fire or another emergency, raise the alarm and follow the Theatre's emergency procedure.
- No one is expected to fight a fire unless trained, it is safe to do so and there is a clear escape route.
- People must not re-enter the building until authorised to do so.
- Special effects that may affect fire detection or fire safety require prior approval and specific controls.

15. First Aid

The Theatre will maintain first-aid arrangements based on a first-aid needs assessment, including suitable equipment and appointed persons and/or trained first aiders as required. Staff and volunteers will be told how to summon first-aid assistance.

Serious emergencies require 999. A casualty should not be moved unnecessarily where a serious injury, spinal injury or fall from height is suspected, unless remaining in place presents a greater immediate danger.

16. Accident, Near-Miss and RIDDOR Reporting

All accidents, work-related ill health events, near misses, dangerous occurrences and significant property damage must be reported promptly to the Duty Manager, Duty Technician or Theatre Manager and recorded through the Theatre's incident-reporting arrangements.

The Theatre will investigate incidents proportionately and implement corrective action. Where an incident is reportable under the Reporting of Injuries, Diseases and Dangerous Occurrences Regulations 2013 (RIDDOR), the responsible person will make the required report to the enforcing authority. Over-seven-day worker incapacity is reportable; over-three-day incapacity must be recorded even where it is not reportable.

17. Public, Audience and Event Safety

Work in public areas must be planned to protect audience members and other visitors who may be unfamiliar with technical hazards. Public routes must be controlled during load-ins, load-outs and maintenance work. Audience capacity, seating, accessible routes, barriers and emergency routes must not be altered without Theatre approval.

Staff, volunteers and contractors are expected to behave professionally. Threatening, abusive or unsafe behaviour may result in an individual being removed from the premises or work being stopped.

18. Contractors and Visiting Companies

Contractors and visiting companies must cooperate with the Theatre and provide relevant information about their work. The Theatre will share venue hazards that may affect them. Permits, method statements, risk assessments, equipment certification or evidence of competence may be required for higher-risk work.

Contractors must not start intrusive building work until relevant building safety information, including asbestos information where applicable, has been checked.

19. Asbestos and Building Work

Where the Trust is a dutyholder for non-domestic premises, asbestos will be managed in accordance with the Control of Asbestos Regulations. An asbestos register/management information will be maintained as applicable and made available to people who may disturb the building fabric.

No drilling, cutting, fixing or intrusive work into building fabric may begin without authorisation and appropriate checks.

20. Display Screen Equipment (DSE)

Workers who are DSE users will have workstation risks assessed. Suitable adjustments, information and opportunities for breaks or changes of activity will be provided. Eligible DSE users may request an eye and eyesight test in accordance with the DSE Regulations.

21. Lone Working and Personal Safety

Lone working will be risk assessed where applicable. Arrangements may include check-in/check-out procedures, restrictions on higher-risk tasks, access controls, communication arrangements and escalation procedures. Work that requires assistance or supervision must not be undertaken alone.

22. Young People, Volunteers and Vulnerable Persons

Risk assessments will consider age, experience, competence and any additional vulnerability relevant to the work. Young people must receive appropriate information, instruction, training and supervision and must not undertake prohibited or unsuitable higher-risk work.

Safeguarding matters are managed under the Theatre's separate safeguarding arrangements.

23. Work-Related Stress, Welfare and Fatigue

The Theatre recognises that workload, working hours, fatigue, role clarity and workplace relationships can affect health and safety. Work-related stress risks will be considered and concerns should be raised early with management.

Suitable rest breaks, drinking water and welfare facilities will be provided in accordance with applicable requirements and working arrangements. Safety-critical work must not continue where fatigue makes it unsafe.

24. Consultation and Reporting Concerns

The Theatre will consult workers on health and safety matters that affect them and will communicate relevant changes, risk controls and training. Workers are encouraged to report hazards, defects and concerns without delay. Serious unresolved concerns may also be raised through the Theatre's whistleblowing arrangements.

25. Monitoring, Records and Review

Health and safety performance will be monitored through incident and near-miss reports, inspections, maintenance records, training records, risk assessments, feedback and management review. Actions will be prioritised according to risk.

This policy will be reviewed at least annually and sooner where there is a significant change to the building, equipment, staffing, activities, legislation or guidance, or following a significant incident.

Appendix A - Core Supporting Documents

- General and task-specific risk assessments and safe systems of work
- Fire risk assessment and emergency/evacuation procedures
- First-aid needs assessment and first-aid arrangements
- COSHH assessments and safety data sheets
- Asbestos register and management plan, where applicable
- Electrical inspection, maintenance and testing records
- Work equipment inspection and maintenance records
- Work-at-height/access-equipment inspection and training records
- Accident, incident and near-miss records
- DSE assessments
- Lone-working arrangements
- Safeguarding policy and procedures
- Contractor/hirer risk assessments and technical documentation where required

Appendix B - Key 2026 Legal and Guidance Framework

This policy is intended to operate within the current Great Britain health and safety framework, including (as applicable):

- Health and Safety at Work etc. Act 1974
- Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999
- Workplace (Health, Safety and Welfare) Regulations 1992
- Provision and Use of Work Equipment Regulations 1998 (PUWER)
- Lifting Operations and Lifting Equipment Regulations 1998 (LOLER), where applicable
- Work at Height Regulations 2005
- Manual Handling Operations Regulations 1992 (as amended)

- Personal Protective Equipment at Work Regulations 1992 and 2022 duties as applicable
- Electricity at Work Regulations 1989
- Control of Substances Hazardous to Health Regulations 2002 (as amended)
- Control of Noise at Work Regulations 2005
- Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005
- Health and Safety (First-Aid) Regulations 1981
- Reporting of Injuries, Diseases and Dangerous Occurrences Regulations 2013 (RIDDOR)
- Health and Safety (Display Screen Equipment) Regulations 1992
- Control of Asbestos Regulations 2012
- Health and Safety (Consultation with Employees) Regulations 1996 / Safety Representatives and Safety Committees Regulations 1977, as applicable

Publication control: Before this policy is marked 'Approved' and published as the Theatre's formal 2026 policy, the approval/signature block should be completed and the Theatre should confirm that its current fire risk assessment, first-aid needs assessment, asbestos arrangements, insurance requirements and named health-and-safety responsibilities match the wording above.