

# Health and Safety Guide for Contractors

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## INTRODUCTION

Welcome to Staffordshire Moorlands District Council and High Peak Borough Council. The risk of accident, injury or death associated with construction work is generally greater than for other occupations. This document sets out the basic standards to ensure that construction work carried out for, or on behalf of the Council on controlled premises, is conducted in a safe manner without undue risk to employees, visitors, members of the public or others who may be affected by the works.

The Council requires high standards of health and safety from its employees and expects a similarly high level of commitment to health and safety from its Contractors. In this document, references to Contractors shall be deemed to include, as appropriate, Sub-Contractors or others acting for or on behalf of Contractors (e.g. suppliers).

We are committed to ensuring that work carried out in our buildings, property and other sites under our control are carried out to the highest possible standards of health and safety. In order for us to achieve this you will be required to play your part.

We ask for your support in achieving the highest possible health and safety standards.

### **GENERAL HEALTH AND SAFETY PROVISIONS**

Under the health and Safety at Work etc., Act 1974, section 2 (3), the Council places extreme importance on the health and safety of both its own and contractors' employees.

Contractors also have a requirement under the same legislation, Section 3 (1) and 3 (2), whereby whether an employer, or self-employed, they have a duty to act, while on Council premises, in such a way as to ensure that, as far as reasonably practicable, they do not put at risk the health and safety of any persons.

The principles of the Construction Design and Management Regulations 2015 apply in full.

The Corporate Health and Safety Manager will at its own discretion undertake unannounced inspections to ensure that these requirements are being met.

### **DEFINITIONS**

The '**Council**' means Staffordshire Moorlands District Council (SMDC) and High Peak Borough Council (HPBC).

'**Contractor**' means any supplier of services contracted to undertake work for the Council.

'**Contract Administrator**' means the person appointed by the Council to initiate and /or oversee a contractor's work.

'**Authorised Person**' means any person authorised by the Contract Administrator to visit the site of work and inspect, survey, audit, monitor or otherwise act in the interests of the Council.

### **AIM**

The aim of this guidance is to provide general information to contractors employed by the Councils, regarding sensible health and safety steps that can be taken at all times. All of the contractor's employees should be aware of the content of this guidance document.

This guidance compliments the requirements of the contract documents you will be given by the Council, and those contract specific plans you will develop yourself.

Everybody has a responsibility to protect the health and safety of themselves and others when they carry out any type of work. We want everyone to remain safe and healthy, regardless of whether they are an employee, a customer, a visitor or a contractor. Individual contracts may specify more particular safety requirements depending on the nature of the task to be undertaken.

As contractors, you are required to help us to achieve this aim by working in a professional manner. Please take a few minutes to read this handbook so that we can advise you of our site rules and emergency procedures.

If you have any questions, or are unsure of anything contained in this guidance, please speak to your Council Contract Administrator, who for this project is:

Name :

## **CONTRACTOR PASSES**

In order that we can fully co-ordinate all contractors, all operatives working within our buildings must sign-in and out using the register held at Reception each day.

All passes where issued will be valid for the day of issue only, or the duration of your works (whichever is shorter). Expired passes must be returned to Reception before you leave site. For those contractors working off site, some form of identification must be worn whilst working for the Council.

**PLEASE WEAR YOUR IDENTITY BADGE AT ALL TIMES.**

## **RISK ASSESSMENTS / METHOD STATEMENTS**

The Council requires contractors to provide relevant written risk assessments and method statements for all work that you are going to carry out. They will be required in advance of the work commencing, so that they can be checked and if necessary returned to you for comment/amendment.



## **AWARENESS OF HEALTH AND SAFETY SYSTEMS – ADVICE TO WORKERS**

It must be noted that risk assessments and method statements are of little value unless the contractor and their workers, are fully aware of their contents. They will tell you what risks

are involved in your work and the control measures you will need to have in place. This will help you carry out work without risks to you or anyone else.

The answer to the following questions should be **YES!**

- Have you seen the risk assessments and method statements for your work?
- Do you understand the task and the hazards with the job?
- Are you trained to carry out the tasks allocated to you?
- Have all the people who may be affected been identified?
- Are you happy that all the measures to stop you being injured have been taken?
- Do you know what to do and whom to contact if the job goes wrong?

If you have answered **NO** to any of the above then seek clarification from your employer.

If you find that your risk assessments or method statements do not match the work you are carrying out, stop work immediately, or as soon as it is safe to do so, and advise your supervisor and the SMDC/HPBC Contract Administrator.

Following assessment of your risks the Council may require you to work under a permit to work system. Permit to work systems are a formal written system designed to control certain types of work which are identified as potentially hazardous. It is also a means of communication between the Council and the contractor. The aim is to ensure that adequate consideration is given to risks of any particular job.

The Council will initiate or will expect a permit-to-work for the following activities:

- **Work on or near Asbestos**
- **Work in Confined Spaces**
- **Excavations**
- **Work on Electrical Services**
- **Work on Gas Services**
- **Hot Work**
- **Work on Lifts**
- **Work on Pressure Systems**
- **Work at height**

If you intend to do any of the above work and a permit to work has been issued, then you must have a valid permit-to-work displayed at all times. They are issued by Council employees (Assets Team) who are authorised persons (see definition above).

If you are about to work on any of the above, but do not have a permit-to-work, speak to your council host - you will not be allowed to start work without one.

## **PERSONAL PROTECTIVE EQUIPMENT**

Your risk assessments may identify some form of Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) that you will need to wear to protect you from harm – often as a *last resort*, when other controls cannot be introduced.

You have a legal duty to wear any PPE you are given. Your risk assessments will identify all of the PPE you will need to carry out your work safely. If you haven't been given any and think you may need it, ask your employer for the correct PPE.

If you are issued with respiratory protection you should also have been shown how it is to be worn. In cases where respiratory protection is provided as a control measure against silica and other respirable dusts and fibres, face fit testing will also be required.

## **SAFETY SIGNS**

Safety signs are a good way of warning others about the risks posed by your work, but they don't remove the hazard. You should remember that the Council has a lot of different people who work and visit our buildings. Most of these people will not be familiar with the hazards of your work, so signs are a good way of warning them to be careful.

Effective signage on site will form part of your pre-construction plan risk assessments and method statements.

## **PLANT TOOLS AND EQUIPMENT**

As Contractor for the works you will provide sufficient plant, equipment, power tools and hand tools. Plant, equipment and tools must be:

- Suitable for the purposes of the work and used only for the purpose for which they were designed. This would include specifying low noise and vibration emitting equipment.
- In safe condition, adequately maintained and regularly inspected (including a visual inspection prior to use).
- Properly guarded with all guards fitted and correctly adjusted before use.
- Used only by trained, experienced and competent operators.
- Switched off immediately after use.
- Removed to a safe place and/or left in a safe condition before being left unattended. In occupied premises they should be isolated from their power source and protected from tampering.

In occupied premises, plant such as table saws, planers, welding equipment etc. should be used only in designated areas with adequate means of preventing unauthorised access.

**Wherever possible tools should incorporate dust collection systems, especially if you are working in or adjacent to a building where there are radon remediation arrangements in place.**

You must only operate or use plant and equipment that you have been specifically trained for. If you hold any relevant operative training certificates and tickets, have them available whilst on site, as they may be checked at any time. Please note that short periods of Hire Company training will not normally be accepted by the Council as relevant training.

Do not use any plant or equipment unless you have been trained to do so.

## **WELFARE**

Your Council Contract Administrator or member of the Assets Team will tell you or your supervisor which facilities you may use during your time on site. Such arrangements must be in writing if it is agreed that you can use the staff rest areas, you must wear clean overalls / clothes and have your Contractor's Pass clearly displayed. Please be polite and considerate to others using the facilities.

Wash hand basins and sinks must not be used for cleaning tools or for discarding unwanted materials such as paints and oils. Sanitary facilities should be left in the same condition you found them in. Please respect our facilities.

For those contractors working off site you will be required to make suitable arrangements for welfare whilst working for the Council.

Site offices and other temporary buildings should be so constructed and in such location as to protect the occupants from exposure to site hazards. Construction should be of a non-combustible material or, where the use of wooden huts is unavoidable, lined with a fireproof material. Where hut floors are above ground level the space below should be enclosed to prevent accumulation of rubbish. On open sites huts should be well spaced and the intervening spaces not used for storage.

Welfare facilities including, lavatories, washing, changing and messing, shall be suitable and sufficient for the site needs.

## **CO-OPERATION**

Contractors must co-operate with others to ensure that one contractor's work does not adversely affect the work of others. This co-operation would equally apply to members of the public who may be affected by the work you are doing.



Where more than one party is working in an area, all parties must agree responsibilities in advance of the work commencing and consult with their people and their representatives and wherever practical involve them in planning the work.

## **SMOKING / DRINKING / DRUGS**

The Council operates a no smoking policy throughout our premises. You must observe all no smoking signs. Please be considerate to others and only smoke in designated smoking areas – usually discreetly outside in the open air. Our smoking policy includes prohibiting the use of E Cigarettes and vaping.

Operatives are not permitted to drink alcohol at any time whilst working in Council buildings. You should not report for work if you are under the influence of alcohol, illegal drugs or medicines.

**Any operative suspected of being under the influence of alcohol or illegal drugs will be dismissed from site and will not be allowed on any other Council controlled site.**

## **MUSIC AND MOBILE PHONES**

The use of radios and other music producing devices is forbidden when working on Council premises. These can be an unwelcome nuisance and can also distract workers when they most need to concentrate.

Mobile phones should be used considerately. Please don't have loud conversations in occupied corridors or next to working offices!

## **CAR PARKING**

Some council roads on our depots and car parks are subject to the Road Traffic Act. You must only park in designated car parks and marked bays. Vehicles illegally parked are liable to be ticketed. Additionally, all road traffic signs particularly speed signs and pedestrian crossings must be observed.

## **FIRST AID**

If you or one of your colleagues has an accident that can't be treated with your own first aid kit, report to Reception. The Council has a dedicated team of First Aiders who will be able to give assistance more quickly than the emergency services. Reception will call the nearest one or will summon the emergency services for you. Lists of first aiders are posted throughout all corporate buildings.

Always report accidents to your site supervisor or Council host and make sure that they record it in the site accident book. It is important to us that we learn about any accident so that we can make sure that no-one else is injured in the same way.

For those contactors working off site arrangements must be made for suitable first aid cover. This will be dependent on the risks involved and your assessment of risk.

Always record any accidents you have at work, no matter how trivial they may appear at the time.

## **FIRE SAFETY**

**You are required to sign in and out of Council buildings.**

All corporate buildings have a detailed fire risk assessment which you should read before commencing work on our sites.

If the work you are doing increases the risk of fire in one of our buildings, you must ensure a suitable fire risk assessment is carried out before commencement of work. This should be shared with the Contracts Administrator/Assets Team.

## **IF YOU DISCOVER A FIRE**

Remember **CALM:**

- C**lose the door - make work area safe before leaving
- A**lert - alarm - smash the nearest break glass unit
- L**eave the building by the nearest exit
- M**eat at the assembly point:

Don't put yourself at risk. Do not tackle the fire unless you have been trained and are not alone.



Do not stop to collect personal belongings. Do not use the lifts. Help others to escape if necessary. Make sure you know where the nearest exits are and the assembly point.

If, when you get to the assembly point any of your colleagues are missing tell your Supervisor or any Fire Marshal immediately. You must never go back into the building until the Fire Officer says it is safe to do so.

If you are creating dusts or non-hazardous fumes, make sure that you have located and covered all local smoke detectors first. BUT never do this without first telling your Council contact.

Keep corridors, stairs and fire exits clear at all times. Remember - You will be breaking the law if you block emergency exits in any way.

## **FIRE STOPPING**



Contractors installing cables, pipes in buildings are obliged to fire stop cable holes through which they have cabled as part of the contract. All cable holes through floors and compartment walls must be fire stopped to prevent passage of fire, smoke and hot gases.

All holes **MUST** be temporarily fire stopped at the end of each working day whilst installation operations are in progress. At the completion of cabling operations cable holes must be permanently fire stopped

Random checks will be made by the Assets Team.

## **ASBESTOS**

The Council has surveyed for the presence of asbestos in its premises and is in the process of developing a digital asbestos register – you will be told if it is known to be near the place you will be working the details will be shared with you for work planning purposes.

Ensure you see and understand the asbestos survey **before you** commence work.

When in good condition, asbestos does not pose a threat to health and safety. However, if disturbed, the asbestos can release harmful fibres.

If you accidentally discover asbestos, or suspect that a material might be asbestos:

- Stop work immediately.
- Tell other workers to stop working.
- Tell your Supervisor and Councils Contract Administrator/Assets Team.
- Don't cause people to panic, but make sure they leave the area.
- Your supervisor will be responsible for contacting the Assets Team to arrange a site visit as soon as possible [to sample for asbestos, or arrange a clean-up if required].



**UNDER NO CIRCUMSTANCES SHOULD YOU OR ANY OF YOUR COLLEAGUES DISTURB THE MATERIALS UNTIL CONFIRMED AS NOT BEING ASBESTOS.**

## **REPORTING OF NEAR MISSES/ACCIDENTS AND DANGEROUS OCCURENCES**

Although the primary responsibility, for compliance with the Reporting of Diseases and Dangerous Occurrences Regulations 2013 rests with the Contractor, details of any accidents or dangerous occurrences involving Contractor's employees on council premises or land must also be recorded on the Councils Accident/Incident Report Form.

The Contractor must provide the Contract Administrator with copies of any statutory notification to the Health and Safety Executive using form F2508 regarding any accident or dangerous occurrences incident on the site.

In the case of serious accidents (e.g. resulting in serious injury or hospital treatment) or serious dangerous occurrences (e.g. scaffold collapse), the Contractor shall immediately inform the Contract Administrator and Occupier or Person in charge of the building.

Following this an impartial and competent third party shall carry out an investigation, and a produce a report that shall be forwarded to the Contract Administrator, detailing the accident/incident itself, the cause(s) and any recommended improvements to procedures and/or control measures. All third party costs shall be at the expense of the contractor.

## **ENVIRONMENTAL ISSUES, NOISE, BATS AND NATURE CONSERVATION**

All reasonable measures must be taken to effectively control emissions that are likely to be harmful to the environment or persons on or near the site.

The Councils have environmental management systems certified to ISO 140001 and EMAS standards. The Councils expect its contractors and suppliers to ensure that they manage their environmental risk accordingly.



Adequate precautions must be taken to prevent harmful exposure to noise, radiation, dust, fumes or other hazardous substances. Where necessary, operations that are likely to generate significant levels of harmful dust or fume, or are otherwise likely to pollute the air should be screened or sealed off and adequately ventilated. Only suitable, clean, serviceable and fireproof tarpaulins, dust sheets or similar should be used. Where polythene sheeting is used it must be of appropriate thickness and undamaged. Ventilation systems must not discharge polluted air into occupied areas or areas where pollution may cause a statutory nuisance to others.

Adequate precautions must be taken to prevent harmful materials and other building materials entering the drains, sewers or waste pipes. On no account should sinks, drains etc. be used for disposal of waste building materials or chemicals (including solvents).

The Contractor shall comply with the Requirements of the Noise at Work Regulations. Work likely to involve excessive noise i.e. at or above the first action level (80 dBA) shall not commence, (or a daily or weekly personal noise exposure of 87 dB be exceeded) without the prior consent of contract administrator and occupier or person in control of the premises.

Arc welding operations should be adequately screened to prevent the transmission of harmful levels of visible, UV or IR light from the welding arc.

Contractors should always presume that bats might be present in existing buildings and make all necessary enquiries to establish whether this is so or not. Bats are a protected species under the Wildlife and Countryside Act. If bats or evidence of bats is discovered during the course of the works, work should be stopped and the Contract Administrator informed immediately. Similar requirements apply to other protected species of flora and fauna.

Work on or near water, especially when stagnant, carries with it the risk of a variety of water borne diseases including Weils Disease (from Rats Urine), Leptospirosis, Legionellosis and E-Coli. The Contractor should take account of these possibilities when planning safe systems of work on or near water including tanks or storage vessels.

## **CONTROL OF SUBSTANCES HAZARDOUS TO HEALTH**



Contractors who use hazardous substances or who are involved in processes where the regulations apply must comply fully with the COSHH Regulations. In particular they must have carried out a suitable and sufficient assessment of risks if any to the health of both themselves and others affected by their actions. Where applicable this should be carried out on a site specific basis.

Face Fit Testing must be carried out for those who are at risk from respirable silica dust or any other hazardous materials such as asbestos, hard wood dusts and the like..

## **SERVICES**

Only qualified competent and where necessary licensed tradesmen will be permitted to work on mains services or service installations.

Works on gas pipe work, fittings and joints must be suitably inspected and, as necessary, tested both before and immediately after commissioning.

The premises' gas, electricity, water or other services may not be used for any purpose without the prior consent of the Contract Administrator or, as the case may be, occupier or person in control of the premises. When use of services is authorised this will be for specific, agreed uses and restricted to defined supply points and agreed times.

Temporary cable runs, pipe work, etc. will be of suitable construction adequately protected against fire, be of adequate strength and capacity and so sited/placed out of reach/buried/adequately protected against mechanical or environmental damage, as to prevent risks to other site users, fixtures, fittings, plant and transport, materials or other articles.

Other services incidental to the work should not be modified, interrupted or otherwise disturbed without the prior approval of the Contract Administrator.

No excavation, ground breaking, drilling or other similar work likely to endanger buried services may be started without the approval of the Contract Administrator. Every reasonable effort must be taken to identify the presence of buried services before work commences.

Where buried services are known, suspected or discovered, the exact location of the services must be established using a combination, of details from site plans (normally insufficient on their own), location devices and trial holes. All identified or suspected runs shall be marked on the ground prior to digging. Where buried services are present or suspected, safe hand digging techniques shall be used and machine digging avoided. All known and discovered services should be presumed to be live until confirmed otherwise.

On discovery of previously unknown buried services further exposure should be deferred until the Contract Administrator has been advised and appropriate instruction given. Exposed services must be adequately supported and appropriately protected from mechanical or environmental damage. Exposed services, particularly gas mains, should be reinstated only with such materials and in such ways as are suitable for their long-term protection. Site plans should be amended to show the location of any discovered services and any deviations of service runs from existing plans.



Damage to services should be immediately reported to the Contract Administrator and the appropriate supply authority, and HSE as required. Where necessary, the immediate area should be evacuated and site personnel informed to prevent further danger.

If a gas leak is suspected all naked flames and other potential sources of ignition should be extinguished and/or removed to a place of safety. Police and Fire Services should be alerted as necessary, the Police should always be alerted where dangers are likely to affect others off site. Details of local public utility authority emergency contacts should be held on/or available to those in charge of the, site at all times.

## **EXCAVATIONS AND OPENINGS**

Before excavation work commences the presence and location of buried services must be established and appropriate digging techniques used. (See also section on “Services”).

Excavations and openings must be protected at the edges of suitable fencing, guardrails or barriers or must be securely covered. At occupied premises access by occupants should be denied where practicable and appropriate notices posted.

## **BARRIERS AND WARNING SIGNS**

Appropriate barriers should be used where the nature of operations or hazardous site conditions are likely to expose others to significant risk. Barriers must be of suitable construction, appropriately sited and of adequate strength. Barriers, warning signs and where necessary adequate lighting for barriers and warning signs, shall be provided and maintained during the course of the work. Barriers removed for the purpose of allowing immediate access shall be replaced as soon as is practicable.

If work encroaches on the highway, then advice must be obtained from the Highway Authority in respect of signage, permits, and the like. Those working on the highway must be suitably trained to do so and signage must be in accordance with Chapter 8 of the Traffic Signs Manual.

## **ROOF WORK**

Only such persons who have the knowledge, skills, experience and resources to carry out work safely will be permitted to undertake roof work. Where roof work is undertaken in circumstances where anyone is liable to fall from the roof, adequate precautions must be taken to prevent falls, or where this is impracticable, to prevent the fall causing serious injury.

In normal circumstance roof work will involve the use of suitable edge protection at edges where there is a likelihood of falls. The best protection is offered by using suitable barriers, or guardrails with toe-boards, or a suitable working platform. For some types of work of short duration provision of suitable edge protection may not be reasonably practicable and in such cases, where a person is liable to fall more than 2m then safety nets, safety harnesses or belts fixed to suitable anchorage points or fall arrester systems must be used.

Before any roof is used as a means of access or place of work it is essential to identify any areas covered with fragile materials and to take appropriate precautions. Prominent warning notices must be affixed at the approaches to roofs having any fragile materials (excluding glass). Warning notices used by Contractors should be of a suitably permanent nature and left in place at the completion of the work.

Suitable roof ladders or crawling boards should be used where appropriate on sloping roofs over 30 degrees pitch or, for sloping roofs of less than 30 degrees, where the roof surface is likely to be slippery.

Compliance with the Work at Heights Regulations 2005 and HSE Guidance Note HSG33, "Health and Safety in Rook Work 2012" is a requirement of the Council.

## **ACCESS EQUIPMENT SCAFFOLDS, LADDERS ETC**

Suitable means of safe access and egress must be provided at all times when required. All work at heights greater than 2 metres must comply with the requirements of the Working at Heights Regulations 2005 and the Construction Design and Management Regulations 2015.

Scaffolding and work platforms must allow adequate working space, be properly constructed and inspected as appropriate and records kept of inspections. A clearance certificate should be obtained from the scaffold erector prior to the scaffolding being taken into use. A TG20 Certificate of Design will be required. Particular attention must be given to the means of preventing falls of personnel, tools or materials.

Work platforms must be fitted with appropriate toe-boards and guardrails. Temporary openings to allow access, such as hoist gates or the removal of sections of guardrails shall be closed off as soon as practicable. Suitable precautions will be taken to prevent

unauthorised use of access equipment. At the end of the work day, or at other times before leaving the site, access ladders will be removed from low level workings, lower stage of scaffolding or other similar locations where unauthorised access to foreseeable and ladders securely stored or other suitable measures taken to deny access to heights.

Access ladders must be regularly inspected be in a sound condition, be free from defects, and be correctly positioned and appropriately secured to prevent slipping.

Stepladders may be used as a work platform where the work is of short duration, three points of contact can be maintained and the working height is less than 2 metres. However, a site specific risk assessment must be carried out beforehand to determine the suitability of stepladders as a working platform.

## **CONSTRUCTION DESIGN AND MANAGEMENT REGULATIONS**

Where construction projects fall within the parameters of the CDM regulations, contractors must comply fully and be aware that a health and safety file will be set up and used throughout the project. Adequate welfare facilities must be provided during construction works.

A specific Construction Phase Plan (CPP) will be required along with contract specific risk assessments and method statements.

## **LONE WORKING**

The most important aspects of working alone are that the lone worker has full knowledge of the hazards and risks to which they are being exposed. The lone worker knows what to do if something goes wrong and someone knows the whereabouts of the lone worker and what they are doing.

When an individual working for a contractor is called upon to undertake work on their own, suitable steps should be taken by the contractor and the individual to ensure that this is done at the lowest possible risk.

Individuals working out of normal hours or in remote areas of the building should: Inform the Contract Administrator and Caretaker of their location and arrange to keep in regular contact with them for the duration of the work.

## **RADON**

This naturally occurring gas is an issue at some Council managed buildings in the High Peak. Where radon remediation arrangements are in place Contractors must ensure that such a system is not compromised by the work they are undertaking and must adhere to local control measures.

Specific working restrictions apply at Buxton Town Hall. The Contract Administrator will advise you of the specific control measures before you commence work.

## **WASTE SKIPS**

If you are siting a skip on a public road or pavement you will need a skip permit. This permit will also determine the required signage and lighting.

Where possible and in accordance with our fire risk assessments, a closed skip should be provided. For open skips we require all skips to be located 6 metres minimum and away from our buildings or away from the perimeter of a construction site.

## **HOUSEKEEPING**

Finally, keep your work areas clean and tidy at all times. Ensure that do not cause trip hazards or leave flammable materials lying around. Also make sure that your work equipment cannot be tampered with whilst it is in public areas.

## **ACKNOWLEDGEMENT SLIP**

**As appropriate please complete this form and return it to your Employer or Council host:**

**Name (Print):**

**Company:**

**I have read and understood the information in this handbook. I agree to comply with the information given and all instructions whilst working on site.**

**I have also received induction training from my site Supervisor/Contract Administrator.**

**Signed:**

**Dated:**

Thank you.

**David G Owen**

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