

## **The Chilterns Conservation Board Health and Safety Policy**

Our policy is to provide and maintain, so far as is reasonably practicably, safe and healthy working conditions, equipment and systems of work for all our employees and volunteers, and to provide such information, training and supervision as they need for this purpose.

We also accept our responsibilities for the health and safety of other people who may be affected by our activities.

The allocation of duties for safety matters and the particular arrangements, which we will make to implement the policy, are included within this document.

To ensure that this policy will be kept up to date, we will review it every three years or sooner at the Chairman's discretion.

Signed

Chief Officer

Date

Written procedures that support this policy are as follows:

1. Health and safety responsibilities
2. Reporting of Accidents and Dangerous Occurrences
3. First Aid Arrangements
4. Risk Assessment
5. Manual Handling and lifting
6. Lone working
7. Control of Substances Hazardous to Health (COSHH)
8. Electrical Equipment
9. General Fire Safety
10. Use of Visual Display Units
11. Smoking
12. Personal Protective Equipment

### **1. Responsibilities**

- 1.1 The Chilterns Conservation Board is responsible for approving the Health and Safety Policy.

- 1.2 The Chief Officer is responsible for establishing the health and safety policy and ensuring compliance across all activities of The Chilterns Conservation Board
- 1.3 The Office Manager has been given the responsibility of monitoring Health and Safety procedures, and for advising the Chief Officer on their effectiveness.
- 1.4 Both the employer and employees have the responsibility to co-operate with fellow employees and the employer to achieve a healthy and safe workplace, and to take reasonable care of themselves and others.
- 1.5 The approach by The Chilterns Conservation Board in detecting and eliminating risks shall be;
  - By Risk assessment as required within the Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999
  - By continuous informal monitoring and discussion within the organisation
- 1.6 The number of personnel employed by The Chilterns Conservation Board allows easy written and verbal communication to occur to both recognise and quickly resolve any Health and Safety problems.

## **2. Reporting of Accidents and Dangerous Occurrences**

- 2.1 All accidents resulting in personal injury, however small, must be reported as soon as possible after the incident and recorded by an authorised person in the Accident Book kept at the Board's office.
- 2.2 The Health and Safety Executive (HSE) identifies that the following incidents must be reported directly to them as per the Reporting of Injuries, Diseases and Dangerous Occurrences Regulations (RIDDOR) (1985)" – deaths, major injuries, accidents resulting in over three day injury, diseases, dangerous occurrences, gas incidents. Verbal notification must be made within three days and written confirmation within ten.

## **3. First Aid Arrangements**

- 3.1 Appropriate employees will receive First Aid training and the designated First Aiders are;
- 3.2 Individual First Aid Kits are provided and it's the employee's responsibility to maintain its contents which can be obtained by the Office Manager.

## **4 Risk Assessments**

- 4.1 An annual assessment will be made of the office to identify any risks to health that might exist. The purpose of the assessment is to identify any hazard with the potential to cause harm, to consider the likelihood that harm from a particular hazard is realised and to take steps to remove or lessen the risk.

- 4.2 The survey will be undertaken by the Office Manager and the results of the survey will be formally recorded. Any required action will be noted, an individual requested to undertake the work and progress will be monitored by the Chief Officer.
- 4.3 In addition, risk assessments will be made whenever major changes to the layout of offices are made or if new hazards enter the work place, if there are significant changes to working practices, following notification of an accident or dangerous incident and if a member of staff becomes pregnant.
- 4.4 In accordance with the Fire Precautions (Welfare) Regulations 1997 the Office Manager will ensure fire risk assessments are carried out, the results recorded, monitored and reviewed. This will take into account any special fire hazards in any specific areas of the workplace. Responsibilities will also include ensuring compliance with fire safety and prevention codes, training for employees in fire prevention practices, reviewing practices and procedures, inspecting and testing of fire fighting equipment, prevention and protection equipment, advising on safe practices and procedures, arranging fire alarm, emergency and evacuation tests.

## **5. Manual Handling and Lifting**

- 5.1 Manual handling operations will be avoided, as far as is reasonably practical, where there is risk of injury. Employees are reminded that they should not be lifting heavy objects and should be aware of the correct handling methods as advised by the HSE.
- 5.2 Details of all accidents will be recorded in the Accident Book located in the general office.

## **6. Lone working**

- 6.1 The nature of the work that we do makes working alone a common occurrence. It is therefore important that employees are aware of the hazards which they may come up against. These guidance notes are designed for all employees and volunteers to take into consideration when working alone. All employees must be familiar with and adhere to these guidance notes.
- 6.2 The Board will ensure that the necessary tools and equipment are made available to all employees and volunteers (i.e. mobile phone, personal alarms). As part of its commitment to personal safety and welfare of employees, sufficient training will be made available so that employees are confident and prepared for lone working.
- 6.3 If an employee does not feel confident in lone working, however much they have been prepared, they should feel comfortable in saying "no" to their manager and making alternative arrangements. Whatever the reasons an employee gives for not wanting to work alone, they should be supported

during the discussions and helped to find ways of combating the issues. Confidentiality should be adhered to in such cases.

- 6.4 This issue relates equally to both men and women and therefore requires commitment from both sexes to adhere to the guidance provided.

## **Potential Hazards**

### **Violence**

- 6.5 The danger of potential violent encounter with a member of the public is recognised. This may be verbal or physical in nature and could occur both at the work place or out on site

### **Accidents**

- 6.6 Anyone who has an accident whilst working alone may be at greater risk due to lack of help. This is likely to be more so for staff working away from the office and especially in remote areas

## **Precautions**

### **In the Office**

- 6.7 Avoid being left alone in the office whenever possible. However, if you find that you have to be left alone:
1. Always make sure that the front door is locked. If someone buzzes the door to be let in, check first who they are and who they have come to see. Only open the door to let them in if you are satisfied with their responses.
  2. Avoid holding meetings with strangers when on your own in the building. Be aware that meetings can go on after normal working hours and you may find yourself unexpectedly alone.
- 6.8 No employee should leave the building leaving a colleague alone without informing them that they are about to leave. If the last person is uncomfortable being left alone they should leave the building using their working hours flexibly to cover their time.

### **Away from the Office**

- 6.9 When working away from the office employees must ensure that their whereabouts are clearly explained in the electronic diary. This should include sufficient detail on where they are going, who they are meeting and when the approximate time for return so that they can be located if necessary. If an employee is going to return later (e.g. over 2 hours) than expected they will advise the office who will record this in the diary.

- 6.10 All employees should have a mobile phone with them and these should be turned on whilst away from the office except during meetings. When using a mobile phone make sure you keep within the legal constraints, the Board will not take responsibility for employees who break the law.
- 6.11 All employees can also request their own personal alarm.
- 6.12 Employees are provided with individual First Aid Kit.
- 6.13 Employees should not be themselves at risk or undertake activities that are dangerous or where there is a possible associated risk.
- 6.14 Employees are reminded that if they are not happy going somewhere alone they should ask a colleague or someone from one of the other partner organisations that may be involved in the project to attend.

### **Dealing with confrontation**

- 6.15 Employees are advised that if they find themselves in a confrontational situation they should walk away, call the office or emergency services immediately and ask for help. They must not disclose any personal details, they should use their personal alarm if necessary, and seek assistance from a passer-by or person from a nearby property.
- 6.16 On return to the office they report the incident to their line manager who will guide and support the individual and ensure that they receive the necessary counselling.

## **7. Control of Substances Hazardous to Health**

- 7.1 In order to detect and control the use of potentially hazardous substances, assessments will be carried out in compliance with the Control of Substances Hazardous to Health Regulations by the Office Manager
- 7.2 Completed Audit Forms will be retained (together with suppliers' data sheets) and held in the office for reading/use by employees.
- 7.3 The frequency of audits will be every three years or whenever a new or alternative substance is introduced.

## **8. Electrical Equipment**

- 8.1 Portable electrical equipment will be checked in accordance with the Electricity at Work Regulations 1989.
- 8.2 Each item of equipment shall be uniquely identified and recorded in a Register. This register shall detail checks made, results of checks made and any corrective actions. The Board has determined that there should be an annual check of each appliance.

8.3 Repairs to electrical equipment will be carried out by a suitably qualified contractor

8.4 Fixed electrical systems are also checked by suitable qualified electrician

## **9. General Fire Safety**

9.1 The procedures in use at The Board have been introduced to comply with “the Fire Precautions (Workplace) Amendment Regulations 1999”.

These include;

- Fire Drills will be carried out at least once per annum
- The Fire Alarm system shall be checked every twelve months and maintained as necessary
- Fire Extinguishers shall be located within specific/identified areas

9.2 Information shall be provided to employees and visitors on what action to take in the event of a fire (i.e. contact numbers and assembly area)

9.3 Certain personnel shall be identified responsible for checking by head count that all employees have been evacuated safely

9.4 A review of actions taken will be recorded as a formal risk assessment

## **10. Visual Display Screens**

10.1 Employees will be provided with equipment that complies with the relevant legislation and jobs will, if necessary be structured in such a way as to reduce the risk of strain or stress.

10.2 Checks will be made of VDUs and work stations as required by government regulations. These checks will be recorded and held by the Officer Manager.

10.3 All employees will be encouraged to have a bi-annual eyesight test by an optician of their choice paid for by The Board. Where the test indicates the need for special spectacles in order that the employee can carry out his/her work using the VDU, The Board will subsidise the cost up to a maximum of £50.

## **11. Smoking**

11.1 The Board operates a strict no smoking policy in its office.

## **12. Personal Protective Equipment**

- 12.1 Personal Protective Equipment will be issued to employees and volunteers, if necessary, and according to the requirements of their job or task. Ongoing discussions will ensure that the most suitable types of equipment are provided. It is the responsibility of employees to advise whenever equipment becomes defective/requires replacement.