

GREAT WITCHINGHAM PARISH COUNCIL'S GRIEVANCE POLICY

Introduction

1. This policy is based on and complies with the 2015 ACAS Code of Practice (<http://www.acas.org.uk/index.aspx?articleid=2174>). It also takes account of the ACAS guide on discipline and grievances at work. (https://www.acas.org.uk/media/1043/Discipline-and-grievances-at-work-The-Acas-guide/pdf/DG_Guide_Feb_2019.pdf). It aims to encourage and maintain good relationships between the Council and its employees by treating grievances seriously and resolving them as quickly as possible. It sets out the arrangements for employees to raise their concerns, problems or complaints about their employment with the Council. The policy will be applied fairly, consistently and in accordance with the Equality Act 2010.
2. Many problems can be raised and settled during the course of everyday working relationships. Employees should aim to settle most grievances informally with their line manager.
3. This policy confirms:
 - employees have the right to be accompanied or represented at a grievance meeting or appeal by a companion who can be a workplace colleague, a trade union representative or a trade union official. This includes any meeting held with them to hear about, gather facts about, discuss, consider or resolve their grievance. The companion will be permitted to address the grievance/appeal meetings, to present the employee's case for his /her grievance/appeal and to confer with the employee. The companion cannot answer questions put to the employee, address the meeting against the employee's wishes or prevent the employee from explaining his/her case.
 - the Council will give employees reasonable notice of the date of the grievance/appeal meetings. Employees and their companions must make all reasonable efforts to attend. If the companion is not available for the proposed date of the meeting, the employee can request a postponement and can propose an alternative date that is within five working days of the original meeting date unless it is unreasonable not to propose a later date
 - any changes to specified time limits must be agreed by the employee and the Council
 - an employee has the right to appeal against the decision about his/her grievance. The appeal decision is final
 - information about an employee's grievance will be restricted to those involved in the grievance process. A record of the reason for the grievance, its outcome and action taken is confidential to the employee. The

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employee's grievance records will be held by the Council in accordance with the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR)

- audio or video recordings of the proceedings at any stage of the grievance procedure are prohibited, unless agreed by all affected parties as a reasonable adjustment that takes account of an employee's medical condition
- if an employee who is already subject to a disciplinary process raises a grievance, the grievance will normally be heard after completion of the disciplinary procedure
- if a grievance is not upheld, no disciplinary action will be taken against an employee if he/she raised the grievance in good faith
- the Council may consider mediation at any stage of the grievance procedure where appropriate, (for example where there have been communication breakdowns or allegations of bullying or harassment). Mediation is a dispute resolution process which requires the consent of affected parties
- Employees can use all stages of the grievance procedure If the complaint is not a code of conduct complaint about a councillor. Employees can use the informal stage of the council's grievance procedure (paragraph 4) to deal with all grievance issues, including a complaint about a councillor Employees cannot use the formal stages of the council's grievance procedure for a code of conduct complaint about a councillor. If the complaint about the councillor is not resolved at the informal stage, the employee can contact the monitoring officer of Broadland District council who will inform the employee whether or not the complaint can be dealt with under the code of conduct. If it does not concern the code of conduct, the employee can make a formal complaint under the council's grievance procedure (see paragraph 5)
- If the grievance is a code of conduct complaint against a Councillor, the employee cannot proceed with it beyond the informal stage of the council's grievance procedure. However, whatever the complaint, the council has a duty of care to its employees. It must take all reasonable steps to ensure employees have a safe working environment, for example by undertaking risk assessments, by ensuring staff and councillors are properly trained and by protecting staff from bullying, harassment and all forms of discrimination
- If an employee considers that the grievance concerns his or her safety within the working environment, whether or not it also concerns a complaint against a councillor, the employee should raise these safety concerns with his or her line manager at the informal stage of the grievance procedure. The council will consider whether it should take further action in this matter in accordance with any of its employment policies (for example its health and safety policy or its dignity at work policy) and in accordance with the code of conduct regime

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Informal grievance procedure

4. The Council and its employees benefit if grievances are resolved informally and as quickly as possible. As soon as a problem arises, the employee should raise it with his/her manager to see if an informal solution is possible. Both should try to resolve the matter at this stage. If the employee does not want to discuss the grievance with his/her manager (for example, because it concerns the manager), the employee should contact the Chairman of the staffing committee or, if appropriate, another member of the staffing committee. If the employee's complaint is about a councillor, it may be appropriate to involve that councillor at the informal stage. This will require both the employee's and the councillor's consent.

Formal grievance procedure

5. If it is not possible to resolve the grievance informally and the employee's complaint is not one that should be dealt with as a code of conduct complaint (see above), the employee may submit a formal grievance. It should be submitted in writing to the Chairman of the staffing committee.
6. The staffing committee will appoint a sub-committee of three members to hear the grievance. The sub-committee will appoint a Chairman from one of its members. No councillor with direct involvement in the matter shall be appointed to the sub-committee. If insufficient members are available from the staffing committee full council will appoint the necessary members to allow the grievance to be heard.

Investigation

7. If the sub-committee decides that it is appropriate, (e.g. if the grievance is complex), it may appoint an investigator to carry out an investigation before the grievance meeting to establish the facts of the case. The investigation may include interviews (e.g. the employee submitting the grievance, other employees, councillors or members of the public).
8. The investigator will summarise their findings (usually within an investigation report) and present their findings to the sub-committee.

Notification

9. Within 10 working days of the Council receiving the employee's grievance (this may be longer if there is an investigation), the employee will normally be asked, in writing, to attend a grievance meeting. The written notification will include the following:
 - the names of its Chairman and other members
 - the date, time and place for the meeting. The employee will be given reasonable notice of the meeting which will normally be within 25 working days of when the Council received the grievance

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- the employee's right to be accompanied by a workplace colleague, a trade union representative or a trade union official
- a copy of the Council's grievance policy
- confirmation that, if necessary, witnesses may attend (or submit witness statements) on the employee's behalf and that the employee should provide the names of his/her witnesses as soon as possible before the meeting
- confirmation that the employee will provide the Council with any supporting evidence in advance of the meeting, usually with at least two days' notice
- findings of the investigation if there has been an investigation
- an invitation for the employee to request any adjustments to be made for the hearing (for example where a person has a health condition).

The grievance meeting

10. At the grievance meeting:

- the Chairman will introduce the members of the sub-committee to the employee
- the employee (or companion) will set out the grievance and present the evidence
- the Chairman will ask the employee questions about the information presented and will want to understand what action they want the Council to take
- any member of the sub-committee and the employee (or the companion) may question any witness
- the employee (or companion) will have the opportunity to sum up the case
- a grievance meeting may be adjourned to allow matters that were raised during the meeting to be investigated by the sub-committee.

11. The Chairman will provide the employee with the sub-committee's decision, in writing, usually within five working days of the meeting. The letter will notify the employee of the action, if any, that the Council will take and of the employee's right to appeal.

The appeal

12. If an employee decides that his/her grievance has not been satisfactorily resolved by the sub-committee, he/she may submit a written appeal to the staffing committee. An appeal must be received by the Council within five working days of the employee receiving the sub-committee's decision and must specify the grounds of appeal.

13. Appeals may be raised on a number of grounds, e.g.:

- a failure by the Council to follow its grievance policy
- the decision was not supported by the evidence

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- the action proposed by the sub-committee was inadequate/inappropriate
 - new evidence has come to light since the grievance meeting.
14. The appeal will be heard by a panel of three members of the staffing committee who have not previously been involved in the case. There may be insufficient members of the staffing committee who have not previously been involved. If so, the appeal panel will be a committee of three Council members who may include members of the staffing committee. The appeal panel will appoint a Chairman from one of its members.
 15. The employee will be notified, in writing, usually within 10 working days of receipt of the appeal of the time, date and place of the appeal meeting. The meeting will normally take place within 25 working days of the Council's receipt of the appeal. The employee will be advised that he/she may be accompanied by a workplace colleague, a trade union representative or a trade union official.
 16. At the appeal meeting, the Chairman will:
 - introduce the panel members to the employee
 - explain the purpose of the meeting, which is to hear the employee's reasons for appealing against the decision of the staffing sub-committee
 - explain the action that the appeal panel may take.
 17. The employee (or companion) will be asked to explain the grounds of appeal.
 18. The Chairman will inform the employee that he/she will receive the decision and the panel's reasons, in writing, within five working days of the appeal meeting.
 19. The appeal panel may decide to uphold the decision of the staffing committee or substitute its own decision.
 20. The decision of the appeal panel is final.

GREAT WITCHINGHAM PARISH COUNCIL'S DISCIPLINARY POLICY

Introduction

- 1 This policy is based on and complies with the 2015 ACAS Code of Practice (<http://www.acas.org.uk/index.aspx?articleid=2174>). It also takes account of the ACAS guide on discipline and grievances at work.

https://www.acas.org.uk/media/1043/Discipline-and-grievances-at-work-The-Acas-guide/pdf/DG_Guide_Feb_2019.pdf

The policy is designed to help Council employees improve unsatisfactory conduct and performance in their job. Wherever possible, the Council will try to resolve its concerns about employees' behaviour informally, without starting the formal procedure set out below.

- 2 The policy will be applied fairly, consistently and in accordance with the Equality Act 2010.
- 3 This policy confirms:
 - informal coaching and supervision will be considered, where appropriate, to improve conduct and / or attendance
 - the Council will fully investigate the facts of each case
 - the Council recognises that misconduct and unsatisfactory work performance are different issues. The disciplinary policy will also apply to work performance issues to ensure that all alleged instances of employees' underperformance are dealt with fairly and in a way that is consistent with required standards. However, the disciplinary policy will only be used when performance management proves ineffective. For more information see ACAS "Performance Management" at <https://www.acas.org.uk/index.aspx?articleid=6608>
 - employees will be informed in writing about the nature of the complaint against them and given the opportunity to state their case
 - employees will be provided, where appropriate, with written copies of evidence and relevant witness statements in advance of a disciplinary hearing
 - employees may be accompanied or represented by a companion – a workplace colleague, a trade union representative or a trade union official - at any investigatory, disciplinary or appeal meeting. The companion is permitted to address such meetings, to put the employee's case and confer with the employee. The companion cannot answer questions put to the employee, address the meeting against the employee's wishes or prevent the employee from explaining his/her case

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- the Council will give employees reasonable notice of any meetings in this procedure. Employee must make all reasonable efforts to attend. Failure to attend any meeting may result in it going ahead and a decision being taken. An employee who does not attend a meeting will be given the opportunity to be represented and to make written submissions
- if the employee's companion is not available for the proposed date of the meeting, the employee can request a postponement and can propose an alternative date that is within five working days of the original meeting date unless it is unreasonable not to propose a later date
- any changes to specified time limits in the Council's procedure must be agreed by the employee and the Council
- information about an employee's disciplinary matter will be restricted to those involved in the disciplinary process. A record of the reason for disciplinary action and the action taken by the Council is confidential to the employee. The employee's disciplinary records will be held by the Council in accordance with the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR)
- audio or video recordings of the proceedings at any stage of the disciplinary procedure are prohibited, unless agreed by all affected parties as a reasonable adjustment that takes account of an employee's medical condition
- employees have the right to appeal against any disciplinary decision. The appeal decision is final
- if an employee who is already subject to the Council's disciplinary procedure raises a grievance, the grievance will normally be heard after the completion of the disciplinary procedure
- disciplinary action taken by the Council can include a written warning, final written warning or dismissal
- this procedure may be implemented at any stage if the employee's alleged misconduct warrants this
- except for gross misconduct when an employee may be dismissed without notice, the Council will not dismiss an employee on the first occasion that it decides there has been misconduct
- if an employee is suspended following allegations of misconduct, it will be on full pay and only for such time as is necessary. Suspension is not a disciplinary sanction. The Council will write to the employee to confirm any period of suspension and the reasons for it,
- the Council may consider mediation at any stage of the disciplinary procedure where appropriate (for example where there have been communication breakdowns or allegations of bullying or harassment). Mediation is a dispute resolution process that requires the consent of affected parties

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Examples of misconduct

- 4 Misconduct is employee behaviour that can lead to the employer taking disciplinary action. The following list contains some examples of misconduct: The list is not exhaustive.

- unauthorised absence
- poor timekeeping
- misuse of the Council's resources and facilities including telephone, email and internet
- inappropriate behaviour
- refusal to follow reasonable instructions
- breach of health and safety rules.

Examples of gross misconduct

- 5 Gross misconduct is misconduct that is so serious that it is likely to lead to dismissal without notice. The following list contains some examples of gross misconduct: The list is not exhaustive

- bullying, discrimination and harassment
- incapacity at work because of alcohol or drugs
- violent behaviour
- fraud or theft
- gross negligence
- gross insubordination
- serious breaches of council policies and procedures e.g. the Health and Safety Policy, Equality and Diversity Policy, Data Protection Policy and any policies regarding the use of information technology
- serious and deliberate damage to property
- use of the internet or email to access pornographic, obscene or offensive material
- disclosure of confidential information.

Suspension

- 6 If allegations of gross misconduct or serious misconduct are made, the council may suspend the employee while further investigations are carried out. Suspension will be on full pay. Suspension does not imply any determination of guilt or innocence, as it is merely a measure to enable further investigation.
- 7 While on suspension, the employee is required to be available during normal hours of work in the event that the council needs to make contact. The employee must not

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contact or attempt to contact or influence anyone connected with the investigation in any way or to discuss this matter with any other employee or councillor.

- 8 The employee must not attend work. The council will make arrangements for the employee to access any information or documents required to respond to any allegations.

Examples of unsatisfactory work performance

- 9 The following list contains some examples of unsatisfactory work performance: The list is not exhaustive.
 - inadequate application of management instructions/office procedures
 - inadequate IT skills
 - unsatisfactory management of staff
 - unsatisfactory communication skills.

The Procedure

- 10 Preliminary enquiries. The council may make preliminary enquiries to establish the basic facts of what has happened in order to understand whether there may be a case to answer under the disciplinary procedure.

If the employee's manager believes there may be a disciplinary case to answer, the council may initiate a more detailed investigation undertaken to establish the facts of a situation or to establish the perspective of others who may have witnessed misconduct.

- 11 Informal Procedures. Where minor concerns about conduct become apparent, it is the manager's responsibility to raise this with the employee and clarify the improvements required. A file note will be made and kept by the manager. The informal discussions are not part of the formal disciplinary procedure. If the conduct fails to improve, or if further matters of conduct become apparent, the manager may decide to formalise the discussions and invite the employee to a first stage disciplinary hearing.

Disciplinary investigation

- 12 A formal disciplinary investigation may sometimes be required to establish the facts and whether there is a disciplinary case to answer.
- 13 If a formal disciplinary investigation is required, the Council's staffing committee will appoint an Investigator who will be responsible for undertaking a fact-finding exercise to collect all relevant information. The Investigator will be independent and will normally be a councillor. If the staffing committee considers that there are no councillors who are independent (for example, because they all have direct

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involvement in the allegations about the employee), it will appoint someone from outside the Council. The Investigator will be appointed as soon as possible after the allegations have been made. The staffing committee will inform the Investigator of the terms of reference of the investigation. The terms of reference should specify:

- the allegations or events that the investigation is required to examine
- whether a recommendation is required
- how the findings should be presented. For example, an investigator will often be required to present the findings in the form of a written report
- who the findings should be reported to and who to contact for further direction if unexpected issues arise or advice is needed.

- 14 The Investigator will be asked to submit their findings within 20 working days of appointment where possible. In cases of alleged unsatisfactory performance or of allegations of minor misconduct, the appointment of an investigator may not be necessary and the Council may decide to commence disciplinary proceedings at the next stage - the disciplinary meeting (see paragraph 22).
- 15 The staffing committee will notify the employee in writing of the alleged misconduct and details of the person undertaking the investigation. The employee may be asked to meet an investigator as part of the disciplinary investigation. The employee will be given sufficient notice of the meeting with the Investigator so that he/she has reasonable time to prepare for it. The letter will explain the investigatory process and that the meeting is part of that process. The employee will be provided with a copy of the Council's disciplinary procedure. The Council will also inform the employee that when he/she meets with the Investigator, he/she will have the opportunity to comment on the allegations of misconduct.
- 16 Employees may be accompanied or represented by a workplace colleague, a trade union representative or a trade union official at any investigatory meeting.
- 17 If there are other persons (e.g. employees, councillors, members of the public or the Council's contractors) who can provide relevant information, the Investigator should try to obtain it from them in advance of the meeting with the employee.
- 18 The Investigator has no authority to take disciplinary action. His/her role is to establish the facts of the case as quickly as possible and prepare a report that recommends to the staffing committee whether or not disciplinary action should be considered under the policy.
- 19 The Investigator's report will contain his/her recommendations and the findings on which they were based. He/she will recommend either:

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- the employee has no case to answer and there should no further action under the Council's disciplinary procedure
 - the matter is not serious enough to justify further use of the disciplinary procedure and can be dealt with informally or
 - the employee has a case to answer and a formal hearing should be convened under the Council's disciplinary procedure.
- 20 The Investigator will submit the report to the staffing committee which will decide whether further action will be taken.
- 21 If the Council decides that it will not take disciplinary action, it may consider whether mediation would be appropriate in the circumstances.

The disciplinary meeting

- 22 If the staffing committee decides that there is a case to answer, it will appoint a staffing sub-committee of three councillors, or seek additional members from the Council to facilitate a group of three Councillors to formally hear the allegations. The staffing sub-committee will appoint a Chairman from one of its members. The Investigator shall not sit on the sub-committee.
- 23 No councillor with direct involvement in the matter shall be appointed to the sub-committee. The employee will be invited, in writing, to attend a disciplinary meeting. The sub-committee's letter will confirm the following:
- the names of its Chairman and other two members
 - details of the alleged misconduct, its possible consequences and the employee's statutory right to be accompanied at the meeting
 - a copy of the information provided to the sub-committee which may include the investigation report, supporting evidence and a copy of the Council's disciplinary procedure
 - the time and place for the meeting. The employee will be given reasonable notice of the hearing so that he /she has sufficient time to prepare for it
 - that witnesses may attend on the employee's and the Council's behalf and that both parties should inform each other of their witnesses' names at least two working days before the meeting
 - that the employee may be accompanied by a companion - a workplace colleague, a trade union representative or a trade union official

The purpose of the disciplinary meeting hearing is for the allegations to be put to the employee and then for the employee to give their perspective. It will be conducted as follows:

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- the Chairman will introduce the members of the sub-committee to the employee and explain the arrangements for the hearing
 - the Chairman will set out the allegations and invite the Investigator to present the findings of the investigation report (if there has been a previous investigation)
 - the Chairman will invite the employee to present their account
 - the employee (or the companion) will set out his/her case and present evidence (including any witnesses and/or witness statements)
 - any member of the sub-committee and the employee (or the companion) may question the Investigator and any witness
 - the employee (or companion) will have the opportunity to sum up
- 24 The Chairman will provide the employee with the sub-committee's decision with reasons, in writing, within five working days of the meeting. The Chairman will also notify the employee of the right to appeal the decision.
- 25 The disciplinary meeting may be adjourned to allow matters that were raised during the meeting to be further investigated by the sub-committee.

Disciplinary action

- 26 If the sub-committee decides that there should be disciplinary action, it may be any of the following:

First written warning

If the employee's conduct has fallen beneath acceptable standards, a first written warning will be issued. A first written warning will set out:

- the reason for the written warning, the improvement required (if appropriate) and the time period for improvement
- that further misconduct/failure to improve will result in more serious disciplinary action
- the employee's right of appeal
- that a note confirming the written warning will be placed on the employee's personnel file, that a copy will be provided to the employee and that the warning will remain in force for a specified period of time (e.g. 12 months).

Final written warning

If the offence is sufficiently serious, or if there is further misconduct or a failure to improve sufficiently during the currency of a prior warning, the employee will be given a final written warning. A final written warning will set out:

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- the reason for the final written warning, the improvement required (if appropriate) and the time period for improvement
- that further misconduct/failure to improve will result in more serious disciplinary action up to and including dismissal
- the employee's right of appeal
- that a note confirming the final written warning will be placed on the employee's personnel file, that a copy will be provided to the employee and that the warning will remain in force for a specified period of time (e.g. 12 months).

Dismissal

The Council may dismiss:

- for gross misconduct
- if there is no improvement within the specified time period, in the conduct which has been the subject of a final written warning
- if another instance of misconduct has occurred and a final written warning has already been issued and remains in force.

- 27 The Council will consider very carefully a decision to dismiss. If an employee is dismissed, he/she will receive a written statement of the reasons for his/her dismissal, the date on which the employment will end and details of his/her right of appeal. If the sub-committee decides to take no disciplinary action, no record of the matter will be retained on the employee's personnel file. Action taken as a result of the disciplinary meeting will remain in force unless it is modified as a result of an appeal.

The appeal

- 28 An employee who is the subject of disciplinary action will be notified of the right of appeal. His/her written notice of appeal must be received by the Council within five working days of the employee receiving written notice of the disciplinary action and must specify the grounds for appeal.
- 29 The grounds for appeal include;
- a failure by the Council to follow its disciplinary policy
 - the sub-committee's disciplinary decision was not supported by the evidence
 - the disciplinary action was too severe in the circumstances of the case
 - new evidence has come to light since the disciplinary meeting.
- 30 Where possible, the appeal will be heard by a panel of three members of the staffing committee who have not previously been involved in the case. This includes the Investigator. There may be insufficient members of the staffing committee who have not previously been involved. If so, the appeal panel will be a committee of three

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members of the Council who may include members of the staff committee. The appeal panel will appoint a Chairman from one of its members.

- 31 The employee will be notified, in writing, within 10 working days of receipt of the notice of appeal of the time, date and place of the appeal meeting. The employee will be advised that he/she may be accompanied by a companion - a workplace colleague, a trade union representative or a trade union official.
- 32 At the appeal meeting, the Chairman will:
 - introduce the panel members to the employee
 - explain the purpose of the meeting, which is to hear the employee's reasons for appealing against the disciplinary decision
 - explain the action that the appeal panel may take.
- 33 The employee (or companion) will be asked to explain the grounds for appeal.
- 34 The Chairman will inform the employee that he/she will receive the decision and the panel's reasons, in writing, usually within five working days of the appeal hearing.
- 35 The appeal panel may decide to uphold the disciplinary decision of the staffing committee, substitute a less serious sanction or decide that no disciplinary action is necessary. If it decides to take no disciplinary action, no record of the matter will be retained on the employee's personnel file.
- 36 If an appeal against dismissal is upheld, the employee will be paid in full for the period from the date of dismissal and continuity of service will be preserved.
- 37 The appeal panel's decision is final.

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Purpose

This policy sets out the Council's rules on how employees can claim for expenses incurred in the performance of their duties for the Council. The purpose of this policy is to ensure that employees are properly reimbursed for legitimate business expenses and to ensure that these expenses are treated appropriately for tax purposes. It does not apply to councillors.

General procedure

The Council will reimburse you for actual expenditure that is incurred wholly, necessarily and exclusively in connection with authorised duties that you undertake in the course of your employment. To claim for expenses, you must use the Council's expenses claim forms and set out the reasons why the expense was incurred on the claim form. If you are unsure whether an expense can be claimed, you must seek prior written authorisation from the Clerk / the Chair.

Expenses will not be paid unless supporting evidence is provided, together with a completed expense claim form. This should include original receipts or invoices with the date and time of the transaction (unless you are claiming for mileage). When claiming for travel expenses on public transport, you should enclose the tickets showing the departure point and destination of your journey, where possible. Credit and debit card statements will not be accepted. Where you are submitting a VAT receipt, you should set out:

- the name and VAT registration number of the retailer or service provider;
- the goods and services provided; and
- the amount of VAT payable.

Once completed and signed, you should submit your expense claim form to the Clerk / the Chair for approval. Once approved the claim form should be sent to the RFO for payment.

Expenses claims must be submitted within 30 days of the expense being incurred. If this is not practical, written approval for any extension will be required from the Clerk / the Chair. The Council reserves the right to withhold any payment where prior written approval has not been given.

The Council may return an expense claim form to you without payment if it is completed incorrectly or lacks supporting evidence.

The Council will pay claims for authorised expenses by BACS transfer into the same bank account into which your salary is paid.

In general, you should not incur expenses other than in the categories listed below. However, if you have claims for expenditure other than for those categories listed below, you

should seek written approval from the Clerk / the Chair before incurring the expense. The Council will accept email as written approval where it is required in this policy.

Any queries in relation to this policy should be directed to the RFO.

Homeworkers

If you are a Homeworker, your normal place of work as stated in your contract will be your home. The council will reimburse all reasonable expenses incurred by homeworkers in the course of their duties upon receipt of satisfactory claims.

The council will provide the following equipment necessary to enable homeworking employees to do their job.

- Desk with lockable drawer (or separate secure document store)
- Laptop or personal computer
- Printer
- Chair
- Consumable, e.g monitors, mouse, keyboard, headset

Alternatively, the council will agree with homeworkers a suitable sum to cover use of their own equipment.

The council should also pay the employee for the costs associated with heating, lighting, etc. HMRC rules allow for some of these expenses to be paid tax-free (see HMRC guidance: www.gov.uk/expenses-and-benefits-homeworking/whats-exempt).

Training

When attending training courses all employees and volunteers will be able to claim travel expenses for the difference in the usual home to work costs. Where the training takes place outside contracted daily hours, part-time employees should be paid on the basis as time spent on training is working time.

Travel

Employees and managers should consider whether or not travel is necessary or if there are more appropriate means (for example tele-conferencing or video-conferencing).

Rail

You may claim for standard class rail fares only. Where possible, rail journeys should be booked well in advance to benefit from any discounts for early booking.

Use of your own car

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It may be appropriate and cost-effective to use your own car when travelling on business, for example if you are travelling with other staff or councillors or, where there is limited public transport to your destination, or the journey time is significantly shorter than using public transport. Any use of your own car on business is subject to you:

- holding a full UK driving licence;
- ensuring that your car is roadworthy and fully registered; and
- holding comprehensive motor insurance that provides for business use.

Prior authorisation should be sought from the Clerk (or the Chair in the case of the Clerk), before using your own car on business. The Council accepts no liability for any accident, loss, damage or claim arising out of any journey that you make on business. The Council will not pay for the cost of any insurance policy on your own car.

To claim for petrol expenditure, you should set out the distance of the journey undertaken on your expenses claim form. The Council will pay you a mileage allowance of 45p per mile for mileage under 10,000 miles and 25p per mile for mileage over 10,000 miles, or such other rate as set out from time to time by HM Revenue and Customs. The Council will pay for tolls, congestion charges and parking costs incurred, where applicable.

Use of bicycle or Motorcycle

If use of your bicycle or motorcycle is approved, you can claim a mileage allowance of 20p or 24p per mile respectively. Any use of your own motorcycle on business is subject the same requirements as a car (see above).

Taxis

Any use of taxis will require prior approval and only in limited circumstances. These are:

- where taking a taxi would result in a significantly shorter travel time than using public transport;
- where there are several employees travelling together; or
- where personal security and safety of employees is an issue, for example taxis may be permitted after 9.30pm.

You must obtain a receipt with details of the date, place of departure and destination of the journey.

Overnight accommodation

As a guideline for travel on council business you should book accommodation equivalent to three-star standard or less. You may book hotel accommodation of up to £120 maximum in a

major city and £100 elsewhere. It is your responsibility to ensure that any hotel reservations are cancelled within the required cancellation period if they are no longer required.

Meals

If you are required to be away from home on council business, you may claim up to:

- £10 for breakfast (if this is not included in the hotel room rate);
- £15 for lunch;
- £20 for dinner
- a daily allowance of £5 per night for general incidental costs such as a newspaper or telephone calls.

The maximum amounts above are inclusive of drinks. Alcohol cannot be reclaimed under any circumstances.

You should supply receipts and invoices for all hotel and meal expenses other than for the daily allowance, where no receipt is required.

Entertainment/gifts

The Council has strict rules about offering or receiving both entertainment and gifts. Any gifts, rewards or entertainment offered to you should be reported immediately to the Clerk or the Chair in the case of the Clerk. As a general rule, small tokens of appreciation, for example flowers or a bottle of wine, may be retained by employees. Limit of £50.

Annual events

The Council may decide to hold a staff event, such as a Christmas meal or other celebration. Except where agreed to the contrary, attendance is not compulsory, and you will remain responsible for any expenses you incur.

Expenses that will not be reimbursed

The Council will not reimburse you for:

- the cost of any travel between your home and usual place of work (except in exceptional circumstances for early morning/late night transport as set out above);
- the cost of any travel undertaken for personal reasons;
- the cost of any travel for your partner or spouse;
- any fines or penalties incurred while on council business for whatever reason, including penalties for not paying for a rail ticket in advance of boarding the train and penalties or fines associated with motoring offences, including speeding or parking fines, clamping or vehicle recovery charges;
- alcohol; and

- cash advances or withdrawals from an ATM machine.

You are required to pay for any travel costs incurred by your partner or spouse in the event that he or she accompanies you on business. Your spouse or partner must have adequate travel insurance for that journey.

False claims

If the Council considers that any expenditure claimed was not legitimately incurred on behalf of the Council, it may request further details from you. The Council will thoroughly investigate and check any expenses claim as it sees fit. It may withhold payment where insufficient supporting documents have been provided. Where payment has been made to you prior to the discovery that the claim was not legitimate or correct, it may deduct the value of that claim from your salary.

Any abuse of the Council's expenses policy will not be tolerated. This includes, but is not limited to:

- false expenses claims;
- claims for expenses that were not legitimately incurred;
- claims for personal gain;
- claims for hospitality and/or gifts without them having been declared; and
- receipt by you of hospitality and/or gifts from contacts that may be perceived to influence your judgment.

The Council will take disciplinary action where appropriate and, in certain circumstances, may treat a breach of this policy as gross misconduct, which may result in your summary dismissal. In addition, the Council may report the matter to the police for investigation and criminal prosecution.³

This is a non-contractual procedure which will be reviewed from time to time.

Date of policy: January 2023

Policy effective from: 19th January 2023

Date for next review: January 2025

GREAT WITCHINGHAM PARISH COUNCIL

STAFF EXPENSES FORM

(See Expenses Policy for more information)

Name:		Cost
Date:		
Item:		
Item:		
Item:		
Item:		
Item:		
TOTAL:		£
Signed Employee:		
Signed Manager:		

GREAT WITCHINGHAM PARISH COUNCIL SICKNESS ABSENCE POLICY

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What to do if you are unwell

If you are away from work because of sickness you must:

- Telephone the Clerk/The Chair, before your contractual or normal start time for work on the first day of absence providing details and how long you expect to be off. If you are unable to call personally, someone else may call for you. It is your responsibility to ensure the Council is notified.
- If you are away for seven days or less (including weekends and other non-working days), you must complete a self-certification form and provide it to the council when you are back at work.
- If you are away for more than seven days (including weekends and other non-working days), you must send in a 'fit to work' statement from your doctor and continue to do so as each new certificate is issued to you. This certificate gives details as to whether you are too ill to work or whether you are well enough to work with suitable support from the Council. This gives you and the Council the opportunity to discuss suitable arrangements which will support your return to work. The form also gives more space for the doctor to provide information about your condition and helpful tick boxes to suggest common ways to help you return to work.
- All sickness or injury absence will be entered on your employment record and will be monitored from time-to-time.

Return-to-work meetings

On the first day back at work after a period of sickness absence your manager may want to meet informally. If this is not possible on your first day back, the meeting may take place later. The return-to-work meeting should take place in a private place, and all discussions should be private and confidential. The meeting would normally include

- a welcome back to work;
- outline the purpose of the return-to-work meeting; which is to manage and monitor absence and attendance to identify any problem areas and offer support where appropriate;
- a discussion about the reasons for absence, in a supportive way and to understand whether the council can take any steps to help the employee's attendance;
- explain that the absence will be recorded;
- establish if medical advice has been sought (if appropriate);
- ensure the self-certification form has been completed or a fit note from the doctor has been provided;

- a discussion on absence over the last 52 weeks, the impact on pay and any next steps; and
- a handover of work where appropriate.

Medical appointments

The council recognises that employees will, from time to time, need to attend medical appointments. Please try to arrange medical appointments in your own time or, if this is not possible, at times that will cause the minimum amount of absence from work or inconvenience to the council. The council will allow reasonable time off work with pay for such appointments.

Council's Sick Pay (Occupational Sick Pay)

It is the Council's policy to pay you your normal basic rate of pay exclusive of overtime/allowances during periods of sickness absence as stated in your contract. This occupational sick pay will be for absences due to sickness calculated over the previous 52 weeks and will include your entitlement to SSP.

Payment is, however, conditional upon you complying with the council's procedure for notifying your manager of the absence, attending an interview with your manager on request to discuss the absence, and completing a self-certification form on return to work or providing a fit-note when requested. We may also ask you to attend an interview/examination with a nominated doctor at the request of the Council.

We may not pay you occupational sick pay where:

- you have failed to comply with the Council's sickness absence notification and evidence requirements;
- you unreasonably refuse to attend a sickness absence meeting with the Council on request;
- you are unable to work because you hurt yourself in dangerous sports / activities or any other occupation you have;
- you have misled the council about your fitness to work;
- you have resigned; or
- where disciplinary proceedings are pending against you.

Medical advice

The Council may want to obtain advice on your fitness for work from occupational health advisers or medical practitioners. Examples of when the Council might refer to occupational health or a medical practitioner include the following:

- to seek a medical report on your illness or injury;

- to establish when you might be able to return to work;
- to understand when you are likely to be fully fit to resume your normal duties;
- to understand what alternative duties you might be fit to undertake if you are unfit to resume your normal duties;
- to understand when you are likely to be fit to undertake any alternative duties;
- to ask for guidance on your condition, for example if there is a possibility that you are disabled or ambiguity as to the exact nature of the condition;
- to ask what reasonable adjustments could be made to working conditions or premises to facilitate a return to work;
- to understand the likely recurrence of the illness or injury once you have returned to work; and
- to discuss any adjustments that could be made to accommodate your disability, if you are disabled.

The Council will pay the cost of the report and you will have the right to see it. The Council will also be provided with a copy of the report and once we have seen it, we will want to meet you to discuss the findings and consider options available to you.

If you choose not to consent to an Occupational Health referral, any decisions in relation to your employment may be made without the benefit of access to medical reports.

Persistent short-term absence

Persistent short-term absence is where an employee is frequently absent from work for relatively short periods due to sickness. We understand most employees will have some short-term sickness absence from time to time. However, if you are frequently and persistently absent from work, this can damage efficiency and productivity, and place an additional burden of work on your colleagues and councillors.

Therefore, it is essential that frequent absence is dealt with promptly and consistently and in some circumstances, the Council may begin a capability or disciplinary procedure as part of the absence management process. If we do so, we will meet with you to set attendance targets. Following a review meeting we may issue a formal warning if those targets are not met. You will be given written notice in advance of any formal meeting and you can be accompanied by a work colleague or trade union representative. You may appeal against a formal warning. If your absence remains unacceptable after a second formal warning, the council may bring your employment to an end following consultation with you.

If frequent absence is due to an underlying long-term health condition then we will also request, with consent, a medical report either from an Occupational Health Physician or your G.P. or consultant to establish further information about your health and how the council can support your attendance.

When considering the reasons for absence, and deciding on whether a formal meeting is appropriate, the council will not consider any pregnancy related absence. The council will also make adjustments where absences are related to a disability by allowing a higher level of absence before considering whether disciplinary action is appropriate.

The council will consider any alternative employment options before making any decision about ending employment. You will have the right to be accompanied by a work colleague or trade union representative at formal meetings and a right of appeal against a formal warning or dismissal sanction. The monitoring of absence operates on a rolling 52-week period.

Where it appears that there is no acceptable reason for an absence or if you have not followed the correct absence notification procedure, the matter should be treated as a conduct issue and dealt with under the disciplinary procedure.

Long-term absence

As a guide, long term absence is any absence which lasts or is expected to last over 4 weeks. In all cases of long-term absence, it is essential for the Council to maintain contact with you. In cases where the return date is less certain this will take the form of consultation and will include:

- Discussions at the start of the absence and periodically throughout
- Obtaining better information on your health and likely prognosis, ideally through an Occupational Health Physician
- Where appropriate alerting you to the fact that your absence is becoming a problem, and
- Allowing you the opportunity to state your opinion of your condition and giving consideration to that opinion

Where ill-health means that you are unlikely to return to work for a long period of time, the council may need to consider bringing your employment to an end. In these circumstances, the council will:

- Review your absence record to assess whether or not it is sufficient to justify dismissal
- Consult with you
- Obtain up-to-date medical advice
- Advise you in writing as soon as it is established that termination of employment has become a possibility
- Discuss whether you may be able to access benefits from the Local Government Pension Scheme (where appropriate)

- Meet with you to discuss the options and consider your views on continuing employment before any decisions are made, allowing you to be accompanied by a work colleague or trade union representative
- Review if there are any alternative jobs that you could do prior to taking any decision on whether or not to dismiss
- Allow a right of appeal against any decision to dismiss you on grounds of long-term ill health
- Following this meeting, inform you of the final decision

Absence as a result of disability

Where you experience sickness absence as a result of a disability it will be treated in line with the provisions contained within the Equality Act 2010 (formerly as part of the Disability Discrimination Act 1995). This will include considering whether any reasonable adjustments can be made.

Data protection

The Council will treat personal data collected during the absence management process in accordance with its data protection policy on processing special categories of personal data. Information about how your data is used and the basis for processing your data will be provided in our employee privacy notice. When relying on legitimate interests as the legal ground for processing your data, you can object to the processing.

This is a non-contractual procedure which will be reviewed from time to time.

Unplanned or long term sickness Absence Policy

Great Witchingham Parish Council is committed to maintaining an effective service to the community of Great Witchingham

If the Clerk notifies the Council, or it is anticipated that the Clerk will become unavailable for a period of more than four weeks the Chair of the Council, or nominated member, is authorised to contact the Norfolk Association of Local Councils to arrange for a locum Clerk to be appointed if deemed necessary. Arrangements for the hand over of Council devices, such as a lap top should be made and any appropriate paper documents obtained.

Date of policy: January 2023

Date for next review: January 2025

Health, Safety & Welfare Policy

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This document has been written in anticipation of many assets and services being managed by Great Witchingham Parish Council in the future, not all sections are currently applicable to the Parish Council. The Parish Clerk has ultimate responsibility for all staff until such time as staffing structures are in place and approved by the council.

Health, Safety and Wellbeing POLICY STATEMENT**1. Introduction**

This Policy provides a business framework for the implementation and development of an effective Health & Safety management system for Great Witchingham Parish Council that facilitates a high standard of employee care and wellbeing together with compliance to the Health & Safety at Work etc. Act 1974 and other legislation. It has an overriding purpose to reduce, as far as reasonably practicable, the risk of injuries, ill health and other losses. This applies to the employees of the Parish Council, elected members, other volunteers, the general public and other organisations that may be affected by our actions.

2. Purpose

- To promote a positive Health, Safety and Welfare culture throughout the organisation;
- To provide adequate control of the health and safety risks arising from our work activities as far as reasonably practicable;
- To consult with our employees on matters affecting their health and safety;
- To promote clear channels of communication for Health, Safety and Welfare between all services;
- To provide information, instruction and supervision for employees;
- To provide and maintain safe plant and equipment;
- To ensure safe handling and use of substances (COSHH);
- To ensure all employees are competent to do their tasks and to give them adequate training;
- To prevent accidents and cases of work-related ill health;
- To maintain safe and healthy working conditions;
- To initiate continuous improvement of Health and Safety through regular reviews and auditing both internally and externally;
- To make Health and Safety integral to all business processes, planning and decisions.

3. General statement

The health and safety of our employees is of paramount importance. We aim to provide and maintain safe and healthy working conditions, equipment and systems of work for all our employees and to provide them with the necessary information, instruction and training to achieve this aim.

Appropriate preventive and protective measures are and will continue to be, implemented following the identification of work-related hazards and assessment of the risks associated with them.

We recognise the importance of employer/employee consultation on matters of health and safety and the value of individual consultation prior to allocating specific health and safety functions.

We also accept our responsibility for the health and safety of other persons who may be affected by our activities.

The allocation of duties for safety matters, the identity of competent persons appointed with particular responsibilities and the arrangements made to implement this policy are set out in this policy and in associated risk assessments and safety documents and records.

Expert advice will be sought as necessary when determining health and safety risks and the

measures required to guard against them.

The objectives of this policy statement can only be achieved through the support and co-operation of employees and all other persons who use our premises, e.g. members of the public (hirers, customers, users), Councillors, contractors and visitors.

The contents of this policy statement is informed by statutory guidance and good practice issued by the Health & Safety Executive (HSE) or industry recognised bodies.

The Policy will be reviewed for its effectiveness on a regular basis with a formal review undertaken every three years.

4. Roles and Responsibilities

Full Council has the overall responsibility for the Parish Council's Health, Safety and Welfare policy, who review and consider this policy at the agreed intervals. The Council will have general oversight of the Policy, and consider the health, safety and welfare systems, processes, procedures, risk assessments or similar as required to ensure the Council undertakes its responsibilities in accordance with the law.

The responsibility for ensuring the application of this policy is delegated to the Parish Clerk. Heads of Service will have overarching responsibility for health and safety standards for their respective service areas:

The Council will designate the Parish Clerk to act as its **Health and Safety Officer**. The Health and safety officer's main aim is to prevent injuries, accidents and work-related illnesses in the workplace. Their role is to assist in creation and implementation of health and safety policies in accordance with the legislation and to ensure that these policies are implemented by management and employees.

All employees are expected to:

- Co-operate with managers on all health, safety, welfare/ wellbeing matters;
- Actively consider their safety and the safety of others and help develop and maintain a good safety culture with a low level of risk. All employees are encouraged to make suggestions to improve health, safety and welfare in their workplace;
- Correctly use work items, including personal protective equipment as instructed;
- Not misuse or interfere with anything provided in the interests of health and safety;
- Read all relevant risk assessments and comply with the control measures;
- Report all accidents, incidents, near misses and dangerous occurrences, whether there is injury/damage or not, and complete a form provided for the purpose;
- Promptly report foreseeable hazards (or situations considered to be potentially hazardous);
- Report all property and equipment defects;
- Use any machinery, equipment, substance, transport or safety device provided in accordance with training and instructions, in compliance with regulations;
- Inform their Manager of any work situation or shortcomings in protective arrangements which he/she considers represents a significant risk to health, safety and welfare, or a risk to other persons (i.e. contractors, visitors, customers, the general public and members); and

- Take reasonable care of their own health and safety.

Supervision of **trainees/work experience** will be arranged, undertaken and monitored by Head of Services if necessary.

MANAGING HEALTH AND SAFETY

5. Accidents

Health and Safety at Work etc Act 1974

Reporting of Injuries, Diseases and Dangerous Occurrences Regulations 2013 (RIDDOR)

Reporting and Recording Accidents

There is a legal duty placed upon the Council to report and record all accidents at work.

Details of all accidents involving employees or members of the public shall be recorded on an **Accident Report Form** and submitted to their Line Manager.

Individual employees are responsible for reporting accidents and potential accidents/near misses that occur at work on the mandatory Accident Report Form, which is available from the Parish Clerk.

The Health and Safety Officer will record all accidents/near misses in an **Accident Book** and will be responsible for reporting 'Lost Time' accidents. All accidents and cases of ill health as a result of an accident at work are to be recorded in the accident book. The book is kept by the Parish Clerk.

The Parish Clerk will ensure that **accidents and work-related causes of sickness absences are investigated** and that the causes are analysed to assist in formulating preventative measures and will report to the Staffing Committee.

The Parish Clerk is responsible, where required by law, for reporting accidents, diseases and dangerous occurrences to the enforcing authority.

6. Employee Consultation

Health and Safety (Consultation with Employees) Regulations 1996

Safety Representatives and Safety Committees Regulations 1977

Consultation with employees will be undertaken at:

- One to one meetings with individual staff members.

7. Fire & Evacuation Procedures

Dangerous Substances and Explosive Atmospheres Regulations 2002

Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2015

UK fire regulations require a fire risk assessment for all workplaces. The Parish Clerk is responsible for ensuring a **fire risk assessment** is undertaken and implemented, including appropriate provision of fire exits, signs, alarms and extinguishers at any properties under the management of the Parish Council.

Fire evacuation procedures are to be provided at each property.

8. First Aid

The Health and Safety (First Aid) Regulations 1981

First aid means treating minor injuries at work and giving immediate attention to more serious casualties until medical help is available. Through this initial management of injury or illness suffered at work, lives can be saved and minor injuries prevented from beginning major ones.

Nominated staff are required to attend a "First Aid at Work Appointed Person Course". First aid equipment is readily accessible at each premises and is kept stocked, clean and ready for use.

A list of First aid trained personnel is available from the Parish Clerk.

9. Contractors & Visitors

Fire & Evacuation Procedures

Fire action notices are positioned around all the Council's premises to inform visitors of the action to be taken in an emergency.

Contractors

Contractors shall, at all times, comply with the requirements of the Health and Safety at Work Act and the Management of Health & Safety at Work Regulations 1992 and of any other Acts Regulations or Orders pertaining to the health and safety of employees.

The Contractor shall identify risks to the health and safety of employees and others and provide the applicable Manager with Risk Assessments, method statements or other depending on the type of work being undertaken.

The Contractor shall have regard to the Council's Safety Policy. Whilst on premises owned by the Council the Contractor shall ensure that his employees comply with the Council's Health & Safety Policy.

10. Personal Protective Equipment

The Parish Clerk will be responsible for ensuring that a Personal Protective Equipment Assessment is completed for each task to ensure that appropriate information, equipment, instruction and training is issued.

11. Risk Assessments

Risk assessments will be undertaken by the Parish Clerk for all activities carried out. Where technical expertise is required and/or there are serious/significant risks being assessed, the Parish Clerk will commission qualified experts to advise and undertake the assessment. Employees will also help to inform the assessments.

Action required to remove/control risks will be approved by the Parish Clerk.

The Clerk or other delegated person will be **responsible for ensuring the action required is implemented** and will check that the implemented actions have removed/reduced the risks.

Employees will be made aware and a copy of the risk assessment/s applicable to their area of work will be made available to them.

A Risk based approach will inform the frequency of inspections for the Parish Council's open space areas and the measures to be implemented in order to mitigate against the hazard /risk.

Risk Assessments will be reviewed annually

12. Training

Induction training

Induction training will be provided for all employees by their Line Manager who will ensure that all new employees complete an Induction Checklist.

Where specific jobs require special training, the Manager will make arrangements for this to be undertaken, which can be by a work colleague, attendance on a training course or similar.

Ongoing Training

Training will be identified, arranged and monitored by the employees Line Manager who will also make arrangements for refresher training to be completed on an annual basis or such approved frequency determined by the service area risk assessment.

Centralised training records are kept by the Health and Safety Officer, who is also responsible for ensuring that any changes to the Council's Health and Safety Procedures are made to the 'Master File' and copies distributed to all relevant members of staff.

13. Workplaces (Health, Safety & Welfare)

The Parish Clerk is responsible for ensuring that a periodic review is undertaken in their service/s area/s to check working conditions and ensure safe working practices are being

followed.

The Council will keep the Council's Risk Assessments under review to reflect changes in activities, etc.

All Employees have a duty to familiarise themselves with the Risk Assessments relevant to their work and adopt the procedures and working practices contained within them.

RISKS TO HEALTH AND SAFETY

14. Asbestos

The Control of Asbestos Regulations 2012

Asbestos is the largest single cause of work related fatal disease and ill health in Great Britain. Almost all asbestos related deaths and ill health are from exposures several decades ago, but where people work with asbestos or come into contact with it during repair and maintenance work, they are at risk. Working with asbestos should be avoided if possible but, if not, it must be done safely.

Asbestos can be found in buildings from 1950 to 1999 in many forms. It may also be found in some vehicle brake pads and clutch linings.

The Control of Asbestos at Work Regulations 2002 (CAWR) introduces an explicit duty to manage asbestos in non-domestic premises, to manage the risk of exposure to asbestos or asbestos containing material (ACM). The duty to manage requires those in control of premises to:

- Take reasonable steps to determine the location and condition of materials likely to contain asbestos;
- Presume materials contain asbestos unless there is strong evidence that they do not;
- Make and keep an up to date record of the location and condition of the ACMs or presumed ACMs in the premises;
- Assess the risk of the likelihood of anyone being exposed to fibres from these materials;
- Prepare a plan setting out how the risks from the materials are to be managed;
- Take the necessary steps to put the plan into action;
- Review and monitor the plan periodically; and
- Provide information on the location and condition of the materials to anyone who is liable to work on or disturb them.

The Parish Clerk is responsible for ensuring that a copy of the applicable Council's 'Asbestos survey' is issued to Employees/Contractors who carry out any type of maintenance, repair or refurbishment work on any property under Parish Council control.

15. Display Screen Equipment

Health and Safety (Display Screen Equipment) Regulations 1992

Using a computer or other kinds of display screen equipment (visual display units) can give rise to back problems, repetitive strain injury or other musculoskeletal disorders. These health problems may become serious if no action is taken. They can be caused by poor design of work stations

(and associated equipment such as chairs), insufficient space, lack of training or not taking breaks from display screen work. Work with a screen does not cause eye damage, but many users experience temporary eye strain or stress. This can lead to reduced work efficiency or taking time off work.

Managers are responsible for ensuring that all relevant employees:

- are given the necessary training;
- complete a display screen risk assessment;
- implement any necessary control measures to eliminate or reduce the identified risks.

Where applicable, staff will be able to arrange eye tests at appropriate intervals, for which reimbursement of the cost can be claimed from Great Witchingham Parish Council.

16. Hazardous Substances

Control of Substances Hazardous to Health Regulations 2002 (COSHH)

Classification, Labelling and Packaging Regulations 2008 (CLP)

Control of Lead at Work Regulations 2002

COSHH

COSHH safety notices and Guidance Procedures are to be displayed on the applicable storage cupboards.

The Parish Clerk is responsible for **identifying substances** which need a COSHH assessment. **Employees who use hazardous substances** will be responsible for undertaking the COSHH assessments.

Employees are responsible for notifying the Parish Clerk of any hazardous substances for use in order that the Product Data Sheets can be obtained and Risk Assessments including appropriate control measures can be identified and implemented.

The Parish Clerk and relevant employees will be responsible for ensuring that all **actions identified** in the assessments are implemented.

The Parish Clerk will be responsible for ensuring that all of their relevant employees are informed about the COSHH assessments.

The Parish Clerk will check that new substances can be used safely before they are purchased. Assessments will be reviewed every 3 years or when the work activity changes, whichever is soonest.

Safety Data Sheets from suppliers are to be maintained at the appropriate properties.

Spill Control

Managers are responsible for ensuring that all staff are aware of procedures in the event of a spillage of hazardous substances and for ensuring that stocks of spill control equipment are maintained.

17. Working at Heights

Provision and Use of Work Equipment Regulations 1998 Lifting Operations and Lifting Equipment Regulations 1998 Construction (Design & Management) Regulations 2015

A fall from height has sudden and irreversible consequences and can only be prevented by ensuring that each task associated with working at height is carefully planned before deciding if the method of gaining access is appropriate. The overriding principle is to do all that is practicable to prevent anyone falling. Strict adherence to the principles and practices within the Work at Height Regulations 2005, and its Schedules, is the only acceptable solution.

Separate guidance is available from the Council's Parish Clerk.

18. Lone Working

A Lone Working Policy & Procedure, which is designed to raise awareness of the risks presented by lone working, to identify the responsibilities each person has in this situation, and to give guidance on how to manage such risks has been produced by the Parish Council. This is available from the Council's designated Health and Safety Officer.

19. Machinery

Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999 Provision and Use of Work Equipment Regulations 1998

Vibration from work with powered hand held tools, equipment or processes can damage the hands and arms of users causing 'hand-arm vibration syndrome'. This is a painful, irreversible condition which includes 'vibration white finger' and the effects can be impaired blood circulation, damage to the nerves and muscles, and loss of ability to grip properly.

Back damage can be caused by vibration from a vehicle or machine passing through the seat into the driver's body through the buttocks – known as whole body vibration. Whole body vibration can also be caused by standing on the platform of a vehicle or machine, so vibration passes into the operator through their feet.

The Parish Clerk is responsible for ensuring that an assessment is carried out in respect of all new machinery and equipment.

Staff & volunteers are advised to report any faults immediately.

The use of the Council's equipment is restricted to only the trained operatives and staff.

20. Maintenance & Building Work

*Construction (Design & Management) Regulations 2015
Construction (Design and Management) Regulations 1994 Lifting Operations and Lifting Equipment Regulations 1998 Provision and Use of Work Equipment Regulations 1998 Confined Spaces*

Regulations 1997

All contractors should be qualified and competent for the work to be carried out. The Contractor shall provide the Service Manager with a Risk Assessment/s, method statements or other depending on the type of work being undertaken.

The Contractor shall have regard to the Council's Safety Policy. Whilst on premises owned by the Council the Contractor shall ensure that his employees comply with the Council's Health & Safety Policy.

21. Manual Handling

Manual Handling Operations Regulations 1992

Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999

A manual handling policy and procedure designed to raise awareness of the risks, to identify responsibilities, and to give guidance on how to manage such risks has been produced by the Parish Council. A copy is available from the Council's Health and Safety Officer.

22. Noise at Work

The Control of Noise at Work Regulations 2005 Noise

at Work Regulations 1989

High levels of noise at work can cause hearing loss. This can take many years to become serious. Young people can be damaged as easily as the old and premature deafness is even worse. Sufferers often first start to notice hearing loss when they cannot keep up with conversations in a group or when the rest of their family complains they have the television on too loud. Deafness can make people feel isolated from their family, friends and colleagues.

A preliminary decision on whether an assessment is needed can usually be reached without making detailed noise measurements.

As a rough guide, an assessment of daily personal exposure will usually be needed wherever people have to shout or have difficulty being heard clearly by someone about 2 metres away or they find it difficult to talk to each other.

Whenever it is decided that a more detailed assessment is needed the Parish Clerk will complete the assessment.

23. Plant, Mechanical and Electrical Equipment

Provision and Use of Work Equipment Regulations 1998 Lifting

Operations and Lifting Equipment Regulations 1998 Supply of

Machinery (Safety) (Amendment) Regulations 2011

Work equipment covers an enormous range spanning process machinery, machine tools, office machines, lifting equipment, hand tools, ladders and pressure washers. Important points include: selecting the right equipment for the job, making sure equipment is safe to use and keeping it safe through regular maintenance, inspection and if, appropriate, thorough examination, training

employees to use equipment safely and following manufacturers' or suppliers' instructions. Accidents involving work equipment happen all the time – many serious, some fatal.

The Parish Council is committed to ensuring that all equipment is suitable for its intended use. Employee Safety Representatives will be consulted in connection with the use of new machinery and equipment.

The Parish Clerk will:

- Be responsible for ensuring effective maintenance procedures are drawn up;
- Be responsible for ensuring that all identified maintenance is implemented;
- Will check that new plant and equipment meets health and safety standards before it is purchased;
- Maintain the register of all plant, mechanical and electrical items and ensuring that all inspection and maintenance regimes are complied with, to include:
 - Description of Equipment
 - Location
 - Restricted Users Supervisor
 - Responsible
 - Inspection Maintenance Regime Service
 - Engineers
- Arrange for periodic inspections of portable items;
- Ensure all persons are adequately trained in using electrical equipment; and
- Ensure the use of residual current devices especially if equipment is used outside;

Electrical Equipment

Electricity at Work Regulations 1989

Electricity can kill. Most deaths are caused by contact with overhead or underground power cables. Even non-fatal shocks can cause severe and permanent injury. Shocks from faulty equipment may lead to falls from ladders, scaffolds or other work platforms. Those using electricity may not be the only ones at risk. Poor electrical installations and faulty electrical appliances can lead to fires which can also result in death or injury to others.

User checks on **electrical equipment** can be made by the person using the equipment. Aspects to look for should include damage to the plug, cable or equipment casing, use of tape to join wiring, overheating, and whether the item has been exposed to conditions for which it is not suitable, e.g. a wet environment. Formal visual inspections and changing plugs or altering electrical equipment must be completed by a qualified electrician.

Any items that have not been registered in the inventory and checked (PAT TESTED) must not be connected to the Council's electricity supply.

Any faults should be reported immediately to the person responsible for the maintenance and the equipment taken out of use immediately.

24. Play Equipment

All play equipment is subject to a detailed inspection by independent specialists at least annually.

These detailed inspections should be supplemented with more frequent inspections by the Council's staff, a visual inspection is carried out on a weekly basis to check for any obvious vandalism, wear and tear, broken glass, dog fouling, etc. A more detailed inspection is carried out on a monthly basis. All inspections should be formally recorded.

Any equipment found to be unsafe should be immobilised and taken out of use. In some cases, it may be sufficient to cordon off the area, in others it may be necessary to remove the item completely to ensure the safety of users. DIY repairs should not be carried out unless they are endorsed by the original manufacturer or installer. All repairs shall be carried out by a competent person.

25. Radiation

Ionising Radiation Regulations 2017

Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999

Various kinds of radiation, both ionising and non-ionising, may affect us.

1) Non-ionising radiation:

- UV radiation (e.g. from the sun) can damage the skin and lead to skin cancer; and
- Lasers can cause burns and damage the eye.

2) Ionising radiation:

- Naturally occurring radon gas from the ground; and
- Radiography or thickness measuring gauges.

Excess doses of ionising radiation can cause burns, sickness and can have other adverse health effects.

The Parish Clerk will be responsible for ensuring that jobs at risk of the effects of radiation are **risk assessed** and all **actions identified** in the assessments are implemented.

26. Stress at Work

Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999

Many people argue about the definition and sometimes even the existence of 'stress'. However, research has shown that whatever you choose to call it, there is a clear link between poor work organisation and subsequent ill health. The Health & Safety Executive defines stress as "*the adverse reaction people have to excessive pressure or other types of demand placed on them*".

Stress at work can be tackled in the same way as any other risk to health – by identifying the hazards, assessing who is at risk and the level of risk, deciding how to manage the risk and putting the plans into action.

In order to reduce stress in the organisation, Managers and the staff they are responsible for should keep in regular contact. Managers should ensure they hold regular team meetings and one to one meetings with individual members of staff, providing for an opportunity for all to raise any issues of concern and explore a way to resolve them.

The Parish Council has an approved Absence Policy, which is designed to reduce sickness

absence by addressing the causes. Any member of staff who is absent from work, even for one day, should complete a return to work form and have a conversation with their Manager about the reasons for absence and whether any support or action can be taken to prevent future occurrences.

27. Trip & other Dangerous Hazards

Workplace (Health, Safety and Welfare) Regulations 1992

The most common cause of injuries at work is the slip or trip, resulting in falls which can be serious. It's a particularly important subject since members of the public use our premises. Measures to prevent such injuries are often simple, cheap and lead to other benefits.

Parks & Open spaces grounds staff are responsible for regular visual checks of their respective premises to ensure there are no trip hazards, sharp objects or obstructions.

Where any member of staff discovers spillages, wet surfaces, broken objects, damaged furniture or equipment, they must take every step to initially make the area safe and where the member of staff can deal with the danger safely, they must do so. Otherwise it should be immediately reported to the appropriate responsible officer.

28. Vehicles

Workplace (Health, Safety and Welfare) Regulations 1992

Provision and Use of Work Equipment Regulations 1998

Construction (Design & Management) Regulations 2015

Every year about 70 people are killed and about 2500 seriously injured in accidents involving vehicles at the workplace. Being struck or run over by moving vehicles, items falling from vehicles, or vehicles over turning are the most common causes. Great Witchingham Parish Council may use vehicles in its public places, which includes the workplace, and examples include vans, tractors and mowers. Often there is significantly more danger from vehicles on parks and open spaces and at depots than on the public highway since the operating conditions are different.

All staff using vehicles should have the relevant licence and receive appropriate training and must operate and use the vehicle in accordance with the manufacturer's instructions and solely for the purpose intended by Great Witchingham Parish Council.

Date of policy: January 2023

Approving committee: Full Council

Policy version reference: V1

Supersedes: N/A

Policy effective from: 19.1.23

Date for next review: January 2023

Return to Work Interview Form Great Witchingham Parish Council

Date, Time & Location of Interview

Interview conducted by

Employee Name

Job Title

First Day of most recent Absence

Last Day of most recent Absence

Was GP/Hospital consulted?

Has a fitness to work certificate been issued by the employee's GP?

Reason for absence?

Has the employee's GP given approval for the employee to return to work?

Does the employee have a disability? Is this related to their absence?

NOTE: The purpose of this meeting is to ascertain if the employee is fit to return to normal duties or alternatively, to prepare an action plan to assist a phased return to work, if necessary.

Details of sickness in the past twelve months:

Does the employee recall the reason for the absences and is it connected with the current period of absence?

OPEN DISCUSSION NOTES

**Are you satisfied that the employee can return to normal duties (based upon the information you have received)?
If no, why?**

Does the employee believe they are able to resume normal duties?

Are there any actions required?

E.g. Risk assessment, reasonable adjustments in workplace or temporary alterations to working pattern?

Any other relevant information

This form will be placed with the employee's personnel file.

Signed by Employee:

Signed by Staffing Committee member:

Signed by Witness:

Date:

GREAT WITCHINGHAM PARISH COUNCIL EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY POLICY

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Our commitment

The council is committed to providing equal opportunities in employment and to avoiding unlawful discrimination.

This policy is intended to assist the council to put this commitment into practice. Compliance with this policy should also ensure that employees do not commit unlawful acts of discrimination.

Striving to ensure that the work environment is free of harassment and bullying and that everyone is treated with dignity and respect is an important aspect of ensuring equal opportunities in employment.

The law

It is unlawful to discriminate directly or indirectly in recruitment or employment because of age, disability, sex, gender reassignment, pregnancy, maternity, race (which includes colour, nationality, caste and ethnic or national origins), sexual orientation, religion or belief, or because someone is married or in a civil partnership. These are known as "protected characteristics".

Discrimination after employment may also be unlawful, e.g. refusing to give a reference for a reason related to one of the protected characteristics.

The council will not discriminate against or harass a member of the public in the provision of services or goods. It is unlawful to fail to make reasonable adjustments to overcome barriers to using services caused by disability. The duty to make reasonable adjustments includes the removal, adaptation or alteration of physical features, if the physical features make it impossible or unreasonably difficult for disabled people to make use of services. In addition, service providers have an obligation to think ahead and address any barriers that may impede disabled people from accessing a service.

Types of unlawful discrimination

Direct discrimination is where a person is treated less favourably than another because of a protected characteristic.

In limited circumstances, employers can directly discriminate against an individual for a reason related to any of the protected characteristics where there is an occupational requirement. The occupational requirement must be crucial to the post and a proportionate means of achieving a legitimate aim.

Indirect discrimination is where a provision, criterion or practice is applied that is discriminatory in relation to individuals who have a relevant protected characteristic such that it would be to the detriment of people who share that protected characteristic compared

with people who do not, and it cannot be shown to be a proportionate means of achieving a legitimate aim.

Harassment is where there is unwanted conduct, related to one of the protected characteristics (other than marriage and civil partnership, and pregnancy and maternity) that has the purpose or effect of violating a person's dignity; or creating an intimidating, hostile, degrading, humiliating or offensive environment. It does not matter whether or not this effect was intended by the person responsible for the conduct.

Associative discrimination is where an individual is directly discriminated against or harassed for association with another individual who has a protected characteristic.

Perceptive discrimination is where an individual is directly discriminated against or harassed based on a perception that they have a particular protected characteristic when they do not, in fact, have that protected characteristic.

Third-party harassment occurs where an employee is harassed and the harassment is related to a protected characteristic, by third parties.

Victimisation occurs where an employee is subjected to a detriment, such as being denied a training opportunity or a promotion because they made or supported a complaint or raised a grievance under the Equality Act 2010, or because they are suspected of doing so. However, an employee is not protected from victimisation if they acted maliciously or made or supported an untrue complaint.

Failure to make reasonable adjustments is where a physical feature or a provision, criterion or practice puts a disabled person at a substantial disadvantage compared with someone who does not have that protected characteristic and the employer has failed to make reasonable adjustments to enable the disabled person to overcome the disadvantage.

Equal opportunities in employment

The council will avoid unlawful discrimination in all aspects of employment including recruitment, promotion, opportunities for training, pay and benefits, discipline and selection for redundancy.

Recruitment

Person and job specifications will be limited to those requirements that are necessary for the effective performance of the job. Candidates for employment or promotion will be assessed objectively against the requirements for the job, taking account of any reasonable adjustments that may be required for candidates with a disability. Disability and personal or home commitments will not form the basis of employment decisions except where necessary.

Working practices

The council will consider any possible indirectly discriminatory effect of its standard working practices, including the number of hours to be worked, the times at which these are to be worked and the place at which work is to be done, when considering requests for variations to these standard working practices and will refuse such requests only if the council considers it has good reasons, unrelated to any protected characteristic, for doing so. The council will comply with its obligations in relation to statutory requests for contract variations. The council will also make reasonable adjustments to its standard working practices to overcome barriers caused by disability.

Equal opportunities monitoring

The council will monitor the ethnic, gender and age composition of the existing workforce and of applicants for jobs (including promotion), and the number of people with disabilities within these groups, and will consider and take any appropriate action to address any problems that may be identified as a result of the monitoring process.

The council treats personal data collected for reviewing equality and diversity in accordance with the data protection policy. Information about how data is used and the basis for processing is provided in the council's privacy notices.

Dignity at work

The council has a separate dignity at work policy concerning issues of bullying and harassment on any ground, and how complaints of this type will be dealt with.

People not employed by the council

The council will not discriminate unlawfully against those using or seeking to use the services provided by the council.

You should report any bullying or harassment by suppliers, visitors or others to the council who will take appropriate action.

Training

The council will provide training in/raise awareness of equal opportunities to those likely to be involved in recruitment or other decision making where equal opportunities issues are likely to arise.

The council will provide training to/raise awareness of all staff engaged to work at the council to help them understand their rights and responsibilities under the dignity at work policy and what they can do to help create a working environment free of bullying and harassment. The

council will provide additional training to managers to enable them to deal more effectively with complaints of bullying and harassment.

Your responsibilities

Every employee is required to assist the council to meet its commitment to provide equal opportunities in employment and avoid unlawful discrimination. Employees can be held personally liable as well as, or instead of, the council for any act of unlawful discrimination. Employees who commit serious acts of harassment may be guilty of a criminal offence.

Acts of discrimination, harassment, bullying or victimisation against employees or customers are disciplinary offences and will be dealt with under the council's disciplinary procedure. Discrimination, harassment, bullying or victimisation may constitute gross misconduct and could lead to dismissal without notice.

Grievances

If you consider that you may have been unlawfully discriminated against, you should use the council's grievance procedure to make a complaint. If your complaint involves bullying or harassment, the grievance procedure is modified as set out in the dignity at work policy.

The council will take any complaint seriously and will seek to resolve any grievance that it upholds. You will not be penalised for raising a grievance, even if your grievance is not upheld, unless your complaint is both untrue and made in bad faith.

Monitoring and review

This policy will be monitored periodically by the council to judge its effectiveness and will be updated in accordance with changes in the law. In particular, the council will monitor the ethnic and gender composition of the existing workforce and of applicants for jobs (including promotion), and the number of people with disabilities within these groups, and will review its equal opportunities policy in accordance with the results shown by the monitoring. If changes are required, the council will implement them.

Information provided by job applicants and employees for monitoring purposes will be used only for these purposes and will be dealt with in accordance with relevant data protection legislation.

This is a non-contractual procedure which will be reviewed from time to time.

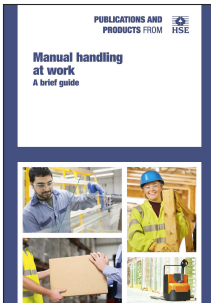
Date of policy: January 2023

Policy effective from: 19th January 2023

Date for next review: January 2025

Manual handling at work

A brief guide



01/20 INDG143(rev4)

You can buy this leaflet at
<https://books.hse.gov.uk/>

This is a web version of the printed edition

Introduction

As an employer, you must protect your workers from the risk of injury and ill health from hazardous manual handling tasks in the workplace. This leaflet will help you do that. It includes simple risk filters to help you identify which manual handling activities are hazardous.

Manual handling means transporting or supporting a load by hand or bodily force. It includes lifting, lowering, pushing, pulling, moving or carrying a load. A load is a moveable object, such as a box or package, a person or an animal, or something being pushed or pulled, such as a roll cage or pallet truck.

What's the problem?

Manual handling injuries are part of a wider group of musculoskeletal disorders (MSDs). The term 'musculoskeletal disorders' includes injuries and conditions that can cause pain to the back, joints and limbs.

This leaflet focuses on manual handling, which is one of the main causes in the development of musculoskeletal disorders, particularly back pain. For the latest statistics, visit the HSE website.

Manual handling risks can be found across all kinds of workplaces – on farms and building sites, in factories, offices, warehouses, hospitals and while making deliveries. Heavy manual labour, repetitive handling, awkward postures and previous or existing injuries or conditions are all risk factors for developing MSDs. Work may also make worse an injury which was not caused at work, such as a sports injury. There is more advice on MSDs on the HSE website.¹

Taking the action described here will help prevent injuries and ill health, but you can't prevent all MSDs. Encourage workers to report any signs and symptoms to you or their worker representative at an early stage, before they become more serious, so you can take steps to reduce the risk.

If your workers have developed symptoms, consider taking advice from an occupational health provider on a worker's fitness for work and any restrictions or adaptations to their work that may be required.

What does the law say?

The Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations² require you to assess the risks to the health and safety of your workers. Where this identifies hazardous manual handling of loads, you should also comply with the Manual Handling Operations Regulations (the Manual Handling Regulations).³

The Manual Handling Regulations set out a clear hierarchy of measures you must follow to prevent and manage the risks from hazardous manual handling:

- **avoid** hazardous manual handling operations, 'so far as reasonably practicable';*
- **assess** the risk of injury to workers from any hazardous manual handling that can't be avoided;
- **reduce** the risk of injury to workers from hazardous manual handling to as low as reasonably practicable.

Workers have duties too. They should:

- follow systems of work in place for their health and safety;
- use properly any equipment provided for their health and safety;
- cooperate with you on health and safety matters;
- inform you if things change or they identify hazardous handling activities;
- take care to make sure their activities do not put others at risk.

Consult and involve your workforce. Your workers and their representatives know first-hand what the risks in the workplace are and can often suggest practical solutions to control them.⁴

*This means balancing the level of risk against the measures needed to control the real risk in terms of money, time or trouble. However, you do not need to take action if it would be grossly disproportionate to the level of risk.

Avoid hazardous manual handling

Eliminate handling the load

Can you eliminate hazardous manual handling by not moving loads, for example, by looking at whether the work could be done in a different way:

- Does the item really need to be moved, or can the activity be done safely where it already is by redesigning the task?
- Can products or materials be delivered directly to where they will be used?

Automation or mechanisation

If handling the load cannot be avoided, consider whether the operations can be automated or mechanised to eliminate the manual part of the handling. The best time to make decisions about this is when plant or systems of work are being designed.

- Can you use materials handling equipment or mechanical aids to eliminate or reduce the risks you identify in your risk assessment? Can you use, for example, a conveyor, a chute, an electric-powered pallet truck, an electric or hand-powered hoist, or a lift truck to reduce the risk of injury? See *Making the best use of lifting and handling aids* for more information.⁵
- Can you use robotics technology, for example, in production lines?
- When introducing automation or mechanisation, make sure you avoid introducing new risks (for example, when maintaining equipment or when things break down).
- Make sure your workers are trained to use any equipment you introduce, such as lift trucks.

Assess the risks

Where you identify risks from hazardous manual handling in your workplace that cannot be avoided, you must do a manual handling risk assessment to help you decide what you need to do to manage these risks. Make sure your workforce is fully involved in the risk assessment process.

Consider risks arising from:

- the task;
- the load;
- the working environment;
- individual capacity;
- any materials handling equipment or handling aids used;
- how you organise and allocate work;
- the pace, frequency and duration of the work.

Make sure you take account of the individual requirements of workers who may be especially at risk, for example:

- new or expectant mothers;
- people with disabilities, which may make it more difficult to do a particular task;
- those returning to work after a recent manual handling injury, who may be on a phased return to work;
- inexperienced new, young or temporary workers;
- older workers;
- contractors, homeworkers or lone workers;
- migrant workers who may not have English as their first language.

You also need to take account of psychosocial risk factors. These may affect workers' psychological responses to their work and workplace conditions. Examples are high workloads, tight deadlines and lack of control over the work and working methods, which may make people more likely to develop MSDs.

How detailed should my risk assessment be?

The amount of detail required by your manual handling risk assessments will depend on a number of factors, including the level of risk and complexity of the tasks being carried out. Using HSE's simple risk filter(s) as a first step can help you to initially identify low- and high-risk tasks. This will help you decide your priorities for more detailed assessments of your higher-risk tasks.

HSE's guidance on the Manual Handling Regulations (L23) *Manual handling*³ contains in-depth advice on risk assessment. If you choose to use HSE's suggested approach, there are three levels of detail:

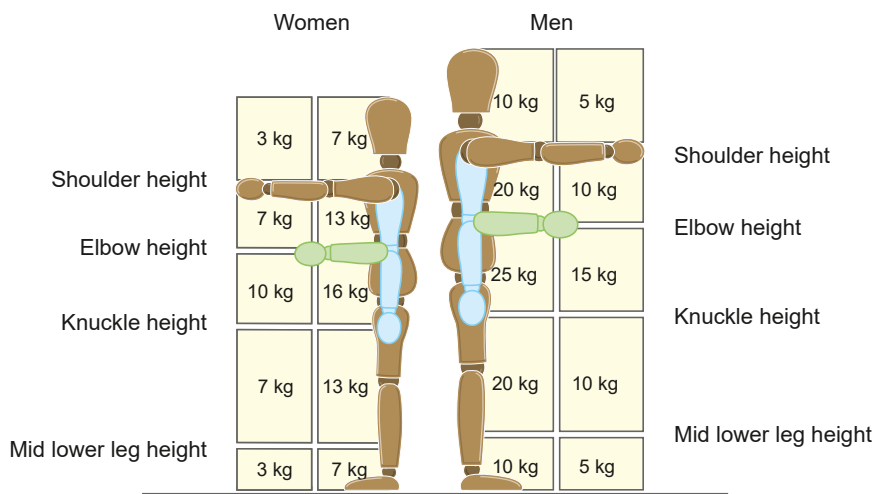
- **simple filters** to distinguish low-risk tasks from those which need a more detailed assessment;
- **HSE's risk assessment tools**, the *Manual handling assessment charts (the MAC tool)*⁶ and *Risk assessment of pushing and pulling (RAPP) tool*⁷ which help you identify high-risk handling operations and prioritise action to control the risks if the tasks fall outside the simple risk filters;
- **a full risk assessment**. There are online checklists⁸ available if you need to carry out a full risk assessment for lifting and carrying or pushing and pulling.

Simple filters

Use the guideline filters for lifting and lowering in Figure 1 to help you identify low-risk tasks. The Manual Handling Regulations do not set specific weight limits, so the guidelines are **not** 'safe limits' for lifting and carrying. They use broad assumptions or generalisations where, if met, the risk of injury is considered to be low. But working outside the limits is likely to increase the risk of injury, which can lead to ill health. The guidelines are derived from lifting capacity data which show differences between men and women in the population (rather than individuals).

The filter for pushing and pulling in Figure 2 looks at the posture of your workers during pushing or pulling operations.

Where the handling task falls within the filter guidelines, you do not normally need to do any other form of risk assessment unless you have individual workers who may be at significant risk. If you are unsure, complete a more detailed assessment.

Lifting and lowering risk filter**Figure 1** Lifting and lowering risk filter

- Figure 1 assumes that the load is easily grasped with both hands and is handled in reasonable working conditions, with the worker in a stable body position.
- Each box in Figure 1 contains a filter value for lifting and lowering in that zone. The filter values in the boxes are reduced if handling is done with arms extended, or at high or low levels, as that is where injuries are most likely to happen.
- Observe the work activity you are assessing and compare it to Figure 1. First, decide which zone or zones the worker's hands pass through when moving the load. Then assess the maximum weight being handled. If it is less than the value given in the matching box, it is within the guidelines.
- If the worker's hands enter more than one zone during the operation, use the smallest weight. Use an in-between weight if the hands are close to a boundary between zones.

Lifting and lowering: Do I need to make a more detailed assessment?

You will need to make a more detailed assessment using the MAC tool or full risk assessment checklists (or equivalent) if:

- the handling operation must take place with the hands outside the zones in Figure 1;
- the weight exceeds those in Figure 1;
- the handling involves torso twisting;
- the handling is more frequent than one lift every two minutes;
- the handling is done by a team;
- the handling operations are complex, for example, the weights vary significantly or there are several start and finish locations;
- the lift does not meet the conditions given for using the guidelines, for example, if the load is difficult to grasp or handle;
- the person lifting may be at significant risk, for example, new or expectant mothers, young workers, those new to the job, or those with a disability, significant health problem or recent injury.

Carrying risk filter

You can apply the filter weights for lifting and lowering in Figure 1 to carrying operations where the load:

- is held against the body;
- is carried no further than about 10 m without resting;
- does not prevent the person from walking normally;
- does not obstruct the view of the person carrying it;
- does not require the hands to be held below knuckle height or much above elbow height.

Where you can carry the load securely on the shoulder without lifting it first (for example, by sliding it onto your shoulder), you can apply the filter values up to 20 m.

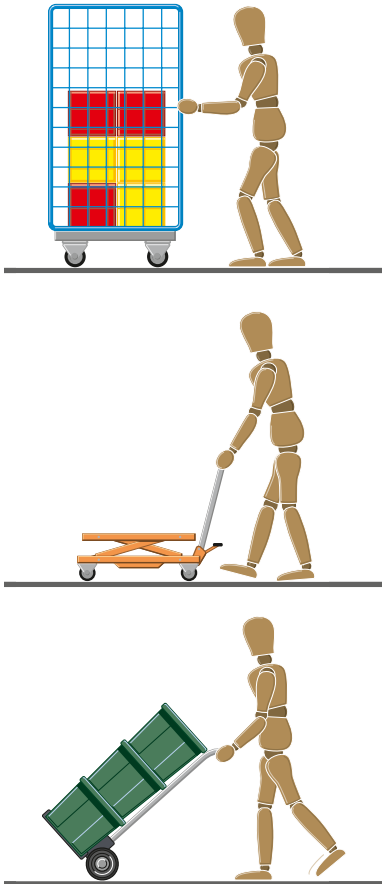


Figure 2 Acceptable push/pull postures

Pushing and pulling risk filter

In pushing and pulling operations, the load might be slid, rolled or moved on wheels. Observe the worker's general posture during the operation. Figure 2 shows some acceptable push/pull postures. The task is likely to be low risk if:

- the force is applied with the hands;
- the torso is largely upright and not twisted;
- the hands are between hip and shoulder height;
- the distance moved without a pause or break is no more than about 20 m.

Pushing and pulling: Do I need to make a more detailed assessment?

If the load can be moved and controlled very easily, for example with one hand, you do not need to do a more detailed assessment. You should make a more detailed assessment using, for example, the RAPP tool or full risk assessment checklists (or equivalent) if:

- the posture shows that the task requires significant forces, for example, leaning;
- there are extra risk factors like slopes, uneven floors, constricted spaces or trapping hazards.

Handling while seated

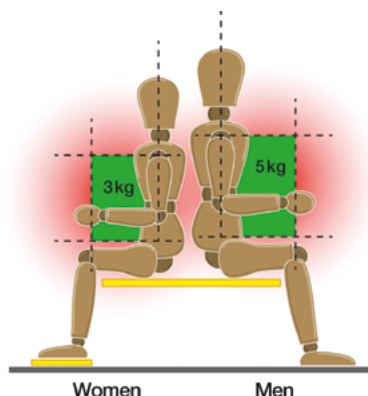


Figure 3 Handling while seated

The filter values for handling operations carried out while seated, as shown in Figure 3, are **Men: 5 kg** and **Women: 3 kg**. These values only apply for two-handed lifting and when the hands are within the green zone shown. If handling beyond the green zone is unavoidable, you should make a full assessment.

Record and review

Make a record of your significant findings – the hazards, how people might be harmed by them and what you have in place to control the risks. Any record should be simple and focused on controls. If you have fewer than five employees you do not have to write anything down, but it is useful to do this so you can review it later, for example, if something changes.

Regularly review your work activities to make sure the risks are being adequately controlled and that your risk assessment remains relevant – few workplaces stay the same because production processes or workers may change.

What about manual handling training?

Providing information and training alone will not ensure safe manual handling.⁹ The first objective should always be to design the handling operations to be as safe as reasonably practicable. Manual handling training is important to further manage the risk of injury if the task cannot be avoided and you have already taken action to reduce the risk. However, on its own, it can't overcome:

- a lack of mechanical aids;
- badly designed tasks;
- unsuitable loads;
- an unsuitable working environment.

The information covered by manual handling training should be specific to the job and should include:

- manual handling risk factors and how injuries can happen;
- appropriate systems of work for the individual's tasks and environment;
- use of mechanical aids;
- how to carry out safe manual handling, including good handling techniques;¹
- practical work relevant to the job to allow the trainer to identify and put right anything the trainee is not doing safely;
- how to report symptoms and injuries.

Risks and controls

Table 1 includes some practical advice on what to look for when making an assessment and suggests ways to control the risks.

Table 1 Risks and how to control them

Risks to look for when making an assessment	Ways of reducing the risk of injury
<p>The tasks</p> <p>Do they involve:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ holding loads away from the body? ■ twisting, stooping or reaching upwards? ■ large vertical movement? ■ long carrying distances? ■ strenuous pushing or pulling? ■ repetitive handling? ■ risk of sudden movement of loads? ■ insufficient rest or recovery time? ■ a work rate imposed by a process? 	<p>Can you:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ use a lifting aid? ■ change workplace layout to improve efficiency? ■ reduce the amount of twisting and stooping? ■ avoid lifting from floor level or above shoulder height, especially heavy loads? ■ reduce carrying distances? ■ use powered handling devices to eliminate pushing and pulling? ■ avoid repetitive handling? ■ take steps to reduce fatigue? ■ vary the work, allowing one set of muscles to rest while another is used?
<p>The loads</p> <p>Are they:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ heavy or bulky? ■ difficult to grasp? ■ unstable or likely to move unpredictably? ■ harmful, eg sharp or hot? ■ awkwardly stacked? ■ too large for the handler to see over? 	<p>Can you make the load:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ lighter or less bulky? ■ easier to grasp? ■ more stable? ■ less harmful? ■ evenly stacked? <p>If the load comes in from elsewhere, have you asked the supplier to help, eg by providing handles or smaller packages?</p>

Risks to look for when making an assessment	Ways of reducing the risk of injury
<p>The working environment</p> <p>Are there:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ restrictions on posture? ■ bumpy, obstructed or slippery floors? ■ variations in floor levels? ■ hot/cold/humid conditions? ■ gusts of wind or other strong air movements? ■ poor lighting conditions? ■ restrictions on movements from clothes or personal protective equipment (PPE)? 	<p>Can you:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ remove obstructions to free movement? ■ provide better flooring and/or slip-resistant footwear? ■ avoid steps and steep ramps? ■ prevent extremes of hot and cold? ■ improve ventilation? ■ improve lighting? ■ provide suitable protective clothing or PPE that is less restrictive?
<p>Individual capacity</p> <p>Does the job:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ require unusual capability, eg above average strength or agility? ■ pose a risk to those with a health problem or learning/physical disability? ■ pose a risk to new or expectant mothers? ■ pose a risk to new or young workers? ■ call for special information or training? 	<p>Can you:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ consider the design of the task? ■ pay particular attention to those who have a physical weakness? ■ take extra care of, eg new or expectant mothers and new/young workers? ■ give your workers more information, eg about the range of tasks? ■ provide more training? ■ get advice from an occupational health advisor if you need to?

Risks to look for when making an assessment	Ways of reducing the risk of injury
<p>Handling aids and equipment</p> <p>Consider:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ is the device the correct type for the job? ■ is it well maintained? ■ are the wheels on the device suited to the floor surface? ■ do the wheels run freely? ■ is the handle height between the waist and shoulders? ■ are the handle grips in good condition and comfortable? ■ are there any brakes? If so, do they work? 	<p>Can you:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ provide equipment that is more suitable for the task? ■ carry out planned preventive maintenance to prevent problems? ■ change the wheels, tyres and/or flooring so that equipment moves easily? ■ provide better handles and handle grips? ■ make the brakes easier to use, reliable and effective?
<p>Work organisation factors</p> <p>Consider:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ is the work repetitive? ■ is the work machine or system-paced? ■ do workers feel the demands of the work are excessive? ■ do workers have little control of the work and working methods? ■ is there poor communication between managers and workers? 	<p>Can you:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ change tasks to increase variety? ■ adjust the work rate? ■ make more use of workers' skills? ■ make workloads and deadlines more achievable? ■ involve workers in decisions? ■ encourage good communication and teamwork? ■ provide better training and information?

Find out more

- 1 HSE's website on musculoskeletal disorders:
www.hse.gov.uk/msd
- 2 *Risk assessment: A brief guide to controlling risks in the workplace* Leaflet INDG163(rev4) HSE 2014
www.hse.gov.uk/pubns/indg163.pdf
- 3 *Manual handling. Manual Handling Operations Regulations 1992. Guidance on Regulations L23* (Fourth edition) HSE 2016
www.hse.gov.uk/pubns/books/l23.htm
- 4 *Consulting employees on health and safety: A brief guide to the law* Leaflet INDG232(rev2) HSE 2013
<http://www.hse.gov.uk/pubns/indg232.pdf>
- 5 *Making the best use of lifting and handling aids* Leaflet INDG398(rev1) HSE 2013
<http://www.hse.gov.uk/pubns/indg398.pdf>
- 6 *Manual handling assessment charts (the MAC tool)* Leaflet INDG383(rev3) HSE 2018
www.hse.gov.uk/pubns/indg383.htm
- 7 *Risk assessment of pushing and pulling (RAPP) tool* Leaflet INDG478 HSE 2016
www.hse.gov.uk/pubns/indg478.htm
- 8 *Full manual handling risk assessment: Examples of assessment checklists*
<http://www.hse.gov.uk/pubns/ck5.pdf>
- 9 For help seeking the right type of manual handling advice, see 'Getting help with manual handling risks in your business'
<http://www.hse.gov.uk/msd/external-help.htm>

Further information

For information about health and safety visit <https://books.hse.gov.uk> or <http://www.hse.gov.uk>.

You can view HSE guidance online and order priced publications from the website. HSE priced publications are also available from bookshops.

To report inconsistencies or inaccuracies in this guidance email commissioning@wlt.com.

This guidance is issued by the Health and Safety Executive. Following the guidance is not compulsory, unless specifically stated, and you are free to take other action. But if you do follow the guidance you will normally be doing enough to comply with the law. Health and safety inspectors seek to secure compliance with the law and may refer to this guidance.

This leaflet is available in packs from HSE Books ISBN 978 0 7176 6732 1. A web version can be found at www.hse.gov.uk/pubns/indg143.htm.

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LONE WORKER RISK ASSESSMENT

Great Witchingham Parish Council

General Lone Working Risk Assessment

Roles of Lone Worker: Clerk, Councillor, volunteer		Location: Any Council controlled area.
Risk assessment carried out by: S Hunt Locum Clerk	Date completed: 30 th December 2022	Review date: December 2023
Description of work activity: This form covers general day to day work; any specific event where this differs substantially will be covered under its own risk assessment.		Assessor's signature:

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Hazard:	Controls and precautions against the hazards:	Comments/ Action Required (including who and when):	Action Party:	By when:
Individual				
Medical fitness: Is the Lone Worker subject to any medical condition that may place them at increased risk when working alone.	The Lone Worker must ensure that any medical conditions which might be relevant to their working alone are fully discussed with the Clerk. Individuals must not work alone if any such condition is assessed as placing them at increased risk.	Lone workers to be asked to highlight any medical issues with significant impact on lone working to the Clerk.	All Staff/Clerk	
Supervision: What arrangements are in place to maintain contact with the Lone Worker?	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• During working hours lone workers should maintain regular contact with office staff.• The Lone Worker must comply with any out of hour's arrangements in operation including setting up contact arrangements with a family member.			

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Training & Competency : Has necessary information instruction and training been given to the Lone Worker and is the Lone Worker competent to carry out the work alone?	Any person authorised to be volunteering/working outside normal hours or alone in normal working hours must be fully competent to carry out the work safely and be fully conversant with emergency procedures.	This is the case.		
<u>Location & Premises</u>				
Building security: Is the building secure when meetings take place?	Access to the office building is restricted to authorised personnel at all times. In the event that the Lone worker has concerns about security or suspects there is an intruder in the building they must contact the Police in the case of immediate threat or the Clerk in less immediate threat. When at premises staff should maintain personal security by locking doors where possible and maintaining vigilance.			
Access: Is there a safe means of access/egress for the lone worker (consider lighting and personal security issues and means of escape in emergency)	Entrance of the building and car park are lit. The Lone Worker should plan how to get to car/public transport after leaving, taking account of potential personal safety issues.		Clerk/All Staff/ Councillors	

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Emergencies: Does the Lone Worker have access to emergency warning devices to raise the alarm in event of emergency e.g. fire alarm, motion sensors.	Lone Workers must know local arrangements on how respond in event of fire or other emergency and carry a mobile phone to call the emergency services if required.	Staff are responsible for ensuring they know the location of fire alarms etc.		
<u>Process/Work Activity</u>				
Use of computers and general office equipment	Only competent individuals to be involved in electrical equipment. Staff to ensure that their work station is appropriate and supports personal health and safety. Staff to be responsible for safety of their personal equipment.	Council to be notified by staff if any modified equipment is necessary.		
Slip/trips/falls	Regular inspection of areas to ensure that any trip hazards [torn carpets, uneven flooring, trailing cables etc.] receive prompt attention. Clerk to be responsible for their home working station.	All staff to be made aware of the need to monitor for and report / take action on any hazards.	All Staff/Clerk	
Work with hazardous substances and or machinery	Any instances where this is necessary should be covered under separate assessment.			

LONE WORKER RISK ASSESSMENT

Great Withingham Parish Council

Single handed lifting or handling of any load that is of such a weight as to cause injury.	There are some circumstances where this may occur if proper practices are not used.	Manual Handling HSE guide to be read. Mechanical aids / assistance to be used if necessary.		

Adopted Parish Council January 2023

To be reviewed January 2024

Working at height

A brief guide



This is a web-friendly version of leaflet INDG401(rev2), published 01/14

Introduction

This brief guide describes what you, as an employer, need to do to protect your employees from falls from height. It will also be useful to employees and their representatives.

Following this guidance is normally enough to comply with the Work at Height Regulations 2005 (WAHR). You are free to take other action, except where the guidance says you must do something specific.

Falls from height are one of the biggest causes of workplace fatalities and major injuries. Common causes are falls from ladders and through fragile roofs. The purpose of WAHR is to prevent death and injury from a fall from height.

Work at height means work in any place where, if there were no precautions in place, a person could fall a distance liable to cause personal injury. For example you are working at height if you:

- are working on a ladder or a flat roof;
- could fall through a fragile surface;
- could fall into an opening in a floor or a hole in the ground.

Take a sensible approach when considering precautions for work at height. There may be some low-risk situations where common sense tells you no particular precautions are necessary and the law recognises this.

There is a common misconception that ladders and stepladders are banned, but this is not the case. There are many situations where a ladder is the most suitable equipment for working at height.

Before working at height you must work through these simple steps:

- avoid work at height where it is reasonably practicable to do so;
- where work at height cannot be avoided, prevent falls using either an existing place of work that is already safe or the right type of equipment;
- minimise the distance and consequences of a fall, by using the right type of equipment where the risk cannot be eliminated.

Figure 1 gives further guidance and examples for each of the above steps to help you comply with the law.

You should:

- do as much work as possible from the ground;
- ensure workers can get safely to and from where they work at height;
- ensure equipment is suitable, stable and strong enough for the job, maintained and checked regularly;

- make sure you don't overload or overreach when working at height;
- take precautions when working on or near fragile surfaces;
- provide protection from falling objects;
- consider your emergency evacuation and rescue procedures.

Who do the Regulations apply to?

If you are an employer or you control work at height (for example if you are a contractor or a factory owner), the Regulations apply to you.

How do you comply with these Regulations?

Employers and those in control of any work at height activity must make sure work is properly planned, supervised and carried out by competent people. This includes using the right type of equipment for working at height.

Low-risk, relatively straightforward tasks will require less effort when it comes to planning. Employers and those in control must first assess the risks. See the risk assessment website for more advice at www.hse.gov.uk/risk/risk-assessment.htm.

Take a sensible, pragmatic approach when considering precautions for work at height. Factors to weigh up include the height of the task; the duration and frequency; and the condition of the surface being worked on. There will also be certain low-risk situations where common sense tells you no particular precautions are necessary.

How do you decide if someone is 'competent' to work at height?

You should make sure that people with sufficient skills, knowledge and experience are employed to perform the task, or, if they are being trained, that they work under the supervision of somebody competent to do it.

In the case of low-risk, short duration tasks (short duration means tasks that take less than 30 minutes) involving ladders, competence requirements may be no more than making sure employees receive instruction on how to use the equipment safely (eg how to tie a ladder properly) and appropriate training. Training often takes place on the job, it does not always take place in a classroom.

When a more technical level of competence is required, for example drawing up a plan for assembling a complex scaffold, existing training and certification schemes drawn up by trade associations and industry is one way to help demonstrate competence.

What measures should you take to help protect people?

Always consider measures that protect everyone who is at risk (collective protection) before measures that protect only the individual (personal protection).

Collective protection is equipment that does not require the person working at height to act to be effective, for example a permanent or temporary guard rail.

Personal protection is equipment that requires the individual to act to be effective. An example is putting on a safety harness correctly and connecting it, via an energy-absorbing lanyard, to a suitable anchor point.

The step-by-step diagram in Figure 1 should be used alongside all other advice in this leaflet. You do not always need to implement every measure in Figure 1. For example when working on a fully boarded and guarded scaffold that is already up, not being altered or taken down, workers would not need to wear personal fall-arrest equipment as well.

What are the most common causes of accidents when working at height?

Roof work is high risk and falls from roofs, through fragile roofs and fragile roof lights are one of the most common causes of workplace death and serious injury. As well as in construction, these accidents can also occur on roofs of factories, warehouses and farm buildings when roof repair work or cleaning is being carried out.

The following are likely to be fragile:

- roof lights;
- liner panels on built-up sheeted roofs;
- non-reinforced fibre cement sheets;
- corroded metal sheets;
- glass (including wired glass);
- rotted chipboard;
- slates and tiles.

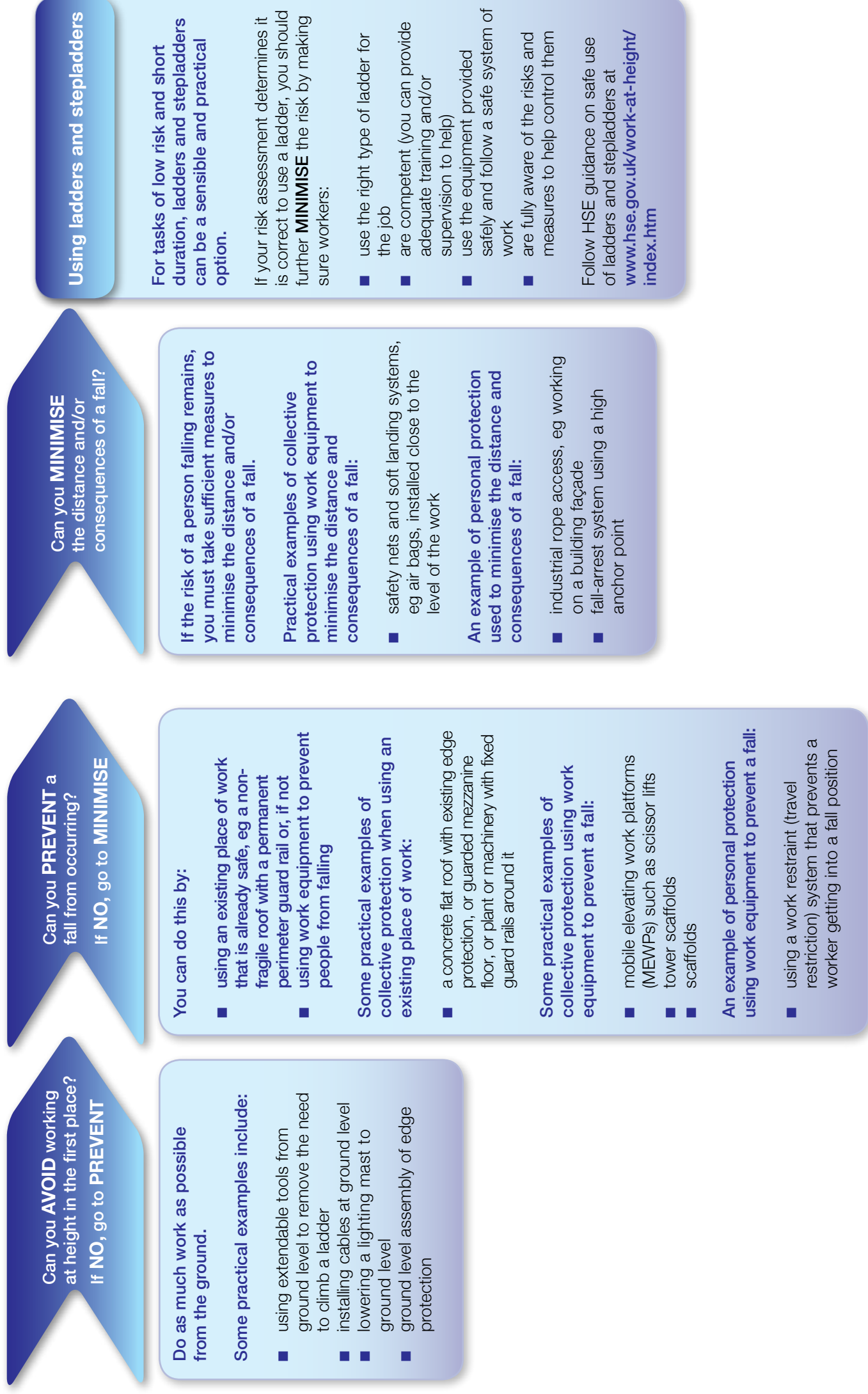
Fragile roof accidents are preventable and information on safe working practices can be found in the HSE information sheet *Fragile roofs: Safe working practices* (see 'Further reading').

What do you need to consider when planning work at height?

The following are all requirements in law that you need to consider when planning and undertaking work at height. You must:

- take account of weather conditions that could compromise worker safety;
- check that the place (eg a roof) where work at height is to be undertaken is safe. Each place where people will work at height needs to be checked every time, before use;
- stop materials or objects from falling or, if it is not reasonably practicable to prevent objects falling, take suitable and sufficient measures to make sure no one can be injured, eg use exclusion zones to keep people away or mesh on scaffold to stop materials such as bricks falling off;
- store materials and objects safely so they won't cause injury if they are disturbed or collapse;
- plan for emergencies and rescue, eg agree a set procedure for evacuation. Think about foreseeable situations and make sure employees know the emergency procedures. Don't just rely entirely on the emergency services for rescue in your plan.

Figure 1 Step-by-step diagram



For each step, consider what is reasonably practicable and use ‘collective protection’ before ‘personal protection’

How do you select the right equipment to use for a job?

When selecting equipment for work at height, employers must:

- provide the most suitable equipment appropriate for the work (use Figure 1 to help you decide);
- take account of factors such as:
 - the working conditions (eg weather);
 - the nature, frequency and duration of the work;
 - the risks to the safety of everyone where the work equipment will be used.

If you are still unsure which type of equipment to use, once you have considered the risks, the **Work at height Access equipment Information Toolkit** (or **WAIT**) is a free online resource that offers possible solutions. It provides details of common types of equipment used for work at height. HSE has also produced a guide on the safe use of ladders and stepladders (see 'Further reading').

How do you make sure the equipment itself is in good condition?

Work equipment, for example scaffolding, needs to be assembled or installed according to the manufacturer's instructions and in keeping with industry guidelines.

Where the safety of the work equipment depends on how it has been installed or assembled, an employer should ensure it is not used until it has been inspected in that position by a competent person.

A competent person is someone who has the necessary skills, experience and knowledge to manage health and safety. Guidance on appointing a competent person can be found at www.hse.gov.uk/competence.

Any equipment exposed to conditions that may cause it to deteriorate, and result in a dangerous situation, should be inspected at suitable intervals appropriate to the environment and use. Do an inspection every time something happens that may affect the safety or stability of the equipment, eg adverse weather, accidental damage.

You are required to keep a record of any inspection for types of work equipment including: guard rails, toe-boards, barriers or similar collective means of protection; working platforms (any platform used as a place of work or as a means of getting to and from work, eg a gangway) that are fixed (eg a scaffold around a building) or mobile (eg a mobile elevated working platform (MEWP) or scaffold tower); or a ladder.

Any working platform used for construction work and from which a person could fall more than 2 metres must be inspected:

- after assembly in any position;
- after any event liable to have affected its stability;
- at intervals not exceeding seven days.

Where it is a mobile platform, a new inspection and report is not required every time it is moved to a new location on the same site.

You must also ensure that before you use any equipment, such as a MEWP, which has come from another business or rental company, it is accompanied by an indication (clear to everyone involved) when the last thorough examination has been carried out.

What must employees do?

Employees have general legal duties to take reasonable care of themselves and others who may be affected by their actions, and to co-operate with their employer to enable their health and safety duties and requirements to be complied with.

For an employee, or those working under someone else's control, the law says they must:

- report any safety hazard they identify to their employer;
- use the equipment and safety devices supplied or given to them properly, in accordance with any training and instructions (unless they think that would be unsafe, in which case they should seek further instructions before continuing).

You must consult your employees (either directly or via safety representatives), in good time, on health and safety matters. Issues you must consult employees on include:

- risks arising from their work;
- proposals to manage and/or control these risks;
- the best ways of providing information and training.

Employers can ask employees and their representatives what they think the hazards are, as they may notice things that are not obvious and may have some good, practical ideas on how to control the risks. See the worker involvement website for more information on consulting employees (www.hse.gov.uk/involvement).

What must architects and building designers do?

When planning new-build or refurbishment projects, architects and designers have duties under The Construction (Design and Management) Regulations, to consider the need for work to be carried out at height over the lifespan of a building, eg to clean, maintain and repair it. They should design out the need to work at height if possible.

Further reading

HSE's website provides more advice, guidance and answers to frequently asked questions. Industries and trade associations have produced guidance about working at height for specific jobs or for using certain types of access equipment.

Find out more at www.hse.gov.uk/work-at-height/index.htm

You can access the Work at height Access equipment Information Toolkit (WAIT) at www.hse.gov.uk/work-at-height/wait/index.htm

Using ladders and stepladders safely: A brief guide Leaflet INDG455 HSE Books 2014 www.hse.gov.uk/pubns/indg455.htm

Health and safety in roof work HSG33 (Fourth edition) HSE Books 2012 ISBN 978 0 7176 6527 3 www.hse.gov.uk/pubns/books/hsg33.htm

Further guidance on risk assessment can be found at www.hse.gov.uk/risk

Further information about CDM and design requirements can be found at www.hse.gov.uk/construction/cdm.htm

The Work at Height Regulations 2005 SI 2005/735 The Stationery Office 2005 www.legislation.gov.uk

Fragile roofs: Safe working practices General Information Sheet GEIS5 HSE Books 2012 www.hse.gov.uk/pubns/geis5.htm

Further information

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