



Houghton Regis Town Council

Health & Safety at Work Policy

Date of Approval:	Town Council 22 nd June 2015
Date of Review:	18 th May 2016; 5 th March 2018; 4 th March 2019; 8 th June 2020; 28 th November 2022; 9 th September 2024
Date of Re-approval:	18 th May 2016; 18 th June 2018; 17 th June 2019; 5 th October 2020; 20 th March 2023; 16 th December 2024

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To be issued to all employees.

In accordance with the Health & Safety at Work etc Act 1974

This is the Health & Safety Policy Statement of
Houghton Regis Town Council

1.0 POLICY STATEMENT

Houghton Regis Town Council:

1. Recognises and accepts its responsibilities as an employer for providing an adequate control of the health and safety risks arising from the Council's work activities.
2. Will consult with employees on matters affecting their health & safety.
3. Is keen to encourage employees to participate in providing a safe and healthy working environment.
4. In particular employees should:
 - a) Carry out their duties without endangering the health and safety of themselves, their colleagues and the general public.
 - b) Comply with all instructions appertaining to safety, all statutory provisions and local codes of practice.
 - c) Endeavour to facilitate the implementation of the safety policies of the Council.
5. Will seek to maintain safe and healthy working conditions.
6. Will provide and maintain plant and equipment.
7. Will ensure the safe use, handling, storage and transport of substances.
8. Will provide sufficient information, training and supervision to enable all employees to avoid hazards and contribute positively to their own safety and health at work.
9. Will, as far as is reasonably practicable, seek to prevent accidents and cases of work-related ill health.
10. The Town Council has ultimate responsibility for Health and Safety matters. However, this responsibility in relation to the day-to-day operation of the Council's activities is delegated to the Town Clerk as the proper officer. A meeting will be held between the Town Mayor and the Town Clerk to discuss health and safety issues as required.
11. The Health and Safety Policy will be reviewed annually, or if there is a change in circumstances.

Signed:
Cllr E Cooper, Town Mayor

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Mrs C Evans, Town Clerk

2.0 RESPONSIBILITIES FOR HEALTH AND SAFETY

The Council's Responsibilities:

- 2.1 Overall and final responsibility for health and safety is that of the Town Council.
- 2.2 Day-to-day responsibility for ensuring this policy is put into practice is delegated to the Town Clerk.
- 2.3 Under the Health & Safety at Work Act the Council has responsibility for the safety, health and welfare of employees and any other person in so far as they are affected by the activities of the work of the Council. To meet these responsibilities the Council will:
 - (a) Ensure that there is an up-to-date overall policy for the safety, health and welfare of employees and that there are appropriate department policies and procedures, all of which are brought to the attention of employees.
 - (b) Periodically appraise the effectiveness of the policies and procedures and ensure that any necessary changes are made.
 - (c) Ensure that its activities do not detrimentally affect the safety, health and welfare of the general public. Where this cannot be avoided altogether it will, through its officers, ensure the general public is made aware of any situations that arise affecting its safety, health and welfare, and take any necessary precautions to eliminate such situations.

Line Manager's Responsibilities:

- 2.4 Under the Health & Safety at Work Act Line Managers have responsibility in the following areas:

Town Clerk (Clare Evans) Day to day management responsibilities & Council Offices

In the absence of the Town Clerk, Debbie Marsh (Head of Corporate Services) assumes these responsibilities.

Grounds Manager (Robert Kempson) Day to day management responsibilities for outside areas

In the absence of the Grounds Manager, Ian Haynes (Head of Environmental and Community Services) assumes these responsibilities.

- 2.5 These Officers are responsible for:
 - (i) Implementing the Council's overall safety, health and welfare policy in the work area under their control.
 - (ii) Ensuring that all subordinate staff fulfill their responsibilities in respect of safety, health and welfare.
 - (iii) In so far as it is within their power ensure there is adequate staff, funds and materials to meet the safety, health and welfare programme and that appropriate safe working arrangements are made before work begins.
 - (iv) Taking a direct interest in the Council's safety, health and welfare policy / programme and supporting other persons in carrying it out.

- (v) Ensuring that first aid facilities are available to all employees.
- (vi) Evaluating all risks relating to accidents and health at work, loss or damage to the Council's property and to the public and putting in place appropriate safe working procedures.
- (vii) Ensuring that all liability is covered by Insurance.
- (viii) Taking part in an annual review of the performance of the Council in the field of safety, health and welfare and developing an annual safety, health and welfare programme (risk assessments).
- ix) Ensuring that appropriate records are kept, including Accident Reporting (via Online: www.hse.gov.uk/riddor or alternatively by phoning 0345 300 9923 (during normal working hours), for fatal accidents or accidents resulting in specified injuries to workers only. and Assessments (COSHH and Manual Handling.)

Employees' Responsibilities:

2.6 Under the Act the employees of this Council have responsibilities as follows:

- (i) To carry out their duties without endangering the health and safety of themselves, their colleagues and the general public.
- (ii) To comply with all instructions appertaining to safety, all statutory provisions and local codes of practice.
- (iii) Not to interfere with anything provided to safeguard their health and safety;
- (iv) To endeavour to facilitate the implementation of the safety policies of their Council, Department and Section.
- (v) Bring to the attention of management any health and safety matters requiring attention.

3.0 ARRANGEMENTS

3.1 Health & Safety Risks Arising from Work Activities

- Risk assessments will be undertaken by the Town Clerk and the Grounds Manager
- Confirmation of the completion of the risk assessments and actions required will be reported to Town Council on an annual basis.
- Action required to remove / control risks will be approved by Town Clerk or Town Council.
- The Town Clerk / Grounds Manager will be responsible for ensuring the action required is implemented and that the action has removed / reduced the risks.

- Risk assessments will be reviewed annually or when circumstances change, whichever is the soonest.

3.2 Consultation with employees

- Employee representatives are:
Office staff: Debbie Marsh (Head of Corporate Services)
Grounds Staff: Ian Haynes (Head of Environmental & Community Services)
- Consultation with employees is provided through the bi-monthly staff meeting or when required

3.3 Safe plant and equipment

- The Grounds Manager will be responsible for identifying all equipment / plant needing maintenance
- The Grounds Manager and in the absence of the Town Clerk the Head of Environmental & Community Services will be responsible for ensuring that all identified maintenance is implemented.
- Any problems found with plant / equipment should be reported to the Head of Environmental & Community Services in the absence of the Town Clerk or Grounds Manager
- Grounds Manager and Head of Environmental & Community Services will check that new plant and equipment meets health and safety standards before it is purchased.

3.4 Safe handling and use of substances

- Grounds Manager and the Head of Environmental & Community Services, in the absence of the Town Clerk will be responsible for identifying all substances that need a COSHH assessment.
- Grounds Manager and the Head of Environmental & Community Services, in the absence of the Town Clerk will be responsible for undertaking COSHH assessments.
- Grounds Manager and the Head of Environmental & Community Services, in the absence of the Town Clerk will be responsible for ensuring that all actions identified in the assessments are implemented.
- Grounds Manager and the Head of Environmental & Community Services, in the absence of the Town Clerk will be responsible for ensuring that all relevant employees are informed about COSHH assessments.
- Grounds Manager and the Head of Environmental & Community Services, in the absence of the Town Clerk will ensure that new substances can be used safely before they are purchased.
- Assessments will be reviewed annually or when the work activity changes, whichever is the soonest.

3.5 Information, Instruction and Supervision

- The Health and Safety law poster is displayed in all Council properties
- Health and safety advice is available from Central Bedfordshire Council
- Supervision of young workers / trainees will be arranged / undertaken / monitored by Town Clerk
- The Town Clerk is responsible for ensuring that employees working at locations under the control of other employers are given relevant health and safety information.
- The Town Clerk is responsible for ensuring that employees working from home have been provided with the relevant health and safety information and advice.

3.6 Competency for Tasks and Training

- The Town Clerk will ensure the provision of induction training for all employees
- Job specific training will be provided by Grounds Manager or Town Clerk.
- Training records will be kept by the Town Clerk at the Council Offices
- Training will be identified, arranged and monitored by the Town Clerk through the bi-annual appraisal system.

3.7 Accidents, First Aid and Work-Related Ill Health

- First aid boxes are kept in the Council offices, the Council workshop and in each of the Council vehicles.
- The appointed persons / first aiders are: Clare Evans, Chantel England, Tara Earnshaw, Ben McGarrigle, Josh McGarrigle, and Mark Titterington .
- All accidents and cases of work-related ill health are to be recorded in one of the 2 accident books. The books are kept at the Council Offices and the Council Workshop.
- The Town Clerk is responsible for reporting accidents, diseases and dangerous occurrences to the enforcing authority.
- Health & safety checks including the checking of the 1st Aid boxes are completed on a 6-month basis and a record of the inspection is kept.

3.8 Monitoring

To check working conditions and to ensure that safe working practices are being followed, the Council will:

- Discuss health and safety issues at the bi-monthly staff meetings
- Discuss on an individual basis health and safety issues with employees at their bi-annual appraisal meeting

- Carry out periodic inspections of work practices
- Investigate accidents (responsibility of the Town Clerk)
- Investigate work related causes of sickness absences (responsibility of the Town Clerk)
- Act on investigation findings to prevent a recurrence (responsibility of the Town Clerk).

3.9 Emergency Procedures – Fire and Evacuation

- The Town Clerk is responsible for ensuring the fire risk assessment is undertaken and implemented.
- Escape routes are checked by the Town Clerk and the Grounds Manager every month
- Fire extinguishers and emergency lighting are maintained and checked annually by a competent firm
- Smoke alarms are tested monthly by the Head of Grounds Foreman (office) and the Grounds Manager (there are no fire alarms)
- Emergency evacuation will be tested every six months.

4.0 CODE OF PRACTICE

4.1 This information and guidance has been prepared for the benefit of all employees to ensure the safety of yourself, your colleagues and members of the public.

- I. If you are unsure on any aspect of safety in respect of any task seek guidance from your Manager.
- II. If you discover a fault on any item of equipment, or notice anything you consider to be unsafe, report it to your Manager.
- III. Keep your workplace clean and tidy.
- IV. Keep your working area, including floor space, free from all obstructions.
- V. Good standards of hygiene must be maintained at all times.
- VI. Clothing/footwear must be appropriate for the job. Protective clothing should be worn when supplied.
- VII. Do not attempt to use any item of machinery or equipment if you have not had adequate instruction.
- VIII. Council vehicles should only be driven by Council employees. The driver must ensure the vehicle is not overloaded. Vehicles must be regularly cleaned (inside and out) and regular checks made on oil, water, tyres and lights.

- IX. No attempt should be made to lift heavy or awkward items unassisted. If assistance is not available, do not lift.
- X. All fuels, chemicals, cleaning materials, etc., must be stored in safety zones and used in accordance with the supplier's instructions or local safe working procedures as appropriate.
- XI. Be aware of the health risk from exposure to hypodermic needles/blood and use protective clothing when handling such items.
- XII. Equipment must not be stacked unless so designed.
- XIII. Step ladders must be in good condition and used by a competent person.
- XIV. Ladders must be in good condition and must not be used by one person alone. There must always be another person at the foot of the ladder unless the ladder is securely fixed by some other means.
- XV. Appropriate fire notices are displayed throughout the Council's premises. Be aware of procedure in case of fire and ensure it is strictly adhered to. On hearing the alarm vacate the premises immediately. Life is more important than property.
- XVI. All accidents must be reported and entered in one of the Accident Books. These are kept at the Council Offices, Peel Street and at the workshop.
- XVII. Smoking and vaping is not permitted in any of the council premises or in any Council vehicle.