
Corfe Castle Parish Council
Health and Safety Policy Annex – June 2022

Arrangements

1. Asbestos Corfe Castle Parish Council will ensure that all premises under the Council's control have been surveyed for the presence of asbestos containing materials (ACM's). The reports, detailing findings, location, and condition of ACM's are held by the Clerk.
2. Computer/Display Screen Equipment (DSE)
This section applies to computers whether desktop, laptop, or handheld, wherever they may be used. Using a computer or other display screen is not high-risk work and activities are generally limited to the office.

All Employees habitually using DSE equipment as a significant part of their normal work must complete the DSE Workstation Checklist.

As identified through the Assessment all workstations must be maintained in a safe condition. This includes:

- Chairs that are capable of being adjusted and have adequate back and leg support,
- Adequate space under the work surface, • Footrests available to those who need them,
- Adequate ventilation and lighting.

Computer work does not damage your eyesight, but it can make you temporarily short sighted. Eyes can also become tired from focussing at the same distance for too long; tired if your glasses/ eyes do not focus on the computer screen; dry when you are concentrating on screen work (because you blink less) and dry if your monitor is high because it exposes more of the eye surface.

Consequently, Corfe Castle Parish Council will provide habitual DSE users, on request, with an eyesight test every two years or more frequently if recommended by a doctor or optician. It is also recognised that some Employees may require glasses solely and specifically for DSE work because their usual glasses are not effective at the relevant viewing distance.

Where an Optician recommends corrective vision spectacles specifically for DSE use, the Council will pay for these.

Many of the problems encountered can be controlled through good workstation design and set up. These elements are identified in detail in the DSE Workstation Self-assessment.

- 3 Control of Substances Hazardous to Health
Hazardous substances (as defined by the Control of Substances Hazardous to Health Regulations) will only be brought on to Council premises where there is no practical alternative. Every effort will be made to ensure that, so far as possible, non-hazardous substances are purchased for use or, where there is no non-hazardous substance which is suitable, that the least hazardous substance is obtained.

The quantities of hazardous substances stored and used on-site will be the minimum quantities consistent with the needs of the operation and with sound commercial purchasing practice.

The Council will identify all hazardous substances to which persons may be exposed either by employees or contractors. Contractors will be required to identify any hazardous substances used and will compile a register of all such substances plus inform the Council.

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Attached to the register will be suppliers/manufacturers' safety data sheets, which suppliers must provide by law. These outline the hazards of the substance, also indicating any precautions which are necessary.

Before any hazardous substance is brought onto site for the first time, manufacturers/ suppliers' safety data sheets will be obtained and suitable judgements made of the necessity for, and utility of, the substance.

A COSHH assessment will then be carried out by a competent individual. All such assessments will be recorded in writing. The assessment will also include an assessment of the risks arising from Blood-borne viruses (HIV, Hepatitis etc). Any recommendations made for gaining or improving control of hazardous substances will be implemented by the Council. The assessments will be reviewed when there is a material change in circumstance and, in any event, on an annual basis. Where relevant, changes to assessment findings will be communicated to employees.

All measures intended to prevent, or control exposure will be regularly monitored as identified by the assessments. All Councillors and the Clerk will be responsible for ensuring that control measures are maintained. In the event of any failure of any control measure, Councillor(s) or the Clerk will take immediate steps to regain control; if necessary, by ordering cessation of use of the substance/ the Clerk will take action in the first instance and then advise the Council immediately.

4 Health Hazards

The following general rules should always apply when handling any chemicals:

- Read the information, such as container labels, before using any products.
- Never mix chemicals together.
- Never transfer chemicals into another container without ensuring that all safety information on the original container is copied onto any new container.
- Follow the manufacturer's instructions carefully.
- Chemical products must never be allowed to come into eye contact and contact with skin. Mucous membranes must likewise be avoided.
- Wear protective equipment and clothing supplied.
- Do not swallow materials or use in areas where food is being consumed
- Always store chemicals away from food.
- Inhalation of chemical vapours or dust should be avoided. Adequate ventilation must be provided.
- Facilities for the washing and cleansing of the skin are made available.
- If any person handling the materials shows the symptoms which may possibly have been caused by exposure to chemical products, they should be removed from the area and medical advice sought without delay. First aid information is available on the relevant Material Safety Data Sheet (MSDS).

Waste materials such as broken glass or other "sharps" should be adequately wrapped to prevent injury and disposed of safely i.e. not in plastic bags.

COSHH Assessments are undertaken where significant hazards are identified.

The Clerk will ensure that any protective clothing, equipment or hygiene measure is provided, worn and maintained as required.

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- 5 **Driving at Work and Vehicles**
Where privately owned vehicles are used for business purposes, the driver must ensure that their insurance covers business use.
- 6 **Drugs and Alcohol**
Even very minor alcohol or drug misuse can lead to some loss of concentration and affect judgement and physical co-ordination, which in turn can lead to accidents. Consequently, the use of illegal drugs and misuse of alcohol is forbidden in all Corfe Castle Parish Council activities and employees must therefore ensure that alcohol or drug use does not have an adverse effect on their work performance, other people or safety arrangements.
Before consuming any medication, employees should ask the pharmacist about side effects or read enclosed information. Where the effects of the prescribed drug may compromise safety, employees should reassess their ability to carry out that work safely while potentially affected.
- 7 **Electricity**
All electric wiring and fittings must be kept in good repair by sub-contracted qualified electricians. Unauthorised alteration to, or interference with, electric wiring or fittings is strictly forbidden. Any failure, breakdown, overheating or chaffing of wires is to be reported immediately to the Clerk or Parish Council Chairman and, wherever possible, the electric current turned off until the defect has been rectified.
No light or power point is to be used for any purpose other than that for which it is intended.
- 7.1 **Portable Electrical Appliances**
Portable electrical equipment is any electrical item connected to the mains electricity supply by means of a flexible cable, plug and socket which includes office equipment such as computers and printers and any on-site power tools. The definition of portable electrical equipment also includes equipment that is handheld or hand operated whilst connected to the electrical supply as well as extension leads, plugs, sockets and adaptors.

The following steps are to be taken to ensure employees or users are not exposed to any risk of electrocution:

- Portable electrical equipment must only be used for the purpose for which it was intended and in the environment for which it was designed and constructed.
- Only qualified electricians are permitted to carry out repairs or modifications to portable electrical equipment.
- All portable electrical equipment purchased conforms to UK and/or EC product safety standards. Wherever possible equipment will be double insulated (Class II type – 2 wires) to ensure it is constructed with high integrity insulation without the need for an earth connection. (Double insulated equipment is marked with by the ‘double square’ symbol).

To assist, all Employees must:

- Visually inspect new equipment for damage.
- Only connect portable electrical apparatus to the mains supply by means of suitably fused plug and socket outlets. Under no circumstances should multi-point adapters be used.
- As all portable electrical equipment must be adequately maintained, users should undertake regular visual checks and report any fault, damage or defect to the Clerk / Chairman. If any users have any safety concerns they should immediately stop using the equipment, disconnect it from the power source and ensure that nobody else can use it.

Portable appliance testing is undertaken on a regular basis by the Council’s approved electrical contractor and a register of all testing is maintained and held by the Clerk

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8 Fire

The main causes of fire are likely to be an accumulation of rubbish or other flammable waste materials near a heat source, faulty electrical appliances, overloaded socket outlets or arson. Therefore, good housekeeping and regular inspection and testing of appliances will reduce these fire risks to a minimum.

The Clerk / Chairman will ensure:

- Adequate egress from the premises is available.
- Adequate firefighting facilities are available.
- Emergency procedures are in place.

9 First Aid

Small first aid kits are available in all Council Buildings. (I.e. West Street Toilet Storeroom, Gods Acre Shed).

10 Housekeeping

All persons should ensure that their work area is kept clear and free of tripping and slipping hazards. It is important that all Employees can move about freely and be able to exit their work area without hindrance in the event of an emergency.

Coats and bags must not be hung on the backs of chairs or left on the floor around workstations.

All waste materials should be promptly removed to designated waste storage areas and disposed of regularly to avoid build up.

Any defects in the work environment or conditions must be reported to the Clerk or Chairman

11 Incident, Ill Health and Dangerous Occurrences Reporting

All injuries or damage resulting from incidents on site or in other workplaces, however minor and all near misses, must be reported to the Clerk or Chairman.

In the event of a fatal or major injury to any person, over seven day injury or dangerous occurrence as defined by the Reporting of Injuries, Diseases and Dangerous Occurrences Regulations 2013 (RIDDOR), the Health & Safety Executive must be notified by telephone immediately by the Clerk or Chairman.

The Clerk or Chairman will ensure that an investigation is carried out as soon as possible and confirm details of accidents to the Health & Safety Executive within 10 days via their website.

The Incident Contact Centre is contactable between 8.30am to 5.00pm, Monday to Friday, on (Tel) 0345 300 9923.

RIDDOR incidents can be sent by e-mail to: riddor@natbrit.com, or by visiting the Centre's website at: www.riddor.gov.uk

Postal reports can be sent to: RIDDOR Reports

Health and Safety Executive

Redgrave Court

Merton Road

Bootle , Merseyside

L20 7HS

If a medical certificate or other written diagnosis from a doctor has been received in respect of an Employee who is absent from work and the disease diagnosed is one of those listed in the Reporting of Injuries, Diseases and Dangerous Occurrences Regulations 1995, the Clerk or Chairman will complete and send form F2508A to the Health & Safety Executive.

12 Lone Working

Employers are responsible for the Health, Safety and Welfare at work of their Employees and for the Health and Safety of those affected by that work. These responsibilities cannot be transferred to Employees who work alone or without close supervision. It is therefore the Council's duty to assess risks to lone workers and take steps to avoid or control the risk where necessary.

There is no general prohibition on working alone, however the general duties under the Health and Safety at Work etc. Act 1974 apply. There will be some cases where there are specific stipulations that at least two people must be involved in the work and which specify that a safe system of work must be followed due to the risks involved.

The work to be carried out by the lone worker will always be assessed to identify hazards, the risks involved and to ensure that appropriate control measures are implemented to eliminate or adequately control the risks. Where the risk assessment determines that arrangements would not be adequate to ensure that the work can be done safely by one person, then alternative arrangements providing help or back-up will be devised.

13 Manual Handling

The following steps are the basic handling procedures that Employees should adopt:

Consider the acronym TILE and plan the lifting operation and whether the process can be made easier with assistance from another person;

- **Task** – What exactly is required? How much force will be needed? Will the task need to be repeated often? Are there any other means of moving the load?
- **Individual** – Who is available to carry out the task, what is their physical condition, do they have any impairments or disabilities to be taken into consideration?
- **Load** – What needs to be lifted, is it a fixed load or a fluid/loose load? How heavy is it, is it fragile/flammable, toxic? If using a mechanical aid, is it sufficient for the load
- **Environment** – Where is the load, where does it need to go? Could it be dropped off at the other location in the first place? What are the surface conditions (Hot, cold, dry, wet, slippery, sloping). Are there any obstructions or obstacles on the route?
- Ensure the correct body posture and correct use of available handles etc i.e.
 - i. Place the feet apart.
 - ii. Bend the knees.
 - iii. Keep the back straight.
 - iv. Shoulders level and ahead.
 - v. Keep the arms within the area of the head.
- Ensure that the load is securely gripped.
- Raise the load smoothly.
- Keep the load as close to the body or handling aid as possible.
- Avoid twisting, bending or stooping and ensure your vision is not obstructed.
- Place the load carefully.

Manual Handling assessments are undertaken for significant tasks using the Manual Handling Assessment Form.

Whenever possible, use mechanical aids avoid or reduce the need for manual handling.

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14 New Employees

Whenever a new Employee is appointed to Corfe Castle Parish Council, they will be made aware of the following:

- i. Explain what he/she will be required to do and to whom he/she will be directly responsible
- ii. Where the Health and Safety Policy is kept, its purposes and the employee's responsibility
- iii. Any potentially dangerous areas of operations
- iv. The procedures in the event of an accident, in particular, the necessity to record all accidents, however trivial they may appear at the time.

15 Information, Instruction and Supervision

Corfe Castle Parish Council will consult directly with Employees on matters affecting them relating to Health and Safety. This will include any of the following circumstances:

- Any change which may substantially affect their Health and Safety at work, e.g. changes in procedures, equipment or ways of working
- The employer's arrangements for getting competent people to assist the Council in meeting their legal obligations
- The information that Employees must be given on the likely risks and dangers arising from their work, measures to reduce or get rid of these risks and what they should do if they have to deal with a risk or danger
- The planning of Health and Safety training
- The Health and Safety consequences of introducing new technology or equipment

The following arrangements have been made in order to ensure that Employees are provided with suitable information, instruction & supervision relating to Health and Safety issues: -

- i. External providers will provide competent Health and Safety advice to the Council on request.
- ii. The Employer's Liability Insurance Certificate is available on request. The person responsible for obtaining insurance cover is the Clerk.
- iii. The Health & Safety Policy is reviewed annually.

16 Personal Protective Equipment

Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) is a last resort to be used if all other types of control measure have been exhausted

Employees are required to maintain their issued equipment in good condition and will report any loss or damage to the Clerk or Chairman.

Employees and Sub-Contractors are required to comply with any specific site rules regarding PPE.

17 Pregnancy

Once The Council is informed, in writing, of a staff member's pregnancy, the appropriate member of staff must carry out a new risk assessment for all tasks which the member of staff is expected to carry out in their general duties of employment.

Pregnancy is not an illness though pregnant women can often be ill (particularly morning sickness) and are inclined to become very tired in later pregnancy. The changes inherent in pregnancy affect the risks of some work; for instance the bump affects manual handling techniques and position in relation to a computer, the softening of ligaments increases the risk of Musculo-skeletal injury and the hormonal changes increase the risk of Carpal Tunnel syndrome.

When a female employee declares that she is pregnant or when it becomes obvious that she is pregnant, the Clerk or Chairman will continue to ensure their workstation is comfortable and discuss any control measures with the individual.

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18 Smoking

Smoking is the main cause of preventable disease and premature death. It is now recognised that smoking not only affects the smoker but also affects non-smokers through passive smoking, i.e. where non-smokers inhale smoke from other people's cigarettes.

Under Section 2 of the Health and Safety at Work Act, all employers must protect the health of Employees and provide a healthy and safe working environment.

Corfe Castle Parish Council operates a strict no smoking policy on their premises.

Breaches of the above will be dealt with through education and counselling. As a last resort if counselling and negotiation fail, staff that refuse to observe the policies will be subject to normal disciplinary procedures.

All Visitors and Sub-Contractors are expected to abide by the policy, and it is the responsibility of all Councillors and the Clerk to instruct them of the Council's requirements as necessary.

Operatives will observe all site rules regarding smoking.

19 Stress

Work-related stress can develop because a person is unable to cope with the demands being placed on them. Stress, including work-related stress, can be a significant cause of illness and is known to be linked with high levels of sickness absence, staff turnover and other issues such as an increase in mistakes at work.

Corfe Castle Parish Council recognises the dangers of work-related stress. Through effective management and communication, the Council's aim is to create a supportive and positive working environment which will greatly reduce the possibility of an individual being at risk of work-related stress. Positive and supportive engagement between Parish Councillors and employees is recognised as key to this.

The Council endeavours to have no job that is inherently dangerous to mental health. Employees are presumed able to withstand the normal pressures of the job unless they know of a particular problem, or unless any reasonable person would realise a colleague could not cope. Corfe Castle Parish Council is also reasonably entitled to accept a colleague's statement that they are able to cope.

Stress is not pressure and pressure is not stress. Stress is defined as the adverse reaction people have to excessive pressures or other types of demand placed on them. Stress is not an illness, but if it is prolonged or especially intense, it can lead to physical or mental health problems.

Many of the factors that can produce stress are the antithesis of good management. Consequently, measures to reduce the risk of stress are likely to improve, among other things, efficiency, effectiveness, commitment and personal development.

Specific risk assessments will be prepared if a colleague informs management that they are unable to cope. The findings of the assessment will be used to provide personal controls.

The Clerk or Chairman will endeavour to take the following steps at all times:

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- Schedule work sensibly and accept that, where possible, work-travel should be completed in working time.
- Encourage high productivity, discourage long hours and monitor hours.
- Manage under-performance and/or absence at an early stage - before others suffer.
- Manage re-entry after absence.
- Be approachable, communicate clearly, and listen to colleagues' needs.
- Recruit, retain, train and promote so that people are suited to the demands and pressures of the work.
- Set clear objectives, prioritise tasks, eliminate unnecessary work, and try to give warning of urgent work.
- Demonstrate zero tolerance of bullying or harassment.
- Co-ordinate workloads and holidays.
- Ensure colleagues know of other sources of help.

To assist, every employee / Councillor must:

- Be alert to individuals or groups at particular risk - e.g. prolonged, frequent and uncharacteristic absences.
- Not harass or bully any colleague - including senior colleagues.
- Inform the Clerk or Chairman if they recognise a significant change in an activity, or recognise a significant stressor that is not being addressed.
- Help colleagues (including senior colleagues) by being alert to signs of distress/failure. Report your concerns to someone who can help.
- Not to deal with your stress by re-distributing it amongst colleagues – e.g. storming into work in a state, banging things around etc. and getting colleagues ruffled while you calm down.

It is encouraged that you should let the Clerk or Chairman know if you are:

- Coming under excess pressure in your private life.
- Suffering from anxiety or depression to an extent that interferes with your current or reasonably foreseeable work demands.
- Suffering physical illness that significantly reduces your resilience - e.g. pain that interferes with sleep or on receipt of a life-limiting prognosis.
- Suffering stress, due to work, that is threatening your health.

Giving consideration to the following aspects of your life may help you to prevent stress arising or reduce its effects:

- Manage your time and set yourself challenging but realistic objectives.
- List tasks in order of priority and tackle the most important first.
- Take care of your health through healthy eating, tackling addictions, avoiding stress crutches (drinking, sleeping pills, comfort eating, etc)
- Exercising, keeping up with friends and family, talking to someone, relaxing.
- Ensure sufficient rest and adequate number of hours of sleep and take short breaks to let yourself recuperate during busy times.
- Raise concerns if you are being mistreated.

It can help to try and identify the possible causes of stress by writing them down. Should you be absent with stress, co-operate with the Clerk or Chairman in developing a sensible return to work plan, as concern for your welfare is not prying. Acknowledge your own success in stress control each step of the way.

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20. Sub-Contractors

Corfe Castle Parish Council recognises its duty to ensure that the employer of persons who will be working on their premises has been provided with information on the risks to those persons along with details of measures being taken to comply with the relevant legislation as it relates to those Employees.

The Clerk is responsible for ensuring that all Sub-Contractors are competent and possess the appropriate insurances and qualifications to carry out functions on behalf of the Company.

Where the contract work carries a higher risk, or is of an extended duration outside the typical schedule, this information will be requested prior to the work commencing. This will include written risk assessments and method statements depending on the work activity to be carried out, the content of which should include:

- The hazards that the activity will be presenting to the Employees and customers of the Council.
- The level of risk that these hazards present.
- The controls that will be put in place to ensure that the risks are not realised.
- The monitoring system in place that ensures the risk controls remain in place.

Any incidents should be responded to immediately and a discussion after the project finishes may be appropriate to discuss any lessons learned.

All Sub-Contractors are required to conform to Corfe Castle Parish Council's Health & Safety policy in addition to that of a client for all site work.

21 Violence and Aggression

All violent incidents must be reported the Clerk or Chairman and recorded. All such incidents will be investigated.

Where aggressive or threatening behaviour is identified this is brought to the immediate attention of the Clerk or Chairman.

Employees should have methods of communication such as radio or telephone to call for back up or assistance when lone working.

Cash handling should be reduced or avoided altogether whenever possible to reduce the chance of conflict.

Employees are advised to walk away and seek help if they feel a situation is not manageable.

22 Work Equipment

All work equipment will be purchased in line with Legislative requirements and bear the CE mark. For major items of equipment, a copy of the Declaration of Conformity will be obtained.

Risk assessments for significant items of equipment will be undertaken by the Health & Safety Officer.

Employees are trained to safely operate and clean equipment and use the correct equipment for the task. No persons under 18 years are authorised to use machinery or other equipment without authorisation.

23 Tools

A selection of hand tools is used. The following steps are taken to ensure the safety of the user and third parties:

Hand Tools

- Use the right tool for the job
- Maintain all tools in a serviceable condition – if unserviceable either repair or replace
- Control/protect tools with obvious risks (Stanley knives, etc)
- Hammer heads should be tightly wedged onto shafts, and split or damaged wooden handles replaced
- Edges of cutting tools should be kept sharp and hands kept behind the cutting edge when working