



PADSTOW TOWN COUNCIL HEALTH AND SAFETY POLICY

POLICY/PROTOCOL/PROCEDURE

Version	June 2023 FINAL	Comments	
Approval Date	27 June 2023	Responsible Officer	Town Clerk
Committee	Staffing	Approval by	Full Council

VERSION HISTORY

Date	Version	Comments
		Last reviewed and updated 29 January 2019. Original adopted 29 July 2014.
13.6.2023	13 June 2023	Updated to take account of updated job roles/responsibilities. Advised by Council H&S advisor no legislative updates. Also placed document into new template.
20.6.2023	20 June 2023	Changes agreed by Staffing Committee to recommend to Council.
27.6.2023	27 June 2023	Staffing Committee minutes adopted and recommendations approved by Council.

REVIEW RECORD

Date Review initiated	Review undertaken by i.e. officer/ Cttee/Council	Summary of any recommended updates/changes to be made



PADSTOW TOWN COUNCIL

It is our policy to provide, so far as is reasonably practicable:-

- * A work place and work activities that will be safe for our employees, visitors and others who may be affected by what we do.
- * Safe plant, equipment and systems of work.
- * Safe use, handling and storage of articles and substances.
- * Instruction and training for and consultation with our employees.
- * A safe working environment.
- * Adequate facilities and welfare arrangements.
- * Sufficient resources to implement the policy and the assignment of responsibilities.

Employees are reminded that they have a duty to take reasonable steps for their health and safety and other people who may be affected and to co-operate with arrangements in all matters relating to health and safety.

This policy will be kept up-to-date and reviewed annually.

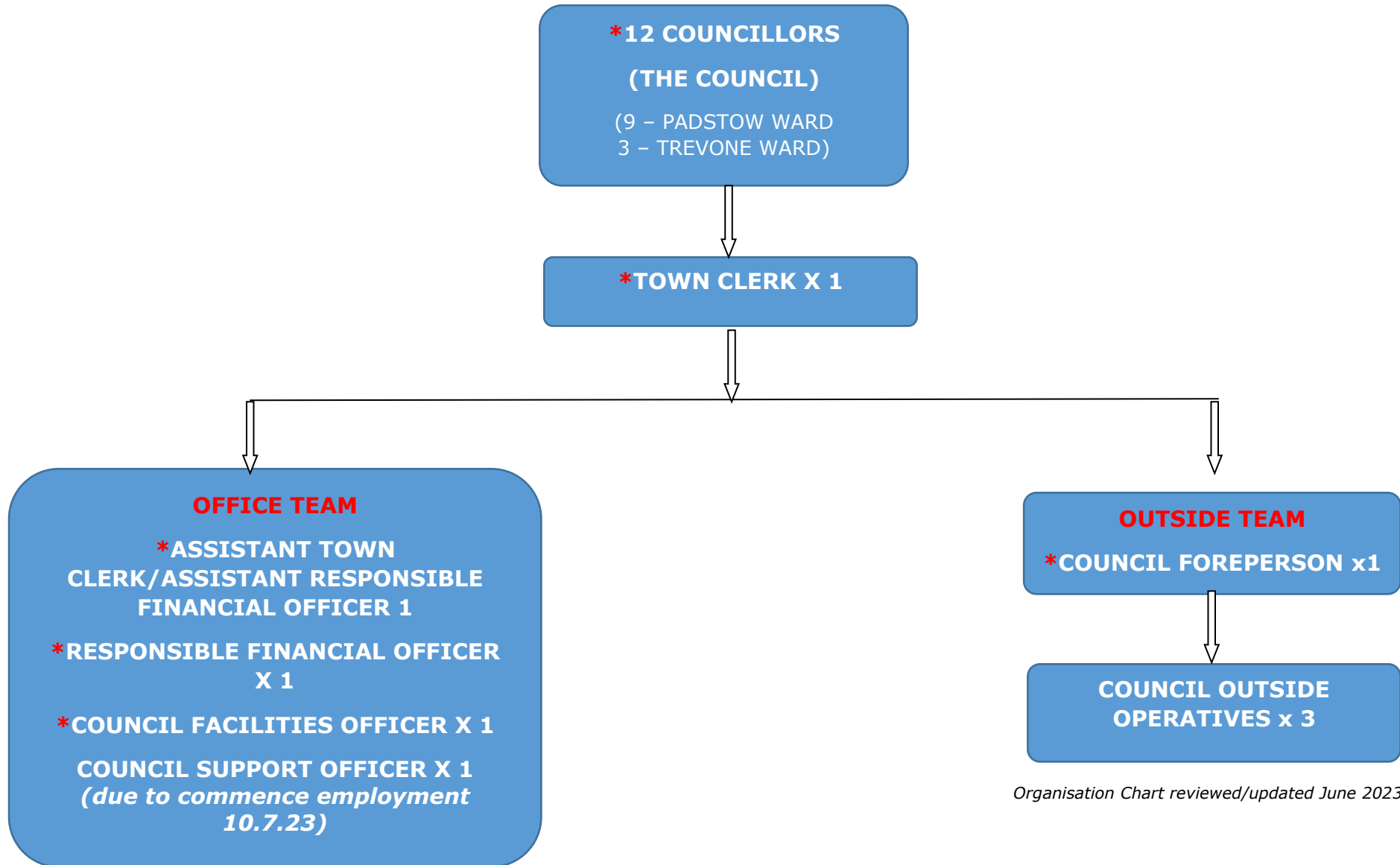
Signed:

Council Chair:.....

Date:

PADSTOW TOWN COUNCIL ORGANISATIONAL CHART

*Role has specific health and safety function (as outlined in this Policy)



Organisation Chart reviewed/updated June 2023

RESPONSIBILITIES

Town Councillors

The Councillors have the ultimate responsibility for the health and safety of Padstow Town Council but discharges this responsibility through the Town Clerk down to individual officers and employees.

The Council has nominated the Town Clerk to have responsibility for health and safety. Some responsibilities of which are delegated to either the Responsible Financial Officer (RFO), Council Foreperson or Council Facilities Officer. The Assistant Town Clerk/Assistant Responsible Officer in the absence of the Town Clerk and Responsible Financial Officer.

However, all staff being mindful of and responsible for health and safety. The Council will ensure that:-

- They provide a lead in developing a positive health and safety culture throughout the organisation.
- All its decisions reflect its health and safety intentions.
- Adequate resources are made available for the implementation of health and safety
- They will promote the active participation of workers in improving health and safety performance.
- They will review the health and safety performance of the Council on an annual basis.

Town Clerk

The Clerk is the designated person with overall responsibility for health and safety within the Council. She will ensure that:

- the Health and Safety Policy is implemented, monitored, developed, communicated effectively, reviewed and amended as required.
- suitable and sufficient people, materials and equipment are provided to meet all health and safety requirements.
- competent persons are appointed to provide health and safety assistance and advice.
- statutory examinations are planned, completed and recorded
- there is regular communication and consultation with staff on health and safety issues.
- an effective training programme is established to ensure staff are competent to carry out their work in a safe manner in consultation with the Council Foreperson and Council Facilities Officer, as well as the RFO in respect finances.
- accidents, ill health and 'near miss' incidents at work are recorded, investigated and reported in particular team members who the Town Clerk has direct management responsibility, liaising with the Council Foreperson on any outside team member who he/she has direct line management responsibility for.
- safety issues raised are thoroughly investigated and, when necessary, further effective controls implemented and

communicated to staff in consultation with the Council Foreperson and/or relevant officer.

- contractors engaged are reputable, can demonstrate a good health and safety record and are made aware of relevant local health and safety rules and procedures in consultation with the Council Foreperson and/or Council Facilities Officer who will liaise with the same.
- effective contingency plans are in place with a designated competent person in charge of the planning and control measures for situations involving imminent danger i.e. Fire Marshall, Lone Working.
- encourages staff to report hazards and raise health and safety concerns.
- communicates and consults with staff on health and safety issues.
- Health and safety objectives are set and their achievement is measured and reported in the annual report [NB: Annual review is undertaken by the Council's H&S advisor (Competent Person), action plan drawn with their advice as well as in consultation with relevant Council officers and reports to Council.

Council Foreperson

- Be responsible for ensuring that all safety checks are undertaken on a daily and weekly basis and as appropriate and checking documentation in this regard.
- To work with the Council Facilities Officer to ensure that relevant up-to-date risk assessments for all duties/equipment are in place.
- Undertake relevant training for the post relating to health and safety.
- Working with the Council Facilities Officer to ensure the outside team has appropriate/relevant training in order to establish and maintain an effective training programme, as well as appropriate safety clothing.
- Ensure health and safety abided by at all times, if not to take action to remedy and contact the Council Facilities Officer and/or Town Clerk to progress, if required. NB: to include ad-hoc checks on team members to ensure appropriate PPE is worn when required.
- Report areas of concern immediately to the either the Council Facilities Officer or Town Clerk, or in their absence the Assistant Town Clerk/Assistant Responsible Financial Officer.
- To undertake specific health and safety training and other training course as necessary and as required.
- To be proactive in offering advice/support in relation to health and safety issues.
- To ensure all "pre-checks" are undertaken for any event/activity undertaken on Padstow Town Council land, filling in appropriate paperwork and escalating any issue of concern.
- Ensuring that hazardous substances are stored, transported, handled and used in a safe manner according to manufacturers' instructions and established rules and procedures, working with the Council Facilities Officer in the documentation of the same.
- Agreed safety standards are maintained particularly those relating to housekeeping.
- Health and safety rules are followed by all.

- To attend regular health and safety meetings with relevant members of staff and the Town Clerk and outside health and safety advisor (if required). Hold regular staff meetings and ensuring health and safety matters are raised.
- Ensure any accidents, ill health (team members who report direct to Council Foreperson) and 'near miss' incidents at work are recorded, investigated and reported in consultation, where appropriate with the Town Clerk or informing the Town Clerk.
- Working the Council Facilities Officer to ensure that safe systems of work are developed and implemented.
- To inspect and ensure the good maintenance and safety of all of the Council's property and equipment (e.g. machinery and vehicles) escalating any issues of concern.
- To be aware of their responsibility under Health and Safety law, taking reasonable care of yourself, colleagues, contractors and members of the public whilst at work and should actively promote a safety culture within the workplace. Working at all times in accordance with the Health and Safety at Work Act 1974 and to follow all company policies, procedures and guidelines.
- To assist team members and keep them updated with relevant policies and practices relevant to their role.
- Ensure welfare facilities provided are maintained in a satisfactory state.

Council Facilities Officer

- To act as Fire Marshall for the Council
- To provide support to the Town Clerk and Council Foreperson to ensure that risk assessment paperwork is up-to-date and records maintained.
- Liaising with the Council Foreperson and Town Clerk concerning assisting with maintaining records, booking team members on relevant training courses and associated work.
- To ensure that relevant health and safety inspections are undertaken and any matters for attention are addressed liaising with the Council Foreperson. For instance, annual playground inspections, regular legionella, fire alarm system and fire extinguishers, electrical testing.
- Maintain all relevant health and safety records in liaising with the Council Foreperson, Town Clerk and Council's H&S Advisors
- Support the Town Clerk in the review/update of Health and Safety Policy.
- To provide support in the annual H&S review and subsequent Action Plan, working with the Town Clerk and Council Foreperson in the drafting and delivery of the same.
- Ensure First Aid boxes are fully stocked and fit for purpose
- liaising with outside contractors/organisations on any activity on Council property ensuring that risk assessments and Public Liability Insurance is provided and satisfactory and liaising with Council's insurers and health and safety advisor in this regard. As well as the Council Foreperson to ensure all "pre-checks" area made
- Issuing to staff any annual health and safety forms, screening etc and working with the Town Clerk and Council Foreperson in respect of any areas to be addressed/dealt with.

- To be aware of their responsibility under Health and Safety law, taking reasonable care of yourself, colleagues, contractors and members of the public whilst at work and should actively promote a safety culture within the workplace. Working at all times in accordance with the Health and Safety at Work Act 1974 and to follow all company policies, procedures and guidelines.
- To assist team members and keep them updated with relevant policies and practices relevant to their role.

Responsible Financial Officer

As Responsible Financial Officer she will have the following responsibilities:

- to ensure that adequate insurance cover is provided and renewed;
- to ensure that suitable and sufficient funds are provided to meet all health and safety requirements.

Employees

All employees must:

- take reasonable care of their own safety.
- take reasonable care of the safety of others affected by their actions.
- observe the safety rules.
- comply with the Health and Safety policy.
- conform to all written or verbal instructions given to them to ensure their personal safety and the safety of others.
- dress sensibly and safely for their particular working environment or occupation.
- conduct themselves in an orderly manner in the work place and refrain from any antics or pranks.
- use all safety equipment and/or protective clothing as directed.
- avoid any improvisations of any form which could create an unnecessary risk to their personal safety and the safety of others.
- maintain all equipment in good condition and report defects to their supervisor.
- report any safety hazard or malfunction of any item of plant or equipment to their supervisor.
- report all accidents to their supervisor whether an injury is sustained or not.
- attend as requested any health and safety training course.
- observe all laid down procedures for processes, materials and substances used.
- Observe the fire evacuation procedure and the position of all fire equipment and fire exit routes.
- Complete any documentation/forms relating to health and safety of themselves as well as Council assets and vehicles.
- If undertaking Lone Working to ensure to follow the process for logging on and off.

ARRANGEMENTS

- 2.1 **Council Policy**
Work instructions and procedures, whether written or verbal, are an integral part of the Council Policy.
- 2.2 **Safety Inspections**
Safety inspections will be arranged at appropriate intervals. All safety equipment such as guards and cut off switches will be regularly tested to ensure effectiveness
- 2.3 **Consultation**
Staff meetings will be held at least quarterly, more frequent if need arises Any items discussed will be noted and where appropriate, actioned.
- 2.4 **Risk Assessment**
The Council will carry out suitable and sufficient assessments of the risks to the health and safety of employees and to others who might be affected by work activities.
- 2.5 **Accident Reporting**
It is Council policy to report all serious injuries, industrial diseases and dangerous occurrences. All notifiable accidents will be reported to the enforcing authority. The Accident Book must be fully completed for all injuries incurred at work, however minor.
- 2.6 **Accident Investigation**
It is Council policy to investigate.
- All accidents resulting in any reportable injury or losses of any assets.
 - Accidents, however minor.
 - All near-misses.
- 2.7 **COSHH**
The Council recognise that some substances have the potential to cause ill health and they will introduce measures to identify any such substances employees use or are exposed to in the course of their work. Where practical alternatives exist, the Council will not use harmful substances. Substances that must be used will be assessed and control measures introduced to prevent risk.
- 2.8 **Display Screen Equipment**
It is Council policy to provide a safe and comfortable working environment and arrangements will put in place and procedures for the assessment of risks from the use of DSE.

A user, defined as a person using display screen equipment for a large proportion of their working day, is entitled to free eyesight tests and this will be discussed with the individuals concerned.

2.9 **Driving For Work**

The Council will ensure that all vehicles provided for work use are serviced, MOT'd (where appropriate) and in good order.

It is the employee's responsibility to :-

- Report defects as soon as possible.
- Report any incident with the Police arising from the use of the vehicle.
- Report accidents or incidents to the Council regardless of fault.

2.10 **Use Of Mobile Phone**

The Council is committed to reducing risk with the Council activities and so provide mobile phones to assist with communication.

All drivers must :-

- Never make or receive calls on a hand held mobile telephone when driving.
- The Council requires that you pull over to make, receive or return calls.

2.11 **Electricity At Work**

All electrical systems on Council premises will be inspected to ensure there is no danger.

All portable appliances will be given a thorough electrical test by a competent person at fixed intervals, which reflect the potential risks associated with the class of appliance. PAT testing records are kept on file.

The fixed wiring installation supplying electrical sockets, lighting or other wired in equipment will be inspected by a competent electrician at least every ten years.

2.12 **Fire Safety**

The Council will put in place arrangements for the assessment of risks from fire and appropriate control measures to minimise the risks identified. These measures will include the following arrangements, procedures and controls.

- Regular inspection of the premises for fire safety.
- Fire extinguishers will be placed at clearly signed fire points.
- Emergency exit routes will be kept clear at all times.
- Training in the use of extinguishers, procedures for fire drills and evacuation.
- Records of training and drills will be kept.

The Council will

- Provide adequate numbers of fire extinguishers on the premises.
- Ensure that the fire extinguishers are subject to regular maintenance.
- Formulate emergency evacuation procedures.
- Practice the evacuation procedures is undertaken annually, or more if new members join the team.

- 2.13 **First Aid**
The Council recognise their legal duty to make sufficient provision for first aid to employees and will make appropriate arrangements to ensure that there are an adequate number of trained first aiders. In the event of anything other than minor injuries, medical assistance must be sought.
- 2.14 **The Indoor Environment**
It is our policy to provide a working environment that is safe and comfortable.
- 2.15 **Manual Handling**
The Council will undertake risk assessments in respect of all manual handling operations identified as having a significant risk and will strive to reduce these risks as far as possible. Training in lifting techniques will be provided for staff involved in all operations identified as having a significant risk.
- 2.16 **Personal Protective Equipment (PPE)**
PPE will be provided where risk assessments show that a risk cannot otherwise be avoided.
It will only be used where it is not reasonably practicable to modify the activity, the process, or the method of work to prevent risk. PPE will be maintained and replaced as necessary to ensure its effectiveness. Employees must report loss or obvious defects in PPE as soon as practicable.
- 2.17 **Smoking At Work**
Smoking is not permitted anywhere on Council premises. This now relates to e-cigarettes.
- 2.18 **Work Equipment**
The Council will, so far as is reasonably practicable, ensure that all work equipment is safe and without risk.
To minimise the risk of injury from work equipment the Council will:-
- Carry out risk assessments of all equipment in use and all new or second hand equipment purchased.
 - Carry out inspections to ensure all safety critical features remain fully effective.
 - Ensure that all maintenance procedures are kept up-to-date.
 - Provide suitable training.
- 2.19 **Young Persons**
The Council will pay special regard to the needs of any young persons by risk assessing the tasks they are being asked to do and taking into account their inexperience and immaturity.
- 2.21 **Alcohol and Drug Abuse**
No alcohol can be consumed on the premises at any time. Anyone found taking alcohol or drugs on the premises is guilty of gross misconduct, and will be disciplined accordingly.
If you are required to take prescription medication please advise your line manger.

2.22 **Stress Management**

The Council recognise that stress is an increasing factor in daily lives. They will endeavour to increase general awareness of stress and ways to combat workplace stress and will take action to prevent workplace stressors and monitor and evaluate stress indicators in employees. Where an employee feels under stress he/she should make their supervisor or manager aware of the situation

2.23 **Visitors**

The Council policy regarding the control of visitors on the premises is that :-

- Employees must be aware that the visitor is on the premises.
- Visitors are the responsibility of the Council whilst on the premises.
- All visitors must comply with any instructions given to them.

2.24 **Contractors/sub contractors**

All contractors working on Council premises are required to comply with appropriate rules and regulations governing their work activities.

The Council will ensure that, prior to engaging any contractor, they are competent and that work is carried out safely.

The Council recognise that they have a duty to the contractor and must ensure that the contractor is not put at risk by Council activities.

2.25 **Occupational Ill Health**

The Council will take all reasonably practicable measures to prevent employees from contracting any occupational diseases or developing medical complaints as a result of their work such as vibration related injuries.

Where, by risk assessment, it is considered appropriate the Council will provide health surveillance by qualified medical professionals.

In the case of vibration it is important that at all times the exposure time is reduced to suitable levels.

2.26 **Consultation and Training**

The Council is committed to providing employees with adequate information, instruction and training. External assistance will be used to provide professional health and safety training if required. The Council will -

- Ensure that all newly appointed or promoted staff receive an efficient induction into their jobs.
- Provide training to increase the productivity and performance of existing staff, ensuring that they are updated in line with new legislative requirements, techniques and technology.
- Review training needs at least once a year.
- Retain records of training for all employees.

2.27 **Noise**

The Council does not consider that the noise levels experienced by its staff exceed the lower action level (over an 8 hour period) as defined in the Noise at Work Regulations however it will continually monitor these levels to ensure staff are not adversely exposed.

2.28 **Play Areas and Skate Parks**

The Council recognises the need to keep the play areas and equipment safe for the users and as such will continue to do the following :-

- Daily visual inspection by maintenance staff during the busy periods and a weekly written inspection and monthly written inspection during the winter
- Annual Independent Inspection.

2.29 **Asbestos**

Asbestos registers have been prepared following an asbestos survey and copies are provided to all staff/contractors working on Council premises.

Instructions have been provided to all staff not to touch any discarded building material or waste in case it contains such material. Contact is to be made to Cornwall Council which will arrange for collection and disposal.

Responsibilities Overview

- Overall and final responsibility for health and safety is that of the Councillors of Padstow Town Council.
- Day to day responsibility for ensuring the policy is put into practice is delegated to the Town Clerk, with some responsibilities either delegated to the Council Foreperson, Council Facilities Officer or Responsible Financial Officer (see detailed responsibilities pages)
- Our nominated Competent Person is James Hallam Risk Management.
- ***The following employees are responsible for health and safety in their areas:-***

Name	Area
Patrick Bate/Tracey Trestain	External Staff
Kathy Pemberton/Tracey Trestain	Office Staff
Tracey Trestain	Fire Marshall
Nikki Barnes	Insurance/adequate budget

- Employees should report any health and safety concerns to the Council Foreperson or direct to the Town Clerk, or Council Facilities Officer
- The Council Foreperson will be responsible for ensuring any risk assessments as required by Regulations are undertaken.
- Action required to reduce or control the risks will be approved by the Town Clerk, working with the Council Facilities Officer.
- The Town Clerk, Council Facilities Officer and Council Foreperson will be responsible for ensuring that employees are made aware of the findings of the risk assessments and any control measures identified.
- Any defects in plant, equipment, buildings or systems should be reported to the Council Foreperson, who in turn should report to the Council Facilities Officer/or Town Clerk.
- The Health and Safety Law Poster is displayed in the Staff Room.
- Induction training for new employees is the responsibility of the Town Clerk or Council Foreperson (dependent on role), with support from the Council Facilities Officer.
- Job training will be co-ordinated by the Council Facilities Officer, in liaising with the Council Foreperson or Town Clerk, as appropriate.

- Training records are kept in the main upstairs office and administered by the Council Facilities Officer.
- Training records are kept for individual members of staff and are kept under review to ensure training is maintained and relevant.
- First aid boxes are kept in the Council Offices (Staff Room) and vehicles. Sharp boxes are kept in Council vehicles.
- Accident Books and Near Miss Books are kept in Reception
- All accidents should be reported to Council Foreperson, or Council Facilities Officer, or Town Clerk
- The Town Clerk in with the Council Foreperson will conduct the accident investigation, with support from the Council Facilities Officer
- Fire safety checks are carried out weekly by the Fire Marshall
- Fire alarms, emergency lighting and fire extinguishers are checked and maintained by Golant Fire and Security Ltd

APPENDICES

A) Manual Handling

B) Ladders and Stepladders

**C) Display Screen Equipment (DSE)/Visual Display
Unit (VDU)**

A) Manual Handling

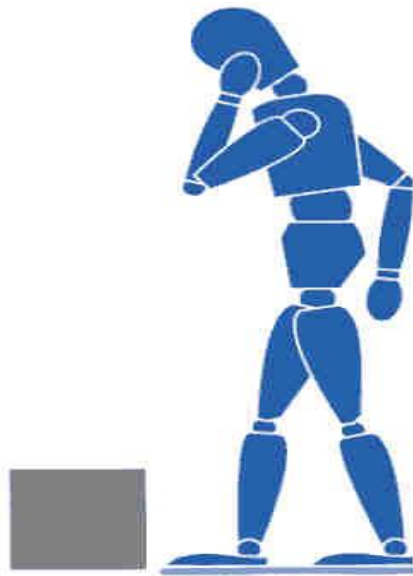
PRINCIPLES OF GOOD HANDLING TECHNIQUE

The 5 P's or 5 Manual Handling Principles to avoid injury can be easily remembered and summarised as follows:

- Plan – plan your lift adequately.
- Position – centre the body & feet correctly.
- Pick – lift item using good posture.
- Proceed – move toward desired location.
- Place – set object down safely.

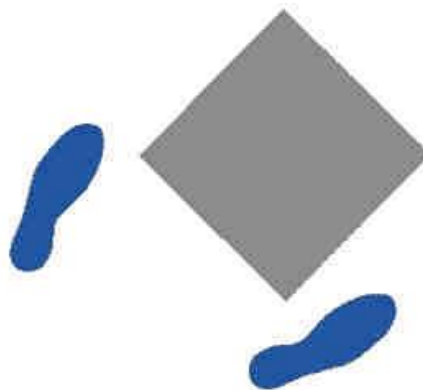
1 Plan

Plan the lift, consider where the load is to be placed, the distances involved, are there any obstructions such as closed doors? Is assistance required? can handling aids or equipment be used?



2 Position

Feet should be positioned apart (shoulder width), one foot ahead of the other in the direction of the intended movement



Adopt a good posture for handling with the knees bent (not squat – don't kneel), in order to gain the most effective power from the thigh muscles

3 Pick

The back should be straight - not necessarily vertical (15 - 20°) from vertical is alright, keeping the natural curve of the spine. It may help to tuck in the chin. If necessary, lean forward a little over the load to get a good grip and to keep the centre of gravity over the load.

The arms should be close to the body (nearer the centre of gravity) with the shoulders level and facing the same direction as the hips.

Ensure a firm grip on the load using the roots of the fingers and the palm of the hand. Holding the load this way is also less tiring than keeping the fingers straight.

Raise the chin out and up as the lift begins, otherwise this results in round shoulders and a curved spine.



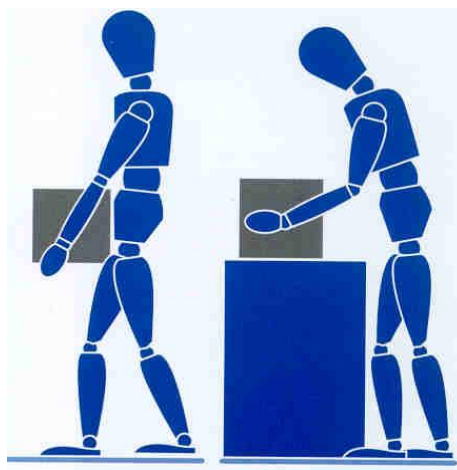
4 Proceed

Keep the load as close to the trunk for as long as possible, and where relevant, keep the heaviest side of the load close to the body. Slide the load towards you if required.

Move the feet not the trunk when turning to the side, i.e., don't twist.

5 Place

Put the load down and then slide the load into the required position if necessary.



9 Team Handling

Handling by two or more people may make possible an operation that is beyond the capability of one person, or reduce the risk of injury to a solo handler.



Additional difficulties may arise if team members impede each other's vision or movement, or if the load offers insufficient good handholds. This can occur particularly with compact loads which force the handlers to work close together or where the space available for movement is limited.

When lifting loads at or near floor level is unavoidable, handling techniques which allow the use of relatively strong leg muscles rather than those of the back are preferable, provided the load is small enough to be held close to the trunk. In addition, if the task includes lifting to shoulder height, allow the handlers to change hand grip. Bear in mind, however, that such techniques impose heavy forces on the knees and hip joints which must carry both the weight of the load and the weight of the rest of the body.

The closeness of the load to the body can also be influenced by foot placement. The elimination of obstacles which need to be reached over or into will permit the handler's feet to be placed beneath or adjacent to the load before beginning the manual handling operation.

B) Ladders and Stepladders

This guidance is to help you:

- know when to use a ladder;
- decide how to go about selecting the right sort of ladder for the particular job;
- understand how to use it;
- know how to look after it; and
- Take sensible safety precautions.

When is a ladder the most suitable access equipment?

As a guide, **only** use a ladder or stepladder:

- in one position for a maximum of 30 minutes;
- For 'light work' - they are not suitable for strenuous or heavy work. If a task involves you carrying more than 10 kg (a bucket of something) up the ladder or steps it will need to be justified by a detailed manual handling assessment;
- where a handhold is available on the ladder or stepladder;
- where you can maintain three points of contact (hands and feet) at the working position;

On a **ladder** where you cannot maintain a handhold, other than for a brief period of time, other measures will be needed to prevent a fall or reduce the consequences of one. On **stepladders** where a handhold is not practicable you will need to consider whether it is safe to work or not.

Is it a safe place to use a ladder or stepladder?

As a guide, **only** use a ladder or stepladder:

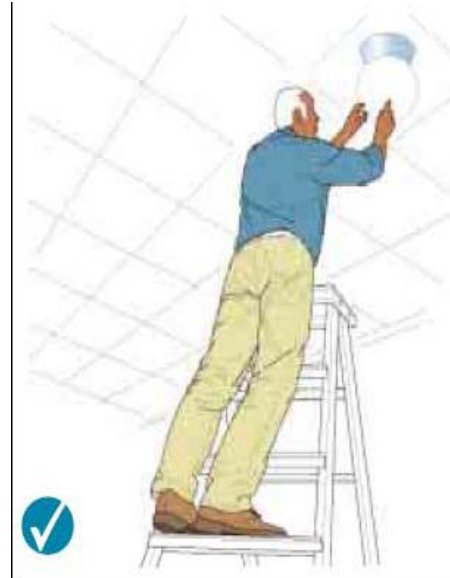
- on firm ground or spread the load (e.g. use a board);
- On clean, solid surfaces (paving slabs, floors etc). These need to be clean (no oil, moss or leaf litter) and free of loose material (sand, packaging materials etc) so the feet can grip. Shiny floor surfaces can be slippery even without contamination;

Never stand ladders or stepladders on moveable objects, such as pallets, bricks, lift trucks, tower scaffolds, vans, stacks of paper or boxes etc. If the ladder or stepladder won't reach, you need to use a more suitable type of access equipment.

Safety in use – stepladders. On a stepladder **do not**:

- overload it – you and anything you are carrying should not exceed the highest load stated on the stepladder;

- Use it in locations where the restraint devices cannot be fully opened. Any locking devices must also be engaged;
- use the top two steps of a stepladder, unless a suitable handrail is available on the stepladder;
- Don't use the top three steps of swing-back or double-sided stepladders, where a step forms the very top of the stepladder.



Correct – two clear rungs. Don't work any higher up this type of stepladder.

Correct – 3 clear rungs, do not work any higher on this type of stepladder

When using stepladders, avoid work that imposes a side loading, such as side-on drilling through solid materials (e.g. bricks or concrete), by having the steps facing the work activity. Where side-on loadings cannot be avoided you should prevent the steps from tipping over, for example by tying the steps to a suitable point, or you should use a more suitable type of access equipment.



Incorrect – steps side on to work activity



Correct – steps facing work activity

Where you cannot maintain a handhold (e.g. putting a box on a shelf), the use of a stepladder will have to be justified by taking into account:

- The height of the task;
- A safe handhold still being available on the stepladder;
- Whether it is light work;
- Whether it avoids side loading;
- Whether it avoids overreaching
- Whether your feet are fully supported; and
- Whether you can tie the stepladder.

Consider tying a **stepladder** where possible and helpful to the task (e.g. side-on working or where two free hands are needed). Stepladders should not be used for access to another level unless they have been designed for this.

Is the ladder or stepladder safe to be used?

You must check that the ladder or stepladder is in a safe condition before using it (a daily pre-use check). As a guide, **only** use ladders or stepladders that:

- have no visible defects.
- have a current detailed visual inspection (look for an inspection label).
- are suitable for work use. Use Class 1 or EN 131 ladders or stepladders at work because domestic (Class 3) ones are not normally suitable for use at work;
- Have been maintained and stored in accordance with the manufacturer's instructions.

Also, you must always use a non-conductive ladder or steps for any necessary live electrical work.

Pre-use checks

Look for obvious visual defects before using a ladder or stepladder. Check that:

- all the ladder feet are fitted;
- the feet are in good repair (not loose, missing, splitting, excessively worn, secure etc);
- The feet are clean - the feet should be in contact with the ground. Ladder feet should also be checked when moving from soft/dirty ground (e.g. dug soil, loose sand/stone, a dirty workshop) to a

smooth, solid surface (e.g. paving slabs), to ensure the foot material and not the dirt (e.g. soil, embedded stones or swarf) is making contact with the ground;

- all the screws, bolts and hinges are secure;
- On a stepladder, that the "spreaders" on the ladder can be locked into place.
- There are no other obvious signs of damage such as cracks.

If you find a problem, DO NOT USE the ladder. It should be repaired (if practicable) or destroyed.

Storage

When storing ladders and stepladders, store them in a well ventilated area to prevent sagging and warping. Store straight ladders in flat racks or on wall brackets, don't hand them from the rungs. Store step ladders in the closed, vertical position.

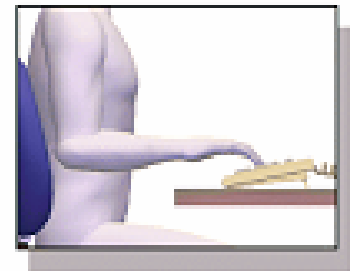
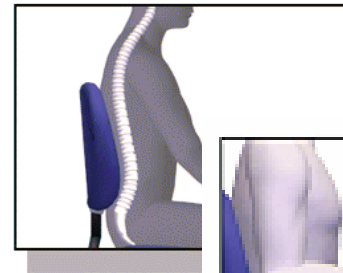
The information in this Guidance is based on the HSE leaflet 'Safe use of ladders and step ladders'

C) Display Screen Equipment (DSE)/Visual Display Unit (VDU)

Some practical tips:

Getting comfortable

- Adjust your chair and VDU to find the most comfortable position for your work. As a broad guide, your lumbar should be supported by the seat cushion, forearms should be approximately horizontal and your eyes the same height as the top of the VDU.
- Make sure you have enough work space to take whatever documents or other equipment you need.
- Try different arrangements of keyboard, screen, mouse and documents to find the best arrangement for you. A document holder may help you avoid awkward neck and eye movements.
- Arrange your desk and VDU to avoid glare, or bright reflections on the screen. This will be easiest if neither you nor the screen is directly facing windows or bright lights. Adjust curtains or blinds to prevent unwanted light.
- Make sure there is space under your desk to move your legs freely. Move any obstacles such as boxes or equipment.
- Avoid excess pressure from the edge of your seat on the backs of your legs and knees. A footrest may be helpful, particularly for smaller users.



Keying in

- Adjust your keyboard to get a good keying position. A space in front of the keyboard is sometimes helpful for resting the hands and wrists when not keying.
- Try to keep your wrists straight when keying. Keep a soft touch on the keys and don't overstretch your fingers. Good keyboard technique is important.

Using a mouse

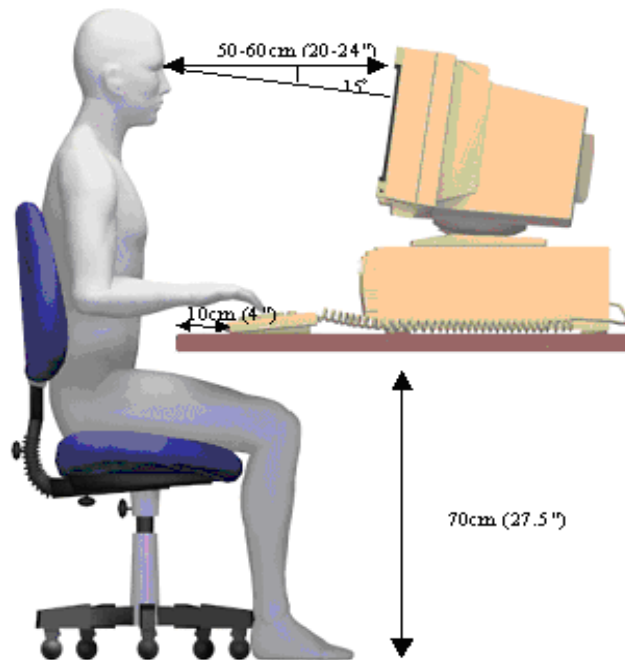
- Position the mouse within easy reach, so it can be used with the wrist straight. Sit upright and close to the desk, so you don't have to work with your mouse arm stretched. Move the keyboard out of the way if it is not being used.
- Support your forearm on the desk, and don't grip the mouse too tightly.
- Rest your fingers lightly on the buttons and do not press them hard.

Reading the screen

- Adjust the brightness and contrast controls on the screen to suit lighting conditions in the room.
- Make sure the screen surface is clean.
- In setting up software, choose options giving text that is large enough to read easily on your screen, when you are sitting in a normal, comfortable working position. Select colours that are easy on the eye (avoid red text on a blue background, or vice-versa).
- Individual characters on the screen should be sharply focused and should not flicker or move. If they do, the VDU may need servicing or adjustment.

Posture and breaks

- Don't sit in the same position for long periods. Make sure you change your posture as often as practicable. Some movement is desirable, but avoid repeated stretching to reach things you need (if this happens a lot, rearrange your workstation)
- Most jobs provide opportunities to take a break from the screen, e.g. to do filing or photocopying. Make use of them. If there are no such natural breaks in your job, your employer should plan for you to have rest breaks. Frequent short breaks are better than fewer long ones.



Portable computers

The same advice as above will also reduce the DSE risks associated with portable computers. However, the following is also useful to note:

- Whenever possible, you should be encouraged to use a docking station or firm surface and a full-sized keyboard and mouse.
- The height and position of the portable's screen should be angled so that you sit comfortably and reflection is minimised.
- More changes in activity may be needed if you cannot minimise the risks of prolonged use and awkward postures to suitable levels.