

Heighington Parish Council

LITHIUM-ION BATTERY SAFETY POLICY

Document Ref:	POL/BAT
Status:	Approved
Version:	1.0
Date of approval:	13/07/26
Minute reference:	084/M/26
Date of next review:	Annual (or if legislation changes)

Version Control:

Version: 1.0

Document creation by: Clerk, based on advice obtained via LALC. Policy introduced following Fire Risk Assessment.

Date approved: 13/07/26

Minute: 084/M/26

1 Purpose & scope

- 1.1 The purpose of this policy is to ensure the safe use, charging, storage, handling, and disposal of all equipment powered by lithium-ion batteries on Parish Council premises or during Council activities. Lithium-ion batteries present a significant fire risk due to the potential for thermal runaway, rapid fire spread, and toxic smoke. This policy sets out the controls required to minimise those risks.
- 1.2 This policy applies to all lithium-ion powered devices, including but not limited to:
- Mobile devices (phones, tablets, laptops)
 - Power tools
 - Cleaning equipment
 - Horticultural equipment
 - E bikes, scooters, mobility aids
 - Torches and small rechargeable devices
- 1.3 This policy covers Council owned equipment and privately owned devices used or charged on Council premises.
- 1.4 This policy applies to Councillors, employees, volunteers, contractors, and all users of Council premises.

2 Responsibilities

- 2.1 The Parish Council is responsible for:
- Ensuring this policy is implemented and reviewed annually.
 - Providing safe charging areas and appropriate signage.
 - Ensuring staff and volunteers receive relevant training.
 - Maintaining an inventory of Council owned lithium-ion powered equipment.
- 2.2 Employees and volunteers are responsible for:
- Following all procedures in this policy.
 - Reporting damaged or faulty batteries immediately.
 - Only using approved chargers and equipment.
 - Never charging devices in unauthorised areas.
- 2.3 Contractors and hirers:
- Must comply with this policy when using Council premises.
 - Must not charge e-bikes, scooters, or large battery devices without prior written permission.

3 Risk Assessment

- 3.1 A lithium-ion battery risk assessment must be completed for:
- All Council buildings.
 - Any area where charging takes place.

- Any new equipment purchased.
- Events where battery powered equipment is used.

3.2 Risk assessments must consider:

- Charging locations.
- Storage arrangements.
- Fire detection coverage.
- Escape routes.
- Supervision levels.
- Condition and age of equipment.

4 Safe Charging Procedures

4.1 General rules:

- Charging must only take place in designated areas.
- Charging is not permitted in escape routes, corridors, kitchens, or unattended rooms.
- Devices must not be charged overnight or when buildings are unoccupied.
- Only manufacturer-approved chargers may be used.
- Do not cover devices while charging.
- Keep charging devices away from combustible materials.

4.2 High Risk Devices (e-bikes, scooters, large batteries):

- Must only be charged with explicit written permission from the Clerk or Responsible Person.
- Must be charged in a well-ventilated, supervised area with smoke detection.
- Damaged or modified batteries must not be charged under any circumstances.

5 Safe Storage Procedures

5.1 General Storage:

- Store batteries in a cool, dry location away from heat sources.
- Do not store batteries in direct sunlight or near radiators.
- Keep batteries away from flammable materials.
- Do not store devices in escape routes or communal corridors.

5.2 Damaged or Suspect Batteries - A battery must be treated as damaged if it is:

- Swollen.
- Leaking.
- Overheating.
- Emitting unusual smells.
- Cracked or punctured.

5.3 Damaged batteries must be:

- Immediately isolated in a fire-resistant container.
- Removed from the building.

- Reported to the Clerk.
- Disposed of via specialist recycling (see Section 7).

6 Safe Use Procedures

- Inspect devices before use for signs of damage.
- Do not use devices that become excessively hot.
- Do not expose batteries to water or moisture.
- Do not attempt to repair or modify batteries.
- Follow manufacturer instructions at all times.
- Avoid dropping or crushing devices.

7 Disposal and Recycling

7.1 Lithium-ion batteries must not be placed in general waste.

7.2 The Council will:

- Use approved WEEE recycling facilities or licensed waste contractors.
- Provide designated battery disposal points where appropriate.
- Ensure damaged batteries are handled as hazardous waste.

7.3 Users must:

- Never dispose of batteries in ordinary bins.
- Report any damaged batteries for safe disposal.

8 Emergency Procedures

8.1 Signs of Thermal Runaway:

- Hissing or popping sounds.
- Smoke or vapour.
- Rapid heating.
- Swelling.

8.2 If any of these occur:

- Evacuate the immediate area.
- Close doors behind you.
- Call 999 and request Fire & Rescue.
- Do not attempt to move the device unless safe to do so.
- Do not use water unless instructed by Fire & Rescue.

8.3 Fire Response:

- Follow the building's fire evacuation procedure.
- Do not attempt to extinguish a lithium-ion battery fire with a standard extinguisher unless trained and it is safe.
- Await Fire & Rescue Service instructions.

9 Training and Awareness

9.1 The Council will provide training covering:

- Battery risks and thermal runaway.
- Safe charging and storage.
- Identifying damaged batteries.
- Emergency procedures.

1.2 Training will be refreshed annually.

10 Procurement Controls

10.1 When purchasing new equipment, the Council will:

- Prefer devices with certified safety standards (e.g., UKCA/CE).
- Avoid unbranded or uncertified batteries.
- Maintain a record of purchase dates and expected battery lifespan.

11 Monitoring and Review

- The Clerk or Responsible Person will monitor compliance.
- Incidents or near misses will be recorded and reviewed.
- This policy will be reviewed annually or after any incident.