



HEALTH & SAFETY POLICY

Introduction

It is the policy of Bewdley Town Council (“the Council”) to comply with all UK legislation on health and safety by identifying those risks which pose a significant threat to the health, safety and welfare of its employees and others likely to be affected by its operations and to do everything that is reasonably practicable to:

- ensure that appropriate control measures are implemented and maintained to avoid or minimise such risks.
- ensure that all employees are formally advised of the risks to their health, safety and welfare and of the measures taken by the Council to avoid or minimise such risks.
- promote and provide a safe and healthy working environment.
- ensure that premises are safe and provide adequate amenities for all those who are likely to use them.
- provide safe means of access to and from places of work which are under the Council’s control.
- ensure safe arrangements for the use, handling, storage and transport of all equipment, products and substances used in connection with the Council’s operations.
- initiate and maintain safe plant and equipment and safe systems of work.
- conduct regular inspections to ensure that the safest possible environment and work methods are maintained.
- provide information, instruction and training enabling avoidance of hazards.
- periodically review council activities to ensure that this policy, procedures, risk assessments and control measures contained within continue to be up to date and relevant to the Council.
- employees have a duty to assist the Council in its health and safety objectives and it is essential that all staff/volunteers/members read the Health and Safety Policy and meet all the obligations imposed.
- staff must take all reasonable care to avoid injury to themselves or to other persons likely to be affected by their activities at work and to cooperate in meeting any duty or requirement imposed on the Council by any statutory provisions.
- staff must not intentionally or recklessly interfere with or misuse anything provided by the Council in the interest of health and safety.

Responsibilities and Management

The Town Clerk will ensure that:

- adequate resources are available, that the policy is properly prepared, implemented throughout the Council's premises and is brought to the attention of Councillors and all employees/volunteers.
- the policy is kept under review, so that changes and improvements are incorporated, and it remains relevant to all activities.
- all individuals with delegated health and safety roles are aware of their responsibility.

In respect of operations and/or areas under their control they:

- are aware that they are directly responsible for the health, safety and welfare of any person who may be affected by the Council's activities and are therefore accountable for any accidents, illness or incidents that may occur as a result thereof.
- ensure that they, and their staff (including new and temporary employees), are familiar with the hazards, risk assessments and the control measures implemented, and will actively encourage safety, and discipline any person who is in breach of the safety measures described.
- ensure that good housekeeping standards are maintained.
- act to:
 - a) correct or contain any deterioration in conditions, or new exposures which increase risks on the premises.
 - b) investigate any accident or incident, however minor.
- ensure that any risk improvement, recommendation relating to defects, housekeeping arrangements and reassessment of risks is implemented as quickly as possible.

In this undertaking the Town Clerk is responsible for:

- fostering a positive culture within the Council towards health and safety.
- ensuring that all those under their control understand and comply with the Council's safety policy provisions and that they are being effectively carried out and adhered to.
- inspecting machinery, equipment and structures regularly and if there are faults, preventing access by any person to the defective apparatus until the faults have been rectified.
- ensuring that all those under their control understand and comply with the Council's safety policy provisions for the use and maintenance of all safety/personal protective equipment, first aid, fire and welfare facilities.
- ensuring that employees are adequately instructed in the safe operation of equipment, machinery or apparatus.
- advising staff/volunteers of their responsibilities under this policy.
- communicating with all those under their control to ensure the effective dissemination of health and safety information and attending any meeting as required in respect of health and safety.
- ensuring that all persons under their control are given adequate instruction, information and training to carry out the health, safety and welfare requirements and responsibilities delegated to them and can effectively implement safe systems of work.
- arranging for incidents, accidents, near misses and dangerous occurrences to be reported.
- ensuring that those under their control do not take unnecessary risks.
- assisting the Council in carrying out the identification of all hazardous activities together with all hazardous substances used; assisting the Council in carrying out risk assessments of such activities and substances and producing safe

systems of work to eliminate or reduce the risk of injury to the worker or any other persons who could be affected by the work activity.

The Town Clerk will be the nominated person with a duty to:

- ensure that the Town Council is informed of all issues relating to the implementation of this policy, and other significant health and safety matters.
- ensure that all personnel are aware of, and instructed in, their responsibilities as imposed by health and safety legislation and the provisions of this policy.
- ensure that the Council fulfils its obligations under the Health and Safety at Work Act 1974 regarding:
 - a) the provision and maintenance of safe equipment and systems of work.
 - b) ensuring safe and risk-free use, handling, storage and transport of articles and substances.
 - c) the provision of information, instruction, training and supervision to ensure the health and safety at work of its employees/volunteers.
 - d) the provision of a safe place of work.
 - e) the provision and maintenance of a safe working environment for its employees together with adequate facilities and arrangements for their welfare at work.
- ensure that statutory tests, inspection and maintenance is followed.
- ensure that risk assessments are conducted (and reviewed annually) with copies being supplied to relevant personnel for implementation of control measures.
- ensure the provision of suitable personal protective equipment is available, issued and used where required, that it is suitably stored, maintained and that a programme is in place for its replacement.
- ensure that fire precautions and fire-fighting equipment comply with current legislation and that all staff are aware of and conform to the Council's arrangements for fire precautions.
- ensure that reportable incidents are notified under the Reporting of Injuries Diseases and Dangerous Occurrences Regulations 1995.
- ensure that all accidents and near misses are investigated, records made and data analysed to identify means of avoiding possible recurrence.
- ensure that accident and near miss information is reported to the appropriate council meeting with any remedial measures are acted upon.
- ensure that meetings with the enforcing authority and insurers are suitably managed and recommendations flowing therefrom are actioned.
- ensure that a positive health and safety culture is actively promoted throughout the workplace.
- keep themselves up to date with best practice in health and safety management.

Employee responsibilities (including volunteers)

Employees/volunteers have legal responsibilities (under Sections 7 and 8 of the HSWA) which are to:

- take reasonable care of their own health and safety and that of others who may be affected by their actions or omissions.
- co-operate with management to meet the Council's legal duties; and
- not to intentionally or recklessly interfere with or misuse anything provided in the interest of health, safety or welfare (e.g. fire extinguishers, fire doors, safety devices, alarm systems, emergency exits, first aid kits and/or protective clothing or equipment).

Employees/volunteers must:

- a) refrain from actions (or omissions) which might endanger themselves, or others.
- b) use **all** equipment safely, including that provided for their personal protection.
- c) comply with all safety instructions or procedures.
- d) follow safe systems of work and ensure that all work equipment is used in a safe and responsible manner.

- e) report any defects in equipment or other dangers immediately, or as soon as it is safe to do so and any accident, injury or incident, however minor.
- f) co-operate in the investigation of accidents and incidents.
- g) be familiar with and comply with all safety procedures detailed in this policy document and with any specific instructions on safety matters given verbally or in writing by a health and safety specialist who, although they may not be an employee of the Council, is recognised by it for the purposes of this policy.
- h) familiarise themselves with the local first aid and fire emergency evacuation procedures, which are posted on notice boards and be prepared to comply with them in the event of an incident.

Accident/Incident Reporting

All accidents, industrial diseases and dangerous occurrences will be reported to comply with the Reporting of Injuries, Diseases and Dangerous Occurrences Regulations 1995.

Accidents to Employees

Employees must report all accidents immediately to their immediate supervisor and, if injury is involved, to a first aider, the first aider will assess the seriousness of the injury and whether they can give appropriate treatment. If the injury is of a serious nature or if there is any doubt, the injured person will be sent to the nearest hospital for treatment.

After every accident however small, an entry must be made in The Accident Book BI 510 for all accidents/injuries incurred at work. This is the responsibility of the employee. If, because of their injury, employees are incapable of making an immediate entry, then their manager, the first aider or a nominated person must make that entry.

If the accident/incident qualifies as reportable, then the Town Clerk will ensure that the Enforcing Authority is notified and that form F2508/F2508A is completed.

Following any accident that requires treatment, the first aider will complete an accident report form and send a copy to the Town Clerk who will carry out an accident investigation to identify if remedial action is necessary to prevent a recurrence.

Accidents to Non-Employees

All accidents to non-employees, i.e. contractors, visitors or members of the public, who suffer injury as a result of either the Council's work activities or its provision of services to the general public should be reported immediately to a first aider/senior member of staff. Details of the accident must be recorded in the accident book and the procedure outlined above should be adopted.

The Town Clerk will investigate all accidents to non-employees and will report their findings to the appropriate council meeting.

Near Miss or Damage Incident

All incidents resulting in damage to property, plant, equipment, etc. together with near misses should be reported to the Town Clerk who will investigate, particularly if the incident could have caused personal injury.

Accident Book

The Accident Book will be kept at the Town Council Office, 6 Load Street DY12 2AE.

Collation of Accident Data

The Town Clerk is responsible for collecting and collating data concerning all incidents annually, whether they are reportable and whether they involve personal injury.

Consultation with Employees

Legislation requires all employers to consult their employees on health and safety matters. This helps to create a safe working environment and strengthens the Council's health and safety culture. Consultation affords the opportunity to create health and safety awareness making a more efficient council reducing accidents, incidents and ill-health.

Statutory notices and emergency procedures are displayed on notice boards, and all employees are encouraged to read these on a regular basis. Developments in legislation and information specific to the Council's business will be notified to staff.

Contractors

The council will ensure, so far as is reasonably practicable, that only competent contractors are engaged. Prior to the engagement of any contractor working for the council, they will be required to provide supporting evidence covering:

- their arrangements for health and safety.
- insurance documents.
- how they achieve safe working practices.
- skill levels of staff (training records, qualifications etc.).
- details of any prosecutions or enforcement notices issued against them.
- details of their accident/incident records.
- information on the controls they impose on any sub-contractors they may engage.
- contractors will be required to work under a permit-to-work system in particularly hazardous situations (hot work, live electrics etc.).

The Control of Substances Hazardous to Health (COSHH)

Whilst the nature of council business make it unlikely that staff will encounter hazardous substances in the workplace, it is recognised that some substances have the potential to cause ill-health. The council will ensure that such substances are assessed and that, so far as is reasonably practicable, will be replaced with suitable and less hazardous substances wherever possible.

Where the Council is aware that its staff may be visiting third-party premises where hazardous substances are present, the Council will seek relevant information from the third party which will be provided to the Council employee.

Completion of COSHH assessments will be carried out for those operations in which hazardous substances or materials are used, or places in which items are stored (including waste products) to identify and evaluate the risk associated with its use. Where necessary control measurements regarding storage and disposal and limit exposure to employees and others who may be affected by those operations.

The council will obtain supplier's safety data sheets for all substances used on site. These will be kept centrally by the Town Clerk who will provide copies to H&S representatives and First Aiders when required.

An assessment will be carried out for new substances introduced into the workplace.

COSHH assessments will be carried out by the Town Clerk or by such other suitably qualified persons as directed.

A review of COSHH assessments and control measures will be undertaken as and when required ensuring that they remain appropriate and effective.

Information, instruction and training for all employees will be provided if necessary.

Training will also be provided to any non-employees who may be exposed to hazardous substances.

No hazardous substances may be introduced to the workplace without the prior written approval of the Town Clerk.

All contractors bringing chemicals or hazardous substances onto Council premises will be required to declare that they are doing so and to supply the Council with a copy of their COSHH assessments and appropriate safety data sheets.

Display Screen Equipment (DSE)

Health risks to display screen operators may include postural problems and visual fatigue, in addition to the other hazards of the workplace, such as tripping over cables or carpets, lifting injuries e.g. picking up boxes of paper, etc.

Postural problems often manifest themselves in the form of back and neck ache as well as sprains and strains of such areas as fingers, hands, wrists, elbows and shoulders.

Contributory factors include:

- sitting in an immobile position for long periods.
- high rates of repetitive finger movements, with the wrists bent.
- poor circulation to the legs.
- pressure from the seat/chair upon the thighs caused by incorrectly adjusted seating.

Visual fatigue can result in eyestrain, headaches or other related symptoms and can be caused by:

- poor screen display, such as low contrast or flickering.
- high levels of ambient light compared to the screen display.
- reflections or glare.
- the need for a document holder.

To reduce the risks to DSE operators a formerly recorded assessment of each user workstation will be undertaken to identify and evaluate the risks associated with that workstation.

Employees will conduct assessments of their own workstation and will forward results to the council. Where an assessment discloses potential problems for the employee, a second assessment will be undertaken by the Chairman or other suitably qualified person, and remedial action will be taken as necessary.

The Council will follow the advice contained in the Health and Safety (Display Screen Equipment) Regulations 1992 as amended by the Health and Safety (Miscellaneous Amendments) Regulations 2002 (DSE) and where assessment indicates a need, it will offer staff free eyesight tests and a contribution towards corrective spectacles. It will also provide footrests and document holders where a need is recognised, and the opportunity for staff to take rest-periods away from the workstation.

Workstation users will be provided with suitable training and information regarding their workstation and will be given a copy of HSE Guidance Note INDG 36 "Working with display screen equipment".

Electricity at Work

Fixed Wiring

In order to maintain the fixed wiring installation which supplies electrical sockets, lighting and other hard-wired equipment, the Council will follow the guidance contained in the Electricity at Work Regulations 1989 and BS 7671 which recommend that the system be inspected by a competent specialist electrical contractor at least once every five years.

Portable Appliances

All portable appliances will be given a thorough electrical test by a competent person on installation or commission and thereafter will be subject to further testing to be determined by the nature of the equipment and the use to which it is put. The frequency of such tests will be determined by reference to HSG 107 "Maintaining Portable and Transportable Electrical Equipment". At the very least, it will undergo a visual inspection every 12 months.

Electrical Contractors

The council will ensure that any electrical contractors employed to carry out electrical work on wiring or equipment are competent, belong to an appropriate body, e.g. NICEIC and comply with all relevant safety standards.

Electric Shock

If there is any accident involving electrical injury to an employee, a first aider should be summoned immediately.

General

Electrical equipment must not be tampered with. Employees should report loose wires or defects in equipment to the Town Clerk who will decide what action to take.

Employees who wish to bring their own electrical equipment onto the Council's premises must not do so until they have obtained prior permission from the Town Clerk.

Fire Safety

The council has a legal duty to safeguard employees and others against exposure to the hazards associated with fire. Exposure to fire can result in burns and inhalation of smoke, either of which can be fatal. Fires can also cause massive destruction to the building structure, services, equipment, and contents.

This section of the Health and Safety Policy defines the responsibilities and procedures that must be followed to ensure fire safety at work.

Training

Employees will receive fire safety training at induction which will include:

- the means of escape from the premises.
- location of fire extinguishers.
- fire assembly points.

Fire Equipment/Extinguishers

Extinguishers can be found at fire points which are clearly signed. They are checked regularly by a competent contractor who services them on an annual basis.

Training in the use of extinguishers will be given as appropriate. All employees are instructed never to take unnecessary risks and only to fight a fire with equipment provided they have been trained to use the equipment and it is safe to do so.

Evacuation

A fire evacuation procedure is displayed on the notice board at the front and only exit from the building. For reference, the procedure is as follows:

- On being informed of a fire, all employees should evacuate the premises immediately, without stopping to pick up belongings. Staff should use the only exit and proceed to their designated assembly point as quickly as possible and await the roll call.
- Following evacuation, staff must not re-enter the building to collect personal belongings or leave the assembly area until told to do so by management, acting under instruction from the senior fire officer at the scene.
- Designated persons will check the premises to ensure that every employee and visitor is accounted for.

Evacuation drills will be undertaken annually to test the effectiveness and suitability of the arrangements. The Town Clerk will evaluate fire safety systems after each drill.

Fire Doors

All fire doors are suitably marked and should always be kept shut and clear of obstruction including the area immediately external to the fire exit. Any employee finding a fire door blocked or locked should report it immediately to the Town Clerk.

Fire Alarm

Smoke detectors are provided throughout the office area and are regularly tested by the landlord (Community Housing).

Emergency Lighting

Emergency lighting conforms with fire safety legislation and is maintained and tested by the landlord. (Community Housing).

Fire Risk Assessment

The council undertakes an assessment of the risks presented by fire ensuring appropriate control measures to minimise fire risk is identified.

These measures will include:

- a regular inspection for general fire safety.
- placing fire extinguishers at clearly labelled fire points.
- keeping emergency exit routes and signs clear at all times.
- training of nominated staff in the use of extinguishers, procedures for fire drills and evacuation.
- supervision and monitoring of visitors, including contractors.
- implementation of precautions in respect of disabled people.
- These arrangements will be reviewed annually and on any significant change.

Employee Responsibilities

All employees are reminded that:

- firefighting equipment must not be tampered with or removed under any circumstances; interfering with safety equipment is a criminal offence under S.8 of the Health and Safety at Work Act 1974.
- electrical equipment should be switched off at close of business wherever practicable.
- the fire exit route must always remain free from obstruction and fire doors and exits must **not be locked or propped open**.
- smoking is not permitted anywhere within the Council's premises.
- personal electrical equipment should not be used on the premises unless it has been authorised by the Town Clerk.
- all waste materials must be placed in metal bins or other designated receptacles provided.
- all workplaces should always be kept tidy.

First Aid

The council has a legal duty to make adequate provision for first aid in respect of employees should they sustain injury or become ill at work, including those travelling or working away from our premises.

The council provide appropriate first-aid equipment to deal with the risks considering the size of the establishment, the hazards and risks involved in daily council activities.

First aid provision will be reassessed annually, or whenever there is a relevant change in the workforce or the hazards to which they are exposed.

The council will also ensure that contractors on the premises either have sufficient first aid provision, or if their work involves no special risks, the contractor may use council facilities, by agreement.

As a minimum, the need for first aid facilities compliance will be based on the Health and Safety (First Aid) Regulations 1981.

First Aid Box

A first-aid box is kept by the first aider in the Council's office. It is checked regularly to ensure that its contents are legally compliant and adequate to fulfil the needs recognised by risk assessments.

Housekeeping

All employees have a responsibility to ensure their own work area and the workplace is kept free from hazards, particularly those which may give rise to fire or to slips, trips and falls. Carpeting and floor coverings will be selected for their appropriateness to area usage and will be maintained in a condition suitable to prevent the risk of slips, trips and falls.

Stacking should be avoided but where this is not possible, materials should be stacked in a stable manner so that, so far as is reasonably practicable, so that the risk of them falling is reduced to a minimum.

Any spillage or leakage of liquids or solids which may give rise to a slip hazard must be cleaned up immediately.

The Council will promote good housekeeping through a system of regular workplace inspection.

Waste or surplus materials should be placed in a waste bin or returned to their source and not left lying around to cause a hazard.

Home Working

Most of the Regulations made under the Health and Safety at Work Act apply to home workers as well as to employees working at an employer's workplace.

The council highlights particular regard to the provisions of:

- Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999
- Display Screen Equipment Regulations 1992
- Manual Handling Operations Regulations 1992
- Provision and Use of Work Equipment Regulations 1998
- Electricity at Work Regulations 1989

Lone Working

There is no general legal prohibition on working alone but the broad duties imposed by the Health and Safety at Work Act and the Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations still apply. These require identifying hazards of the work, assessing the risks involved, and putting measures in place to avoid or control the risks.

The Council will avoid putting lone workers at any greater risk by introducing control measures which take account normal work and foreseeable emergencies, e.g. fire, equipment failure, illness and accidents.

Control measures may include:

- a 'buddy system' by which regular contact is maintained between the lone worker and a nominated person who is advised of the action to take in the event of failed or lost contact.
- a manually operated device designed to raise the alarm in the event of an emergency.
- checks that a lone worker has returned to their base or home on completion of a task.

A separate Lone Working Policy has been adopted by the council in addition to the Health and Safety Policy.

Manual Handling

Manual handling can be defined as the transporting or supporting of a load including:

- lifting and lowering.
- putting and taking.
- pushing and pulling.
- twisting, turning and stretching.
- carrying or moving by hand or bodily force.

Injuries are likely to be caused through incorrect lifting techniques or by not taking account of the weight, size, shape of the load, or the environment.

An assessment will be undertaken for all manual handling operations identifying any risk from handling of loads (other than those which are clearly not significant).

Employees are reminded that manual handling should be avoided where reasonably practicable and employees must not engage in manual handling activities that are beyond their capabilities, due to the size, weight or nature of the item to be moved.

The result of risk assessments will be communicated to employees and where appropriate, suitable training will be given to staff in correct lifting techniques.

Manual handling operation assessments will be carried out by the Town Clerk or such other competent person appointed by the Council.

Hierarchy of measures for the manual handling process:

- avoid or eliminate the hazardous manual handling task.
- if it is unavoidable, assess the manual handling task for risk.

- introduce measures to reduce the risk of injury from the task to the lowest reasonably practicable level.

Monitoring and Review

To ensure that the various procedures and policies set out in the arrangements section of the Health and Safety Policy are being adhered to and being implemented as intended, an annual audit will be undertaken. These audits will be conducted by the Town Clerk and other relevant personnel, aided by external health and safety professional(s) where their assistance is considered appropriate.

The findings of the audits will be communicated to the council with a review of the effectiveness of the arrangements contained in this section of the policy.

In addition, the Health and Safety Policy together with all risk assessments will be reviewed periodically to ensure that they remain valid, and they will be updated to reflect any necessary changes.

The council's risk management policy details the need for an appropriate level of insurance to mitigate against any claim against the council due to health and safety implications as detailed in this policy.

Risk Assessments

The management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999 require that suitable assessments of significant hazards in the workplace are undertaken that could affect staff or others, arising from council activities. Certain work activities require separate, specific assessments.

Risk assessments will be conducted in all areas but with reference to the following Regulations:

- Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999 – General risk assessments.
- Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005 – fire prevention, detection, alarm systems, evacuation procedures.
- Personal Protective Equipment Regulations 2002 – PPE assessments.
- Display Screen Equipment Regulations 1992 – DSE assessments.
- Manual Handling Operations Regulations 1992 – Manual handling assessments.
- Control of Substances Hazardous to Health Regulations 2002 – COSHH assessments.
- The findings of the assessments will be available to all staff. Information, instruction and training will be given to employees following an assessment where appropriate.
- Assessments will be reviewed annually or upon any significant change in circumstances or following an accident/incident.

Smoking at Work

Smoking is not permitted anywhere within the Council's premises. All employees who are working away from Council premises are reminded that they must observe the smoking restrictions which apply at remote sites and, to observe the requirements of the Smoke-free (Premises & Enforcement) Regulations 2006.

Stress

Stress is defined as 'the adverse reaction people have to excessive pressures or other types of demand placed on them'. This makes an important distinction between the beneficial effects of reasonable pressure and challenge.

If stress is not identified and addressed, it can lead to both physical and mental health problems.

The effect of stress on performance is well established and in the interests of both the health of employees and the efficiency of the Council, it should be minimised.

Symptoms of stress include, headaches, depression, raised blood pressure, insomnia, irritability, nervous break-down, psoriasis, eczema, hair loss, panic attacks, palpitations and loss of appetite.

If employees believe that they have a problem with stress, they are encouraged to seek confidential assistance from their line manager.

Volunteer Workers

The Health and Safety at Work etc. Act 1974 and the Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999 make specific provision for the health and safety of volunteers. Managers will ensure that all voluntary workers are given health and safety induction training covering identified hazards, together with the emergency procedures and the management controls appropriate to those risks before they commence their duties.

Volunteer workers may be exposed to the complete range of risks to which other employees are exposed and they will also be unfamiliar with many of the procedures requiring extra supervision.

Volunteers will be provided the council's health and safety policy referring them to aspects of the policy that apply to them.

Protective clothing and equipment will also be provided where there is a need and when a volunteer is carrying out work on behalf of the council that is not on office premises they must notify either the Town Clerk or in the absence of the Town Clerk, a council member. The volunteer must give times when they are carrying out council duties and if lone working must adhere to all points in this policy and sign to record that they have read, understood and complied with its content.

Training

The council has a responsibility under Section 2 of the Health and Safety at Work Act 1974 to provide training for employees to ensure their health and safety at work.

The policy of the council is to ensure that employees and volunteers are adequately trained in the council's health and safety policies and procedures as well as being trained to undertake any task they are expected to carry out and for any emergency that may arise during their employment.

All new employees are given a copy of the Health and Safety Policy and must sign an acceptance note to state they have read and understood the document and will implement its rules and procedures.

On successful completion of any training the employee will be required to complete a form indicating that he/she has received and understood the training. This form will be countersigned by the employee's immediate line manager.

All employees and volunteers have a legal responsibility to cooperate with the Council's training programme so that its objectives can be met. Employees are expected to attend training courses and must put into practice any new instruction or guideline provided.

Employees must also follow any revised working procedures once they have been given the appropriate information, instruction and training.

Visitors

As far as possible, visitors will always be accompanied by an employee. Visitors will not be permitted to wander freely around the work area.

In cases where visitors are not accompanied at all times (e.g. auditors) the Town Clerk will give them a brief induction in the emergency procedure applicable to the premises which they are visiting.

Should a fire occur, the person who is accompanying the visitor will assume responsibility for them and will escort him/her to the fire assembly point.

Should an incident occur involving the visitor which results in injury, this will be recorded in the Accident Book and a thorough investigation carried out as soon as possible.

If the injury is of a serious nature or is fatal, the incident must be reported to the enforcing authority and the Council's accident reporting system must be followed.

All visitors must be advised of the basic fire procedures.

Work away Workers

The Health and Safety at Work Act 1974, the Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999, and the Workplace (Health, Safety and Welfare) Regulations 1992 apply to all employees who visit other premises in the course of their work.

Employees who are working at remote premises must conform to all arrangements made by the duty holder of the premises regarding compliance with regulations covering health and safety, the environment, fire, security and liaison, such as signing the visitors' book, observing no smoking areas and reporting to named managers before starting or leaving work or moving to a different area.

Work Equipment

The Provision and Use of Work Equipment Regulations 1998 apply to the functioning and safety of council work equipment.

In order to minimise the risk of injury from work equipment arrangements will be placed for the assessment of risks with the creation of control measures to minimise the risks identified.

These measures will include the following arrangements and procedures:

- an assessment of all new or second-hand equipment purchased.
- all equipment purchased will comply with any relevant product safety standards.
- all hired or rented equipment will be required to comply with the regulations, and will include the provision of comprehensible information on its safe use.
- inspection of the equipment (including statutory inspection if applicable) and testing where necessary.
- provision of suitable and effective safety devices and controls.
- provision of suitable and readily comprehensible signs and warnings.
- provision of suitable general, task and emergency lighting.
- ensuring that machinery and equipment is maintained in efficient working order and in good repair.
- ensuring that the suitability of equipment is matched to the tasks involved.
- ensuring that adequate and effective training, information and instruction is provided for operators.
- ensuring that maintenance is carried out safely by competent maintenance contractors.
- ensuring that only trained operators use the machinery.
- maintenance of a reporting system for any difficulties, hazards or defects encountered or identified with work equipment.

These arrangements will be reviewed annually and on any significant change in the type, nature or use of equipment.