
Padstow Town Council

Health and Safety Policy

2009



Padstow Town Council

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

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

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

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

Signed

Position

Date

RESPONSIBILITIES

Councillors

The Councillors are ultimately responsible for health and safety within the Council activities however the Town Clerk is the designated person with responsibility for ensuring our compliance with Health and Safety legislation. She will ensure that:

- our Health and Safety Policy is implemented, monitored, developed, communicated effectively, reviewed and amended as required
- suitable and sufficient funds, people, materials and equipment are provided to meet all health and safety requirements
- adequate insurance cover is provided and renewed
- competent persons are appointed to provide health and safety assistance and advice
- an adequate system of maintenance exists and operates to keep premises, plant and work equipment in a safe condition
- statutory examinations are planned, completed and recorded
- there is regular communication and consultation with staff on health and safety issues
- an effective training programme is established to ensure staff are competent to carry out their work in a safe manner
- safe systems of work are developed and implemented
- accidents, ill health and 'near miss' incidents at work are recorded, investigated and reported
- safety issues raised are thoroughly investigated and, when necessary, further effective controls implemented and communicated to staff
- contractors engaged are reputable, can demonstrate a good health and safety record and are made aware of relevant local health and safety rules and procedures
- effective contingency plans are in place with a designated competent person in charge of the planning and control measures for situations involving imminent danger
- health and safety objectives are set and their achievement is measured and reported in the annual report.

Deputy Town Clerk/Maintenance Manager

The Deputy Town Clerk and Maintenance Manager will ensure that in their areas of control:

- they actively lead the implementation of our Health and Safety Policy
- they supervise office staff to ensure that they work safely, providing increased supervision for new and young workers
- risk assessments are completed, recorded and regularly reviewed
- accidents, ill health and 'near miss' incidents at work are investigated, recorded and reported
- they communicate and consult with staff on health and safety issues
- they encourage staff to report hazards and raise health and safety concerns
- safety training for staff is identified, undertaken and recorded to ensure staff are competent to carry out their work in a safe manner
- issues concerning safety raised by anyone are thoroughly investigated and, when necessary, further effective controls implemented
- adequate arrangements for fire and first aid are established
- any safety issues that cannot be dealt with are referred to the Town Clerk for action
- welfare facilities provided are maintained in a satisfactory state
- health and safety notices are displayed
- agreed safety standards are maintained particularly those relating to housekeeping
- health and safety rules are followed by all.

Employees

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

Arrangements

2.1 Company Policy

Work instructions and procedures, whether written or verbal, are an integral part of the Company Policy.

2.2 Safety Inspections

Safety inspections will be arranged at appropriate intervals. All safety equipment such as interlocking guards, emergency stops and pressure mats will be regularly tested to ensure effectiveness

2.3 Consultation

Staff meetings will be held regularly. Any items discussed will be noted and where appropriate, actioned.

2.4 Risk Assessment

We will carry out suitable and sufficient assessments of the risks to the health and safety of our employees and to others who might be affected by our work activities.

2.5 Accident Reporting

It is our policy to report all serious injuries, industrial diseases and dangerous occurrences.

We will report all notifiable accidents to the enforcing authority.

The Accident Book must be fully completed for all injuries incurred at work, however minor.

2.6 Accident Investigation

It is our policy to investigate.

- All accidents resulting in any reportable injury or losses of any assets.
- Accidents, however minor.
- All near-misses.

2.7 ***COSHH***

We recognise that some substances have the potential to cause ill health and we will introduce measures to identify any such substances our employees use or are exposed to in the course of their work.

Where practical alternatives exist, we will not use harmful substances.

Substances that we must use will be assessed and control measures introduced to prevent risk.

2.8 ***Display Screen Equipment***

It is our policy to provide a safe and comfortable working environment and we will put in place arrangements and procedures for the assessment of risks from the use of DSE.

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

2.9 ***Electricity At Work***

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

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

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

2.10 ***Fire Safety***

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

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

- We will

- Provide adequate numbers of fire extinguishers on the premises.
- Ensure that the fire extinguishers are subject to regular maintenance.
- Formulate emergency evacuation procedures.
- Practice the evacuation procedures at least twice a year.

2.11 ***First Aid***

We recognise our legal duty to make sufficient provision for first aid to employees.

We will make appropriate arrangements to ensure that there are an adequate number of trained first aiders.

In the event of anything other than minor injuries, medical assistance must be sought.

2.12 ***The Indoor Environment***

It is our policy to provide a working environment that is safe and comfortable.

2.13 **Manual Handling**

We will undertake risk assessments in respect of all manual handling operations identified as having a significant risk and will strive to reduce these risks as far as possible.

Training in lifting techniques will be provided for staff involved in all operations identified as having a significant risk.

2.14 **Personal Protective Equipment (PPE)**

PPE will be provided where our risk assessments show that a risk cannot otherwise be avoided.

It will only be used where it is not reasonably practicable to modify the activity, the process, or the method of work to prevent risk.

PPE will be maintained and replaced as necessary to ensure its effectiveness. Employees must report loss or obvious defects in PPE as soon as practicable.

2.15 **Smoking At Work**

Smoking is not permitted anywhere within the buildings.

2.16 **Work Equipment**

We will, so far as is reasonably practicable, ensure that all work equipment is safe and without risk.

To minimise the risk of injury from work equipment we will :-

- Carry out risk assessments of all equipment in use and all new or second hand equipment purchased.
- Carry out inspections to ensure all safety critical features remain fully effective.
- Ensure that all maintenance procedures are kept up-to-date.
- Provide suitable training.

2.17 ***Young Persons***

We will pay special regard to the needs of any young persons by risk assessing the tasks we are asking them to do and take into account their inexperience and immaturity.

2.18 ***Pregnant Females***

We recognise that all work involving pregnant women and nursing mothers will need to take into account their physical and psychological capacity.

Employees are reminded that they have a duty to advise their employer as soon as they know they are pregnant.

2.19 ***Alcohol and Drug Abuse***

No alcohol can be consumed on the premises at any time.

Anyone found taking alcohol or drugs on the premises is guilty of gross misconduct, and will be disciplined accordingly.

2.20 ***Stress Management***

We recognise that stress is an increasing factor in our daily lives.

We will endeavour to increase general awareness of stress and ways to combat workplace stress.

We will take action to prevent workplace stressors and monitor and evaluate stress indicators in our employees.

Where an employee feels under stress he/she should make their supervisor or manager aware of the situation.

2.21 ***Visitors***

Our policy regarding the control of visitors on our premises is that :-

- We must be aware that the visitor is on the premises.
- Visitors are the responsibility of the Company whilst on the premises.

All visitors must comply with any instructions given to them.

2.22 **Contractors**

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

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

We recognise that we have a duty to the contractor and must ensure that the contractor is not put at risk by our own activities.

2.23 **Occupational Ill Health**

We will take all reasonably practicable measures to prevent our employees from contracting any occupational diseases.

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

2.24 **Consultation and Training**

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

- We will ensure that all newly appointed or promoted staff receive an efficient induction into their jobs.
- We will provide training to increase the productivity and performance of existing staff, ensuring that they are updated in line with new legislative requirements, techniques and technology.
- Training needs will be reviewed at least once a year.
- Records of training will be kept for all employees.

2.24 **Noise**

The Company is aware of the noise levels of the machinery and has provided new equipment in and effort to reduce the noise and hearing protection to protect staff.

4.1 **Arrangements**

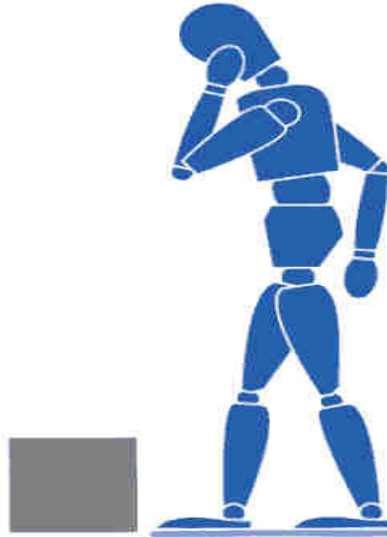
- Induction training for new employees is the responsibility of the Maintenance Manager and Deputy Town Clerk
- Job training will be co-ordinated by the Maintenance Manager and Deputy Town Clerk
- The training plan will be reviewed at least annually
- Training records are kept in the Town Clerk's office
- The first aid box is kept in the Offices
- The Accident Book is kept with the Offices
- All accidents should be reported to the Maintenance Manager and Deputy Town Clerk
- the Maintenance Manager and Deputy Town Clerk will conduct the accident investigation
- Emergency escape routes are checked weekly by Maintenance Manager
- Fire safety checks are carried out weekly by Maintenance Manager
- Fire extinguishers are maintained by Maintenance Manager
- The fire alarm is tested weekly by the Maintenance Manager

Manual Handling

PRINCIPLES OF GOOD HANDLING TECHNIQUE

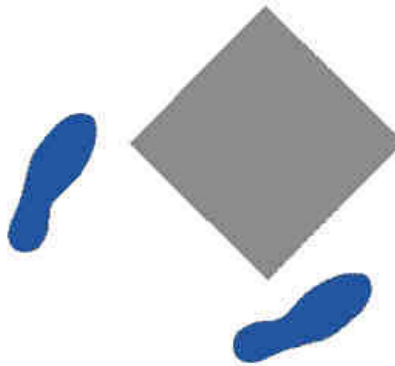
1 Planning

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



2 Feet

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



3 Knees

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

4 Back

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

5 Arms

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



6 Hands

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

7 Head

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

8 Moving the load



- Keep the load as close to the trunk for as long as possible, and where relevant, keep the heaviest side of the load close to the body. Slide the load towards you if required.
- Lift smoothly
- Move the feet not the trunk when turning to the side, i.e., don't twist.
- Put the load down and then slide the load into the required position if necessary.

9 Team Handling

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



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

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

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

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

Some practical tips:

Getting comfortable

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

Keying In

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

Using a mouse

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

Reading the screen

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

Posture and breaks

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

Ladders and Stepladders

This guidance is to help you:

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

When is a ladder the most suitable access equipment?

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

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

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

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

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

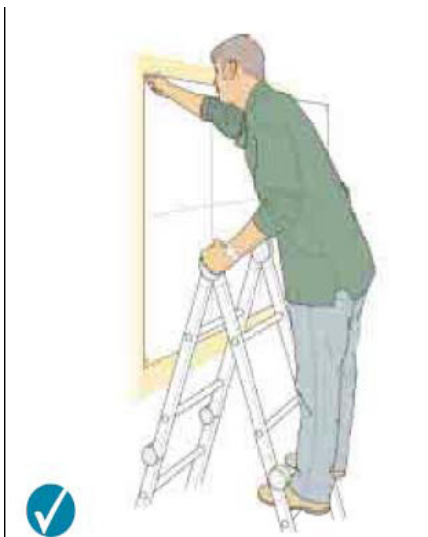
- on firm ground or spread the load (e.g. use a board);
- on clean, solid surfaces (paving slabs, floors etc). These need to be clean (no oil, moss or leaf litter) and free of loose material (sand, packaging materials etc) so the feet can grip. Shiny floor surfaces can be slippery even without contamination;

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

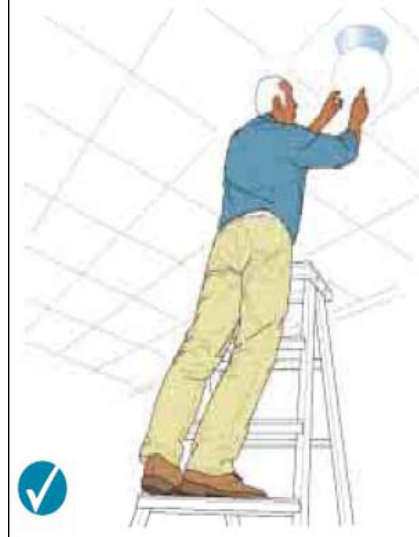
Safety in use – stepladders

On a stepladder **do not**:

- overload it – you and anything you are carrying should not exceed the highest load stated on the stepladder;
- use it in locations where the restraint devices cannot be fully opened. Any locking devices must also be engaged;
- use the top two steps of a stepladder, unless a suitable handrail is available on the stepladder;
- don't use the top three steps of swing-back or double-sided stepladders, where a step forms the very top of the stepladder.



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



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

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



Incorrect – steps side on to work activity

Correct – steps facing work activity

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

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

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

Is the ladder or stepladder safe to be used?

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

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

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

Pre-use checks

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

- all the ladder feet are fitted;
- the feet are in good repair (not loose, missing, splitting, excessively worn, secure etc);
- the feet are clean - the feet should be in contact with the ground. Ladder feet should also be checked when moving from soft/dirty ground (e.g. dug soil, loose sand/stone, a dirty workshop) to a smooth, solid surface (e.g. paving slabs), to ensure the foot material and not the dirt (e.g. soil, embedded stones or swarf) is making contact with the ground;
- all the screws, bolts and hinges are secure;
- on a stepladder, that the “spreaders” on the ladder can be locked into place.
- There are no other obvious signs of damage such as cracks.

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

Storage

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

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