



Benson Community Shed

Code of Conduct

Policy Document

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Owner

Trustees

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Policy Framework

Benson Community Shed operates a simple policy framework intended to keep policies clear, proportionate, and practical.

The policy suite consists of four core documents:

- Roles & Responsibilities Framework
- Health & Safety Handbook
- Code of Conduct
- Safeguarding Adults Policy

These documents are designed to work together and reference one another where appropriate. The Roles & Responsibilities Framework is the single authoritative source for role definitions used across the policy set.

The Shed is a member-led, volunteer-run organisation. These policies are intended to support safe participation and a welcoming community environment without creating unnecessary bureaucracy or implying that the Shed is a care provider or a professionally supervised workshop.

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| Roles & Responsibilities Framework | Defines the roles used in the Shed and acts as the authoritative source for role definitions. |
| Health & Safety Handbook | Sets out practical safety expectations and day-to-day health and safety guidance. |
| Code of Conduct | Sets out behavioural standards, disciplinary arrangements and appeals. |
| Safeguarding Adults Policy | Explains how safeguarding concerns relating to adults should be raised and handled. |
| Other supporting records | Forms, risk assessments, induction records, and notices may support these policies but do not replace them. |

Purpose and Scope

This Code of Conduct sets out the standards of behaviour expected within Benson Community Shed.

It applies to members, visitors, guests, and anyone attending Shed-organised activities or events. It should be read alongside the Health & Safety Handbook, the Roles & Responsibilities Framework, and the Safeguarding Adults Policy.

Core Principles

Behaviour at Benson Community Shed is guided by mutual respect, personal responsibility, collective responsibility for a safe and welcoming environment, and fair and reasonable treatment of others.

These principles apply equally to social spaces, workshops, and Shed-organised events. Members are expected to exercise personal judgement while also considering the safety, wellbeing, and experience of others.

Expected Standards of Behaviour

Everyone using the Shed is expected to treat others with respect and courtesy, behave in a way that does not put themselves or others at risk, follow Shed policies including the Health & Safety Handbook, use shared spaces, tools, and facilities considerately, and raise concerns appropriately when something does not seem right.

Members should help maintain a welcoming and inclusive environment. The Shed aims to be a place where people can participate safely, enjoy shared activities and feel treated with dignity and fairness.

Unacceptable Behaviour

The following behaviours are not acceptable at Benson Community Shed:

- bullying, harassment, or intimidation
- discrimination or exclusion based on personal characteristics
- aggressive, threatening, or abusive behaviour
- deliberately unsafe behaviour
- persistent disregard for Shed rules or guidance, including repeated unsafe behaviour
- damage to Shed property or misuse of equipment

This list is not exhaustive. Context and proportionality will be considered, but behaviour that undermines safety, respect, or the proper operation of the Shed may lead to action under this Code.

Visitors

Members bringing visitors to the Shed are responsible for ensuring that visitors understand and follow Shed rules while on the premises.

Visitors must not operate workshop machinery.

Visitors include contractors, guests, and external volunteers. Supervisors may give reasonable instructions to visitors where necessary to support safety and good order within the Shed.

Alcohol, Drugs, Smoking and Vaping

Standards relating to alcohol, drugs, and impairment are defined in the Health & Safety Handbook and must be followed at all times.

In summary:

- illegal drugs are not permitted
- members must not be on site if impaired by drugs or alcohol
- alcohol may only be consumed as part of an organised Shed event and never in the workshop

Smoking and vaping are only permitted in the designated smoking area outside the building.

Safeguarding Concerns

If a member has concerns about the wellbeing or safety of another person at the Shed, those concerns should be raised with the Safeguarding Lead or, where appropriate, a Trustee.

Members are not expected to investigate safeguarding concerns themselves. Raising a concern in good faith is considered a responsible action.

Bringing the Shed into Disrepute

Members must not behave in a way that could reasonably be considered to bring Benson Community Shed into disrepute.

This includes, but is not limited to, serious misconduct while representing the Shed, behaviour at Shed-organised events that undermines trust, safety, or reputation, and misuse of the Shed's name, facilities, or activities.

Consideration will be given to context, intent, and proportionality when assessing such matters.

Resolving Concerns

Benson Community Shed encourages concerns to be raised early and informally where possible.

Minor issues should normally be addressed through calm, respectful discussion.

Where this is not appropriate, concerns should be raised with a Supervisor or Trustee.

Where behaviour does not meet the expectations set out in this Code of Conduct, the Shed may take steps to protect individuals and the wider membership. Responses will be fair, proportionate, and consistent with the Shed's member-led ethos.

Disciplinary Action and Membership Enforcement

Benson Community Shed aims to resolve issues in a constructive and proportionate manner wherever possible.

The purpose of disciplinary action is not to punish individuals, but to:

- maintain a safe and welcoming environment for all members and visitors
- address behaviour that falls below expected standards
- protect the reputation and proper operation of the Shed

Where concerns arise, the Shed will normally seek to resolve matters informally in the first instance. However, more formal action may be taken where behaviour is serious, repeated, or presents a risk to others.

Any response will aim to be proportionate to the circumstances.

Informal Resolution

Many concerns can be resolved through informal discussion.

Where appropriate, a member may be approached by a Supervisor or Trustee to discuss behaviour that is causing concern and to clarify expectations.

The aim of such conversations is to resolve issues early and prevent further problems.

Informal guidance does not constitute formal disciplinary action.

Formal Warnings

Where behaviour continues to fall below expected standards, or where an issue cannot reasonably be resolved informally, the Shed may issue a formal warning.

A warning will normally:

- explain the behaviour or issue that has caused concern
- clarify the expectations for future behaviour
- explain the potential consequences if the behaviour continues

Warnings may be delivered verbally or in writing.

In some circumstances, particularly where behaviour affects the safety or wellbeing of others, a warning may be issued immediately without a prior informal stage.

Temporary Suspension

In situations where behaviour presents a significant concern, the Shed may temporarily suspend a member from participation in Shed activities.

Suspension may be used where:

- a situation requires time to be reviewed properly
- there are concerns about safety or conduct
- previous warnings have not been effective

During a suspension, the individual may be asked not to attend the Shed or participate in activities for a defined period.

Suspension is intended to allow concerns to be considered fairly and carefully.

Termination of Membership

In serious or persistent cases, the Shed may terminate a person's membership.

Termination may be considered where any behaviour:

- seriously breaches the Code of Conduct
- places others at risk
- repeatedly disregards warnings or expectations
- brings the Shed into disrepute

Termination of membership will normally be considered by the Trustees.

Appeals

A member who is subject to disciplinary action may request that the decision be reviewed.

Appeals should:

- be submitted in writing
- clearly explain the reasons for requesting a review

Appeals will be considered by the Trustees.

The decision reached following an appeal will be final.

Trustee Authority

The Trustees hold ultimate responsibility for governance of Benson Community Shed and for ensuring that the organisation operates safely and appropriately.

Accordingly, the Trustees:

- hold final authority in disciplinary matters
- may determine appropriate action where behaviour affects the safety, wellbeing, or operation of the Shed
- Will seek to ensure that decisions are made fairly and proportionately

Proportional Response

The Shed recognises that situations vary and that disciplinary responses must be proportionate.

In many cases issues can be addressed through discussion or guidance. In other cases more formal action may be necessary.

Nothing in this policy requires disciplinary stages to be followed in a fixed order. Where behaviour is serious, the Shed may move directly to suspension or termination of membership if appropriate.

The overriding aim is to maintain a safe, respectful, and supportive environment for everyone using the Shed.