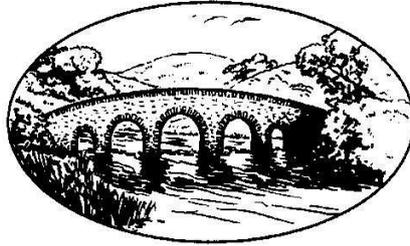


HEYBRIDGE PARISH COUNCIL
Health & Safety Policy



Heybridge Parish Council

HEALTH AND SAFETY POLICY
OF
HEYBRIDGE PARISH COUNCIL
PLANTATION HALL
COLCHESTER ROAD
HEYBRIDGE
ESSEX
CM9 4AL

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Section 1
Policy Statement and Management Organisation

1.1 Statement of intent

Heybridge Parish Council (*known hereafter as HPC*) acknowledges its responsibilities to all those health and safety might be affected by its activities.

HPC therefore commits itself to a policy of ensuring high standards of health and safety throughout the range of its activities. It is recognized that these standards can only be achieved through the effective management of health and safety at all levels of the organization and with the active co-operation of all employees. HPC expects its staff to have an understanding of hazards and risk and to be competent in managing health and safety as an integral and essential part of day-to-day professional management.

The responsibility for implementing this policy lies directly with HPC through to each and every staff member associated with HPC. It is the clear duty of each employee to take reasonable care of their own and other people's health, safety and welfare and to report, and if necessary take action, to rectify any situation which may pose a threat to the well being of any other person.

1.2 Objectives

HPC will do all that is reasonably practicable to ensure:

- That high standards of health and safety (i.e. accepted best practice), are achieved and maintained for all its employees and members of the public as well as the employees of those sub-contractors it appoints to carry out work on its behalf;
- That employees, (and sub-contractors and their employees), are appropriately and adequately trained, equipped and instructed to perform their work in a safe and effective manner;
- That employees, members of the public and other non-employees are not exposed to risks to their health and safety arising out of the Council's activities.
- Provide healthy and safe working conditions, equipment and systems of work for employees(s), volunteers and hirers.
- Keep the village hall and equipment in a safe condition for all users.

The implementation of this policy and achievement of the stated objectives will be regularly monitored by HPC. **The policy will be reviewed at least every 12 months or more often when changes in the scale and nature of our operations occur.** The specific organization and arrangements for the implementation of this policy are detailed in the following sections.

Signed:

Date

Heybridge Parish Council Clerk

Section 1

Policy Statement and Management Organisation

1.3 Organization and Responsibilities

The HPC Clerk, has overall responsibility for the implementation of this policy and for ensuring that adequate and appropriately funded resources are made available for the achievement of the stated objectives. He/she will, in addition, be responsible for ensuring that systems to monitor the effectiveness of the policy are established, and will ensure that a critical review of Health and Safety organization and arrangements is carried out at least once annually.

HPC has a statutory duty under the Health and Safety at Work Act to take 'reasonable practical' steps to ensure the health and safety of employees and others who use the hall ie. Volunteers, members of the public, hirers and contractors.

In addition he/she will be responsible for:

- Making arrangements to implement the findings of risk assessments
- Satisfying himself/herself that work equipment provided for the use of employees is fit for purpose and safe to use
- Ensuring that any accidents, near-misses or ill-health are properly recorded and appropriately investigated in accordance with Section 2.6 of this policy document
- Ensuring that adequate arrangements are in place for first aid in accordance with HPC's " First Aid Needs Assessment", including ensuring that there is a properly authorized and resourced "appointed person or persons " for first aid treatment
- At least annually, appraising the performance of caretakers reporting to him/her in respect of their performance in discharging their safety responsibilities
- Ensuring that suitable Safe Systems of Work are developed for all areas of HPC activities – safe systems of work are to be set out using written Risk Assessments and the Subject Specific Health and Safety Guidance
- Ensuring that sufficient information, training, support and competent advice is available to all HPC staff to enable them to comply with this health and safety policy and with all current health and safety legislation
- Ensuring that all appropriate risk assessments are carried out, periodically reviewed and maintained up to date
- Ensuring that adequate arrangements are in place for the effective day-to-day implementation of the policy within HPC
- Ensuring that there is an effective process of formal consultation with employees on health and safety matters
- Carry out specific risk assessment for any employees identified as being pregnant or below the age of 18
- Notifying the Health and Safety Executive of any "reportable injuries or occurrences
- Ensuring that all work is carried out safely in accordance with agreed company safety procedures i.e. Risk Assessments and Subject Specific Health and Safety Guidance
- Ensure that agreed workplace safe conditions are maintained at all times
- Ensuring that employees fully understand and comply with agreed safe working procedures for the work they are doing at any particular point in time

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- Satisfying himself/herself that employees are competent and appropriately trained for the work being carried out, including induction training on health and fire safety matters on the individuals first arrival into the workplace and any further or additional training or briefing as required for subsequent workplaces or specific work tasks
- Ensuring that the workplace is maintained in safe condition e.g. fire exit routes are clear and unobstructed, fire exits are unlocked, there are no slipping or tripping hazards etc
- Conducting (and recording the findings of) regular health and safety inspections of the workplace or work activity and act on the findings
- For reporting any defects that have safety implications for remedial action
- Enforcing day-to-day compliance with safe systems of work
- Ensuring that all hirers are aware of the health and safety rules in the hiring agreement including the whereabouts of the fire exits, the evacuation procedures, the whereabouts of the accident book and first aid equipment.

Each individual has a duty to:

- Take reasonable care for their own health and safety and for that of all others who might be affected by the actions they take or by their failure to take an action
- Comply and co-operate with the established safe working procedures and practices
- Report any breaches or contraventions of health and safety policy or practice which they become aware of to the Council Clerk
- Report any health and safety hazards they may become aware of to the Council Clerk
- Report any accidents, near-misses or ill-health using the procedures laid down in Section 2.6 of this policy document

All employees are expected to co-operate with the Clerk to accept their duties under this policy. Disciplinary action may be taken against any employee who violates safety rules or who fails to perform his or her duties under this policy.

Hirers

All hirers will be expected to read the whole of the hiring agreement and should sign the hiring form as evidence that they agree to the hiring conditions.

Volunteers, hirers and visitors will be expected to recognise that there is a duty on them to comply with the practices set out by HPC and with safety notices on the premises and to accept responsibility to do everything they can to prevent injury to themselves or others.

It is also the duty of all volunteers, hirers and visitors to take care of themselves and others who may be affected by their activities and to co-operate with HPC in keeping the premises safe and healthy, including the grounds.

Report any health and safety hazards they may become aware of to the Council Clerk.

Report any accidents, near misses or ill-health using the procedures laid down in Section 2.6 of this policy document.

Section 2

Arrangements for the implementation of the policy

2.1 Consultation with employees

The Council recognizes that communication between workers at all levels is an essential part of effective health and safety management. Formal Consultation with employees, as required by the Consultation with Employees Regulations, will be facilitated by means of regular staff meetings involving all employees at which health and safety will be a formal recorded agenda item. Records of these meetings are to be kept and copies provided to employees.

The purpose of these meetings is to provide a forum in which information on health and safety may be conveyed and employee's questions on health and safety issues answered. In addition these meetings will provide an opportunity to assess the continuing effectiveness of the policy.

Examples of issues for discussion at these meetings might include, amongst others:

- Proposed changes to work practice, work equipment, work materials
- Adequacy of risk control measures
- Worker/management compliance with risk controls
- Implementation of risk assessment findings
- Training issues

2.2 Safe Systems of work

It is a fundamental requirement of the Health and Safety at Work Act that employers must establish Safe Systems or Work (SSOW). These can take any form suitable to the employer provided they can be shown to be effective in ensuring that work is carried out safely and that unsafe practices are eliminated. This company's safe systems of work comprise of risk assessments (Section 4) and subject specific guidance (section 3).

Risk Assessments - these can be found in section 4 of this policy and are used to:

- (a) identify the hazards that arise from doing the work or being in the workplace
- (b) evaluate the adequacy of existing controls which are already in place to reduce the risk of the hazard causing harm
- (c) quantify the remaining risk
- (d) where necessary, identify additional risk controls to reduce the risk to the acceptable level

No instructions to undertake work unless the hazards of doing that work have been subjected to risk assessment and appropriate risk controls have been put in place. A formal and recorded risk assessment will be required:

- (i) for all routine and established tasks e.g. using a particular machine or equipment , regular on-going maintenance work or regular use of display screen equipment
- (ii) for all new tasks i.e. where the task has not previously been undertaken, or the machinery/equipment/materials to be used have not previously been used
- (iii) for every workplace except where all the hazards of working in that workplace have been separately assessed by (i) or (ii) above

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Subject Specific Health and Safety Guidance - these provide general guidance on specific health and safety subjects. They describe the policy on that subject and as such are to be complied with in general terms. They can be found in Section 3 of this policy.

2.3 Safe Work Equipment

It is a fundamental requirement of the Health and Safety at Work Act that employers must provide Safe Work Equipment. This aspect is further regulated by the "Provision and Use of Work Equipment Regulations" – commonly known as PUWER. Under PUWER, work equipment is defined as almost anything used at or to do work. It would include "toolbox" tools, drills, ladders, strimmers, tractors, forklifts etc.

HPC must:

- Ensure that all work equipment is CE marked – this marking is intended to show that the equipment is safe and suitable for a specific purpose – staff must ensure it is only used for the purpose intended by the manufacturer i.e. we don't allow screwdrivers to be used as chisels
- Ensure that the equipment provided is suitable for the purpose i.e. we don't provide mains powered tools for work in wet areas
- Evaluate proposals to purchase new work equipment (or different materials) in order to identify any health and safety implications which may be introduced by that change – **they should do so by completing and recording a copy of the procurement form below at Section 2.3.1. of this policy folder**
- Consider the ergonomics when purchasing/selecting equipment – operators should not be expected to exert undue force or to stretch or reach beyond their normal reach
- Ensure that electrical equipment is PAT tested at the required intervals – this must include extension leads- all such items must be clearly and durably marked with the date of the **next** due PAT test
- Ensure that ladders and stepladders provided for work are safe and suitable for the purpose to which they will be put. Ladders and stepladders should be inspected and tested annually by a competent person. Each item is to be catalogued and is to carry a unique identification mark
- Ensure that personal tools are safe to use
- Ensure that where equipment requires the operator to be specially trained or qualified, only such specially trained or qualified operators are allowed to use it
- Ensure that where equipment is hired, assurances are obtained from the hire company that the equipment is fit for purpose, has been properly maintained/serviced/tested and is in safe condition. Where the hire is long term it is important to establish, preferably in writing, which party is responsible for on-going maintenance and testing.

2.3.1 New purchases – health and safety evaluation form

Although changes in the type of materials or processes used or the introduction of new equipment will usually be driven by considerations of business efficiency, such changes can introduce new health and safety hazards, which may be difficult to manage and may negate the efficiency gains which prompted the change in the first place. But even where the change is being made with the primarily objective of improving health and safety, the new arrangements might introduce other safety or health hazards that were not foreseen.

In order to overcome this problem, proposals to procure new work equipment or change some aspect of the process should include a formal and recorded assessment of any health and safety risks that might arise out of its use or potential misuse.

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Prior to purchasing any item or work equipment or changing from one work material to another, the "procurement assessment form" shown below should be completed. Where the assessment shows that the new purchase or new arrangement will come with some level of health and safety hazards, the purchaser should record in writing their reasons for going ahead with the purchase or change i.e. that suitable risk controls can be or have already been put in place.

Where relevant for reasons of health and safety, registers of work equipment should clearly state the use to which the equipment should or should not be put, and who is or is not authorized to use it, together with any training or specific experience required to qualify for authorization.

Factors to be considered when carrying out the assessment include, amongst others:

Machinery & Equipment – will it be easy to handle and user friendly – could it cause injury to the person using it or others nearby – are there moving parts that could trap or injure workers or snag their clothing – is it adequately guarded – are there safeguards to prevent them being over-ridden by workers – are emergency stop buttons positioned where needed and how quickly will they stop the machine – will it be dangerous to maintain or service – will workers be exposed to live mains voltage – will it require significant effort or strength to operate – or awkward movements – will it make noise in excess of the first action level, - will it generate any emissions e.g. heat, dust, exhaust fumes or hazardous vapours – will any part get hot enough to burn a worker or cause a fire

Materials – on its own or as a reaction with the processes – is it associated with a health hazard e.g. can it cause skin problems, occupational asthma or other breathing problems, cancer (by contact or inhalation), is it corrosive – will it get more hazardous if made wet or allowed to get hot etc, - will we have to rely on PPE to prevent ill health to our workers – will it be heavy or awkward to load/unload/handle – will it produce hazardous waste

Process – will the changed process result in any new hazard (such as are described above - which were not a problem before the change?)

PPE – will it be comfortable for as long as is needed (workers won't want to wear it if it's uncomfortable) – will it introduce new hazards e.g. accidents could be caused by the wrong goggles steaming up or the wrong gloves reducing dexterity) – can it be adapted to fit individual variations of shape and size – will it be compatible with other items of ppe the worker may have to wear at the same time – have you made an assessment of its suitability in respect of the hazard to be overcome i.e. if it's a mask does it stop the dust getting into the lungs, do the ear plugs stop enough noise to prevent harm to hearing etc

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2.4 Safety Supervision and Inspection

Supervision – the normal management systems of work and worker supervision, provided they are effective, will also be the best form of Safety Supervision. Just as it is usual to supervise and monitor workers to ensure that work is done in accordance with the contract specification, so the same supervision can ensure that work is done in accordance with the findings of the safety risk assessment and safety procedures.

Safety Inspections –The Clerk of the Council, will ensure that formal safety inspections are carried out, either by herself or by someone nominated by her, and the findings of such inspections are to be recorded using the safety inspection form below.

The purpose of safety inspections can be summarized as follows:

- (a) Ensuring that the workplace is a safe place to be
- (b) Ensuring that the way work is done is safe
- (c) Ensuring that the equipment and plant being used is safe
- (d) Ensuring that the employees are properly supervised and complying with the approved company safety practices

Safety inspections of all areas are to be carried out on a regular basis and the finding recorded using the form below. Completed report forms should be kept in a folder. Where action is required following an inspection, the person who is to take the action should be given a separate copy of the report form to work from. Once action has been taken, a handwritten note recording the action taken and the date it was completed should be made on the relevant original report form.

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Safety inspection and report form

Inspection by:.....**Inspection date:**.....

This is **not** an exhaustive list of things to be checked but it does aim to highlight some of the more important aspects of accident prevention. You must, of course, also familiarize yourself with the management responsibilities set out in Sections 1 and 2, the general guidance in Section 3 and the findings of Risk Assessments and Safe Working Procedures contained in Sections 4 onwards.

	CHECK ITEM	YES/NO	OK	or	ACTION BY: (name)	ACTION BY: (date)
		ACTION NEEDED				
(1)	Is health and safety policy folder readily available to employees, in clean condition and up to date					
(2)	Have outstanding actions on all previous inspection forms been attended to satisfactorily					
(3)	Are any workers using equipment or doing tasks they are not trained or qualified for					
(4)	Are gangways clear and free of trip hazards, and fire exits unobstructed and unlocked					
(5)	Is there anything likely to fall from a height i.e. contents of over-bench shelves, items stored at high level					
(6)	Has all equipment/machinery maintenance been carried out as scheduled					
(7)	Are all signs and notices in place .e.g. Health and Safety "LAW" poster, Fire Action Notice, Fire exit signs					
(8)	Is ventilation working/air quality ok, temperature comfortable, seating and other welfare arrangements ok					
(9)	Are cleaning routines being completed as specified					

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2.5 Training and Competence

The Council Clerk must ensure that every worker for whom they have supervisory responsibility is either employed with the requisite skills, or is suitably trained to perform his or her job effectively and safely. Tasks that carry a high risk of injury are to be restricted to employees considered to be competent by virtue of their training or experience. A record of those persons who are so authorized is to be kept up to date.

Induction Training – All workers are to be induced in safe working practices and procedures on their first attendance in the workplace and prior to being allocated any new role. Induction training can be defined as “the information a worker needs in order avoid coming to harm whilst at work”. A copy of this “Record of Induction” form is to be completed for each new employee on their first attendance in the workplace. Completed forms should be kept in the employee’s personal file.

RECORD OF HEALTH AND SAFETY INDUCTION	
Employees name.....Clerk.....	
Date of Induction	
Explained what to do in the event of a fire or other emergency	
Pointed out all routes to safety and any relevant opening mechanisms	
Explained how fire extinguishers work and when they can be safely used	
Explained arrangements for first aid	
Showed employee where “health and safety law” poster is and explained who to go to for further advice	
Showed employee where health and safety folder is kept and explained management and individuals responsibilities	
Explained findings of risk assessments relating to employees work and workplace	
Instruction given about safe manual handling techniques	
Issued any safety equipment required for the work the employee is to do and explained how it is to be maintained and used and how to obtain replacements	
Other	
Employees signature	Clerks signature

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2.6 Accident Recording, Reporting and Investigation

Enforcing agencies tend to regard accidents as failures of management i.e. they arise out of the employers failure to deliver safe conditions.

When an accident occurs – whether or not anyone is hurt – it is important to learn from the experience in order to avoid such an accident occurring again (because even if there were no injuries on this occasion, someone might get hurt next time).

Accident recording – all accidents that result in injury, however minor, must be recorded using the accident book. The Council Clerk must be informed immediately in the event of any accident that results in a person being unfit to continue their normal duties, and by the next working week-day in the event of any other accident or near miss. Near-miss accidents in which no injury occurred but which could have caused significant injury (e.g. more than minor cuts and bruises) if circumstances had been slightly different, should also be recorded – it is important to recognise near-miss accidents as free lessons.

At this stage the focus should be on recording:

- when
- where
- how
- extent of injury or damage
- immediate cause of the accident or near-miss e.g. cut hand on broken glass

The Council Clerk, will be responsible for ensuring that the HSE is notified under RIDDOR in the event on any significant incident – see below.

Accident Reporting – accidents must be reported to other interested parties as follows:

- i. Where the injury is significant it must be reported to the Health and Safety Executive under Riddor. For significant injuries or dangerous occurrences this must be by telephone – for less significant injuries by submitting form F2508 or by accessing www.riddor.gov.uk. A copy of the HSE's Guide to RIDDOR is to be available at all company offices but the rules are complex and when in doubt you may be best advised ring HSE direct.

Accident Investigation – In the event that an accident results in significant injury, (or was a near-miss which could have resulted in significant injury), a report is to be drawn up by the Clerk, or a person appointed by her. **It must be clearly understood by all that the purpose of investigating an accident is to learn lessons from it rather than to apportion blame. If it is to be a successful learning process then those involved must feel able to speak openly and honestly about why and how things have gone wrong. Managers have a very important role to play in this – the manner in which then carry out the investigation will set the tone and will determine how open and forthcoming those involved in the incident will be.**

The starting point for the investigation report should be the accident recording form. Add detailed information on injury and/or loss sustained. Give names and contact information for victims and witnesses and add their accounts – witnesses to the accident, including the victim(s), should be interviewed as soon as possible after the event – the longer this is left the less reliable will be their accounts of what happened. The report should look in detail at the circumstances of the accident and include photographs and diagrams wherever possible.

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Accidents are rarely without some contributory root cause and the report should attempt to establish the contributory or root cause(s) e.g.

- Was the management instruction (what to do/not do) unclear or lacking in some way
- Was the risk assessment/method statement lacking in some way i.e. a failure to foresee a hazard
- Had bad habits been allowed to go unchecked i.e. a failure of supervision
- Had equipment failed or not performed as expected
- Had there been a failure of training or information i.e. "didn't know it was unsafe to do that"

In drawing up the report the following important points should be borne in mind

- Keep an open mind
- It is not the job of the investigation report to apportion blame but to find out what went wrong
- Such reports are "discoverable" i.e. the injured party's legal team have the right to see them – so stick to facts and avoid opinions
- Draw factual conclusions and make recommendations for corrective action

The completed report should then be submitted to the Clerk for action. If new measures are adopted as a result of the report, a date should be set to review the effectiveness of the new measures.

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2.7 First Aid Provisions

The Health and Safety (First Aid) Regulations set minimum requirements for first aid provision and require an employer to carry out an assessment of first aid needs appropriate to the circumstances of each workplace, in order to determine what level of first aid provision should be made. An assessment of need has been recorded below.

Assessment for First Aid Needs	
Aspect to Consider	Impact on Provision
What are the risks of injury or ill health arising from the work	Small cuts and grazes – No additional provision
Are there any specific hazards	No
Are large numbers of people employed	No
What is the Council's accident record	Good – there have been no accidents in recent times
Are there inexperienced or disabled workers	No
Are the premises spread out	No
Is there shift work or out-of-hours working	No
Is the workplace remote from emergency medical services	No
Are there employees who work alone	On occasion
Do employees work at sites occupied by other employers	No
Are there any work experience trainees	No
Do members of the public visit	Yes
Are there employees with reading or language difficulties	No

Based on the above assessment, we have determined our first aid needs to be:

- An "appointed person" to determine contents for first aid kit appropriate to risk and to summon the emergency services when necessary
- The "appointed person" should ensure that a suitably prepared deputy is available to take over these duties whenever people are at work but the "appointed person" is absent from the premises

The Clerk is the "Appointed Person" for first aid and has responsibility for ensuring that adequate arrangements are in place for first aid in accordance with the company's First Aid Needs Assessment.

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2.8 Employee Welfare

The Workplace (Health, Safety and Welfare) Regulations impose requirements relating to welfare provisions in the workplace e.g. toilets, fresh air etc. The person responsible for ensuring adequate welfare provisions for HPC is the Clerk.

The requirements are:

- **Temperature** – must be reasonable i.e. if too cold provide heating or extra clothing – if too hot provide water and allow frequent withdrawals to somewhere cooler (minimum 16c within 1 hour of beginning work)
- **Toilets** – must have reasonable access to comfortable toilet with privacy and hand-washing facilities
- **Drinking water** – must have access to clean drinking water
- **Rest and eating facilities** – must have provision for rest periods and somewhere suitable to eat food

The welfare provisions at the current premises are evaluated in the Workplace Risk Assessment (see section 4.)

Section 3

Subject Specific Health and Safety Guidance

3.1 General Health and Safety Duties of Employees

Whilst the main thrust of the Health and Safety at Work Act is aimed at the duties of the employer, it also sets out specific duties that employees must comply with. They can be summarized as follows:

- You must take reasonable care for your own safety
- You must ensure that nothing you do, or fail to do, could cause harm to anyone else
- You must cooperate with HPC in order to achieve a safe workplace and safe work activity
- You must not interfere or misuse anything provided for health and safety at work
- You must comply with the Council's safety procedures
- You must wear whatever protective equipment is specified in the risk assessment for the work you are doing
- You must report unsafe equipment and conditions and any safety hazards to the Clerk
- You must keep your work area as clean and free of clutter as practicable – return tools and equipment to their proper place – don't leave it for someone else to trip over
- Report any slip or trip hazards to the Clerk for action e.g. oil spills, cables across gangways etc
- You must not lark about or play practical jokes

3.2 Fire Safety

All employees have a duty to conduct themselves and the work they do in such a way as to minimize the risk of fire. This involves taking care when smoking, keeping combustible materials separate from sources of ignition and avoiding unnecessary accumulation of combustible materials.

- You must familiarize yourself with the procedure to be adopted in the event of a fire and know how to raise the alarm so that everyone is aware of it
- You must know how to use fire extinguishers effectively and safely – read the instructions on the extinguishers near where you work
- You should report immediately any potential fire hazards to the Clerk
- Exit doors and corridors must never be locked, blocked or used as storage space
- Smoking is prohibited in the building
- In the event of fire, or in any other emergency situation (such as a bomb scare), all employees must leave the building by the nearest available exit and assemble as per the Evacuation Procedures

3.3 Manual Handling

Many people are injured at work each year as a result of manual handling tasks. The most common injuries are strains and sprains to muscles and joints, disc trouble, and hernias. They are usually caused by sudden or awkward movements such as twisting or jerking while handling heavy or awkward loads (if the load slips or you need to get a better grip), or by people pushing, pulling or attempting to lift more than they can manage.

Sometimes, people are injured whilst doing something they have done many times before – because they are more tired than usual. Once you have injured your back, you are three times more likely than other people to injure it again – and each time you do it gets worse.

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- The risk of injury is increased if you are picking the load up off the floor or from above shoulder level – or with your arms extended out in front of you – in these circumstances even a 5Kg load carries a significant risk of injury
- The risk of injury is increased if you are picking a load up with trunk bent or twisted – get close to the load and use your legs rather than your back
- The risk is increased if the load is awkward to carry or grip, or if the weight might shift during the lift
- Wherever possible, avoid lifting manually – find another way to move the load or get help with it
- Pushing and/or pulling a load carries the same risk of injury as lifting/carrying, particularly where the hands are above shoulder height or below waist height
- Where team lifting is employed, one person should act as the coordinator giving commands to lift, move, lower etc
- Plan the lift – identify any trip or slip hazards and any obstructions – remove them or plan a route around them before you begin the lift
- Lift the load as close to the body as you can

If lifting from the ground, assume a squatting position (but don't kneel) and keep the back straight with the head in line with the rest of the spine – the load should be lifted by straightening the knees and not the back – reverse these steps for lowering the ground

In line with the Manual Handling Regulations, it is our policy wherever possible:

- **To avoid manual handling tasks that carry a risk of injury in so far as it is reasonably practicable – by redesigning the task to avoid moving the load or by automating the process**
- **To undertake a formal risk assessment of any manual handling that cannot be avoided**
- **To reduce the risk of injury from those tasks so far as is reasonably practicable – by providing mechanical assistance for example or reducing the load**

3.4 Display Screen Equipment (PC's and VDU's)

Regulations governing this sort of equipment require the employer to undertake a personal risk assessment of anyone likely to suffer ill-health as a result of that use. If you fall into this category, the Council will ensure that a risk assessment is carried out and the findings acted upon – and will give you a copy of the assessment.

If an employee is classed as a user by the risk assessment then they can request an eye and eyesight test that the Council will pay for. If the test shows that they need glasses specifically for their VDU work or that their eyes will deteriorate with constant VDU work if they don't have glasses then the Council will pay for a basic pair of frames and lenses. If the user wishes to purchase a more expensive pair of glasses then the Council will pay for the basic pair and the user may top this up. The optician and not the user will dictate the cost of a basic pair of frames and lenses.

Most people who use this equipment do not fall into that category. However, whether you do or do not, you are strongly encouraged to follow the guidance below. If, in doing so, you find you need to re-arrange your workstation, do not hesitate to ask for help.

- Position yourself to face directly into the screen with your head, trunk, hips and knees facing in the same direction
- Make sure there is nothing under the desk to restrict the position of your legs – if your legs are not in line with your trunk you will cause tension in the back

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- The screen should be a comfortable distance away and the top of the screen should be slightly below the level of your eyes – your neck is carrying the weight of your head and if that gets too much you will cause strain in the neck muscles
- Make sure that there is enough room to rest your wrists on the desk in front of the keyboard when you want to – try to ensure the wrists are not bent
- Try to eliminate glare on the screen – close the curtains/blinds or re-position your screen
- Do not work for extended periods without a break – get up and walk about – find something else to do and relax the tension
- If you are experiencing physical discomfort or eye strain/headaches after using the PC then something is wrong with your work-station or the position you are working in – report these symptoms if you cannot rectify the problem yourself.
- **Remember – if you develop a repetitive strain injury you will have it for a very long time and there will be very little you could do to overcome the problems**

3.5 COSHH (control of substances hazardous to health)

A very wide range of substances and preparations have the potential to cause harm if they are inhaled, ingested or come into contact with or are absorbed through the skin. These include chemical substances or preparations such as paints, cleaning materials, metals, pesticides and insecticides. They can also be biological agents such as pathogens or cell cultures. Substances hazardous to health can occur in many forms, e.g. solids, liquids, vapours, gases, dusts, fibres, fumes, mist and smoke

The following points are intended to highlight the more significant hazards only:

- When using materials for the first time always read the labels for hazard warnings and follow the instructions e.g. "Irritant – avoid contact with skin".
- After working with hazardous substances, wash your hands thoroughly before eating, drinking or smoking.
- Be careful not to contaminate your PPE with harmful substances – for example when handling eye or ear protection (eyes and ears can be more sensitive than hands) – avoid wiping your hands on your overalls (it could soak through to your skin) – remove your overalls if they become contaminated with harmful substances
- Report immediately to the Clerk if you suspect that use of, or contact with, particular materials is resulting in rashes, soreness, breathing problems, dizziness etc
- Asbestos – take care not to disturb asbestos fibres
- Take extra care to ensure that the unaware or uninformed cannot come into contact with the hazardous substance you have been using

There are no significant COSHH hazards at HPC.

Section 4
Workplace Safety Risk Assessment

A copy of the current issue of the workplace safety risk assessments is available on request

A copy of the Health & Safety checklist for village and community halls is available on request.

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**Section 5
Fire Safety Risk Assessment**

A copy of the current issue of the workplace fire risk assessment is available on request

A copy of the Fire Evacuation Procedures including a plan of the premises showing evacuation routes are available on request. In addition a copy is fixed to the wall in every room and hallway in the building.

Copies of Fire Marshal sweep reports are available on request

All internal fire exit doors are fitted with automatic door closures in the event of a fire.

Nicky Percy, Mandy Hilton, Denise Kemp and Tony Powell are the appointed Fire Marshals.

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**Section 6
COSHH Risk Assessment**

A copy of the current risk assessment for the control of substances hazardous to health should be kept in this section.

There are currently no significant hazards and no specific COSHH assessments.

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**Section 7
Manual Handling Risk Assessment**

A copy of any current manual handling risk assessments is available on request

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**Section 8
Display Screen (VDU) Risk Assessment**

A copy of any current VDU assessments is available on request