



Work at Height Policy

1.0 OVERVIEW / AIM

It is the responsibility of the Trust to protect its employees who work at height through the use of the procedures and guidance contained in this policy.

The main set of regulations that cover this type of work is the Work at Height Regulations 2005 and their subsequent amendments in 2007.

For the purpose of definition, work at height means;

- any work in any place, including a place at or below ground level,
- obtaining access to or egress from such place while at work, except by a staircase in a permanent workplace, where, if measures required by the Work at Height Regulations 2005 were not taken, a person could fall a distance liable to cause personal injury.

This policy is aimed at managers and employees who by virtue of their employment at the Trust, work at height during their work activities.

The term working at height will mean any work at height including working off ladders or steps, roof work, guttering work, painting work, plumbing work, joinery work, plaster work and bricklaying, which involves work above or below ground level.

2.0 POLICY

The Trust only works at height where there is no other alternative to completing the work. If it is possible to complete the work from inside a building, from an existing place of work or by using an existing means, then this will be the preferred method of work.

The Trust only uses equipment for work at height that is appropriate for the task. The suitability of the equipment is decided by line managers who have the knowledge, experience and training to carry out risk assessments.

Mobile work equipment is hired in as and when required and it is the responsibility of the hire company to ensure it is safe.

The Trust uses working platforms, designed for the purpose of working at height, to gain access to work at height, where the whole task to be undertaken is longer than 20 minutes in duration.

The Trust carries out quarterly inspections of its ladder stock on a rolling program and uses ladder tags to identify the next inspection date.

Work on ladders is only carried out for short duration tasks where the whole task would not be any longer than 20 minutes dependant upon use.

The Trust does not permit work at height on fragile surfaces.

The Trust only permits persons to work at height once they have received adequate information, instruction and training.

The Trust only permits work at height that has been properly planned and organized. For regular routine tasks, such planning and organising may be undertaken by the employee carrying out the task via a dynamic risk assessment

There are specific health risks to employees who work at height such as a fear of heights. Where this is the case, the employee must inform the Trust of their condition.

The Trust ensures that employees who work at height and those who supervise them are given adequate information, instruction, and training to enable them to carry out any work at height safely.

The Trust requires risk assessments to be carried out for all work at height and the development of safe systems of work.

The Trust requires supervision of work at height where there is a need to do so as identified within a risk assessment.

The Trust does not allow contractors, suppliers, company representatives, service engineers or technicians to work at height without first demonstrating to the Trust that those persons are trained in how to work at height safely.

New and young employees are not permitted to work at height at the Trust until they have received adequate information, instruction and training.

No one will be permitted to work at height at the Trust who is not properly trained or who is under the influence of alcohol or drugs.

The Trust does not permit work at height in poor weather conditions which would impact on the personal safety of those working at height.

The Trust will only engage persons to work at height, and supervise those who work at height, who are competent to do so.

The Trust has identified and assessed specific hazards such as falling objects from work platforms, overhead cables and ground conditions via generic or individual risk assessments undertaken by line managers.

The Trust requires that access to work at height sites be limited to those who are there to complete the work.

The Trust requires inspections to be carried out before work commences at height to ensure that this policy is adhered to and that all appropriate safety requirements have been met.

The Trust requires safety inspection records to be filed and a copy kept on site until the next inspection.

The Trust requires all safety signage to be in place for work at height and, where appropriate, operation manuals for work equipment to be provided.

The Trust requires a detailed inspection of working platforms, from which a person could potentially fall, every 7 days.

The Trust requires employees who use mobile work equipment for work at height to be trained in its safe use.

The Trust, where appropriate, only uses mobile work equipment that is suitably designed to carry persons for work at height.

The Trust does not permit persons to ride on mobile work equipment that is not designed for the purpose of working at height.

The Trust requires risk assessments to be undertaken where there is a risk of mobile work equipment rolling over whilst it is being used for work at height.

The Trust requires any lifting equipment used for the purpose of working at height to be fit for purpose and maintained in a safe working order at all times.

The Trust requires Mobile Elevated Work platforms to be fit for purpose, working correctly and all persons operating them must be trained in their safe use.

The Trust requires all equipment for working at height to be positioned or installed correctly.

The Trust does not permit the over loading of any working equipment, elevated working platforms, fixed platforms and lifting equipment for the use of work at height.

The Trust requires all lifting accessories and storage racks to be marked with the appropriate safe working load and instructions for their safe use when working at height.

The Trust requires all accidents and incidents at height to be reported in accordance with the Trust accident reporting procedure and then investigated in line with the Trust's accident investigation policy.

The Trust requires employees to report any activity or defect relating to work at height which is likely to endanger the safety of themselves or other persons.

Employees must report any damaged or faulty equipment, provided for the purpose of work at height, to their line manager.

Employees must operate all equipment for use at height in line with safe working practices, instruction, information and training provided by the Trust.

Employees must not use any equipment provided for the purpose of use at height which is damaged or faulty.

Employees are not permitted to use any work equipment at height without the appropriate information, instruction and training.

Employees must comply with mandatory signage and / or where they are instructed by a line manager to wear the correct personal protective equipment when working at height.

In the event of an emergency line managers must ensure that all persons working at height have safe access and egress when working at height.

3.0 OUTCOMES FOR CUSTOMERS

The Trust strives to minimise the risks at work at all times. Its aim is to provide a safe working environment at all times for all staff, customers and any other relevant third parties. A hierarchy of control has been introduced, and will be followed to help reduce the risk to all. Reduction of risk directly affects and reduces absences from work due to injury or ill-health, therefore the level of service afforded to our customers can be maintained.

4.0 OUTCOMES FOR THE TRUST

The Trust has adopted a sensible approach to Health and Safety and this policy compliments the main health and safety policy and other policies established to manage specific areas of risk. The Trust, through reduction of risk via the hierarchy of control, strives to maintain a healthy and safe environment for its entire workforce and those who can be affected by its work and processes. The result of this achievement is a healthy and able workforce with less likelihood of financial claims for compensation being taken against the Trust. The implementation of this policy also ensures the Trust's compliance with regulatory requirements.

5.0 EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY

In respect of Health and Safety, the Trust treats all employees, customers and other relevant third parties equally. Anyone who feels they belong to a minority group should not be treated any differently from anyone else in respect of personal protective equipment as defined within this Policy but in line with identified hazards and control measures as part of the risk assessment process. The Trust will endeavour to reduce risks in line with the hierarchy of control, undertaking more appropriate methods of control before utilising personal protective equipment, particularly in relation to personnel classed as belonging to minority groups. A Race and Diversity Impact Assessment has been carried out as part of the policy review procedure and is appended with this policy.

6.0 MONITORING

The management of any working at height and this policy to which it relates will be monitored by the Health and Safety Forum and by individual staff and managers at monthly team meetings and 1:1's

7.0 CONSULTATION

All Health and Safety policies are formulated in conjunction with significant consultation with managers and the Health and Safety Forum. Implementation of this policy follows consultation with and adherence to relevant UK regulations such as The Work at Height Regulations 2005, Management of Health & Safety at Work Regulations 1999 and Lifting Operations and Lifting Equipment Regulations 1998. Customers and third parties are not normally consulted with in respect of Health and Safety policies.

8.0 LINKS AND INTERDEPENDENCIES

All elements are covered in the main body of the policy. All Health and Safety legislative responsibilities are incorporated into this and every other Health and Safety policy that is formulated. Guidance Note 10 – Ladders and Access Equipment Safety Booklet, Guidance Note 12 – Scaffolding Safety Booklet and Guidance Note 14 – Plant & Equipment Safety Booklet have all been written in support of and as accompaniment to this policy. Also linked to this policy is the Trust's procedure for reporting defects and the carrying out of risk assessments.

9.0 RESPONSIBILITY

Each Director will be responsible for the following:

- a) Monitoring the effectiveness of this policy in their area of responsibility.
- b) Ensuring that line managers undertake their duties in line with the policy requirements.

- c) Ensuring that adequate resources are in place to allow the requirements of this policy to be met.

Each line manager will be responsible for the following:

Ensure that any work at height is planned and organised so far as is reasonably practicable to ensure the safety of those at work.

Ensuring that staff who work at height have the knowledge, training and experience to carry out the task safely.

Ensure that the level of supervision is adequate and appropriate to the level of risk and that the supervisor has the knowledge, training and experience to supervise the working at height operations.

Ensuring that employees' health has been considered before any working at height begins.

Ensuring that work at height is not carried out when weather conditions jeopardize the health and safety of those who are going to be working at height.

Identify any hazards to employees who work at height through the process of risk assessment and assessing those risks to eliminate or reduce the overall risk.

Ensuring that the risk of falling from height is eliminated or prevented by adherence to the hierarchy of control outlined within the Work at Height Regulations.

Ensuring that where work has to be carried out at height, sufficient work equipment is provided to ensure, as far as reasonably practicable, that a fall can be prevented.

Adequately control the risks by ensuring that where such work equipment is used (e.g. guard-rails, toe-boards, barriers and scaffolds) that they are of sufficient strength and rigidity for the purpose they are being used and placed in a secured position to prevent falls of persons or equipment.

Ensure that all work equipment for work at height is routinely maintained and, where appropriate, replaced or repaired.

Ensure that inspection records are maintained for work equipment and that a copy is recorded until the next inspection for work equipment used for work at height.

Ensuring that suitable and sufficient fall arrest equipment is supplied in accordance with the requirements of the task in hand and as identified in the risk assessment.

Ensure that fall arrest equipment has been installed, located and used in a safe manner to reduce the risks to those who are users of the fall arrest equipment.

Ensure that fragile surfaces are avoided where it is reasonably practicable to do so.

Ensure that steps have been taken to prevent objects falling from work being carried out at height.

Ensure that where there is a risk of falling objects that access is prevented to unauthorized personnel.

Ensure that instruction sheets or manuals, instrument panels, warning signs are understood and in a language that is appropriate to the user for work equipment used for work at height.

Ensure that where a person could potentially fall from a working platform, that the platform is inspected every 7 days.

Ensure that all operators of mobile work equipment used for work at height are trained and deemed competent to operate mobile work equipment safely.

Ensure that any mandatory signs are in place e.g. hardhats must be worn or ear protection must be worn.

Ensure that mobile work equipment is fitted with safety anchor points, safety protection and that it is suitable for carrying people for work at height.

Ensure that any lifting equipment that is provided for use at work at height is fit for purpose and maintained in a safe working order.

Ensure that any Mobile Elevated Work platform used at the Trust is designed for the purpose, working correctly, and that employees are trained in its safe use.

Ensure that lifting equipment is positioned or installed correctly to reduce the risk of sudden movement of loads or equipment, drifting of loads, falling free or unintentional release of loads whilst working at height.

Ensure the safe working load (SWL) is not exceeded for lifting equipment under any circumstances whilst working at height.

Ensure that all lifting accessories and storage racks are marked with the appropriate safe working load and instructions for their safe use when working at height.

Ensure that all lifting operations are planned, that risk assessments have been carried out, resources are allocated and employees/contractors understand their responsibilities so that any lifting operation can be carried out safely when working at height.

Reporting any accidents or incidents involving work at height to the Trust's Health and Safety Adviser and undertaking accident investigations to stop similar accidents or incidents from re-occurring.

In cases of emergency the appropriate type of work equipment must be used to allow safe access and egress for those working at height.

Employees are responsible for the following:

Carrying out a dynamic risk assessment of the work area prior to commencing any task that involves working at height or the use of ladders, steps, Easi-deck, mobile elevated working platforms etc.

Reporting any activity or defect relating to work at height which is likely to endanger the safety of themselves or other persons.

Using work equipment at height in accordance with training, information and instructions provided by the Trust.

Informing their line manager, supervisor of any health problems they may have which may affect them working at height.

Reporting any damaged or faulty equipment to the line manager and not using the damaged or faulty equipment before it is replaced or repaired when working at height.

Not using any type of work equipment when under the influence of alcohol or drugs whilst working at height.

Reporting any hazardous incidents which involve any work at height to the line manager.

Operating all work equipment in a safe manner and in line with safe working practices and / or operator's manuals when working at height.

Not operating any work equipment at height which has faulty or damaged guards or protection devices.

Not operating any mobile work platform at height without the appropriate training.

Ensure that fragile surfaces are avoided where it is reasonably practicable to do so.

Wearing personal protective equipment in the correct manner where mandatory signs indicate the need to do so or where the line manager has requested an employee to do so.

10.0 COMPLAINTS, COMPENSATION AND APPEALS

The Trust's Grievance Procedure is available for any staff who consider that the Trust is not operating in accordance with this policy.

11.0 REVIEW

This policy will be reviewed once every 3 years, the next review being conducted by the Director of Property Services in March 2012 or at such time that any legislative changes dictate the policy is deemed to be no longer valid.

12.0 ACTION PLAN

The current work at height policy and its relevant procedures, links and interdependencies are in place and as such, no interruption of policy cover should be experienced with the implementation of the changes introduced in this policy review.

Appendix to Policy: Race and Diversity Impact Assessment

Appendix two

Race and Diversity Impact Assessment

The term policy refers to any activity Weaver Vale does – whether that is a policy or procedure we write or review, a service we provide, an OSDP project, or an initiative we run.

Department:	THE TRUST AS A WHOLE		Officer responsible for the assessment:	IVAN HILDITCH	
Name of Policy to be assessed:	WORKING AT HEIGHT	Date of Assessment:	26.03.09	Is this a new or existing policy?	EXISTING
1. Briefly describe the aims, objectives and purpose of the policy.	THE AIM OF THE POLICY IS TO RAISE AWARENESS OF THE DANGERS ATTRIBUTED TO WORKING AT HEIGHT ALONG WITH THE POTENTIAL CIRCUMSTANCES THAT CAN BE SUFFERED AS A RESULT OF AN ACCIDENT. THE OBJECTIVE IS TO REDUCE THE NUMBER OF INJURIES ATTRIBUTED TO WORKING AT HEIGHT AND TO PROMOTE THE POSITIVE STEPS BEING TAKEN BY THE TRUST TO ENSURE EVERYONE'S SAFETY.				
2. Who is intended to benefit from this policy, and in what way?	THE POLICY IS AIMED AT PROTECTING THE WHOLE WORKFORCE, AND CONTRACTORS, ALTHOUGH NOT EVERYONE WORKS AT HEIGHT IN THE CONVENTIONAL SENSE. THE REGULATIONS ARE CLEAR THAT WORKING AT HEIGHT IS ANY DISTANCE, ABOVE OR BELOW GROUND LEVEL, THAT ANYONE COULD POTENTIALLY FALL FROM AND CAUSE THEMSELVES AND INJURY.				
When completing the section below consider whether the services made available through the policy are accessible to everyone with the community. Bear in mind any economic, social, environmental, physical, intellectual, cultural, linguistic, technological or other barriers.					
3. Are there concerns that the policy could have a differential impact either positive or negative due to their age?	Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>				
What existing evidence (either presumed or otherwise) do you have for this? Can any positive/negative impact be justified?	MEDICATION BEING TAKEN FOR AGE RELATED ILLNESSES COULD AFFECT PERSONNEL IN ANY NUMBER OF WAYS THAT MAY INCREASE THE RISK OF AN INJURY OR A FALL FROM ANY WORK BEING UNDERTAKEN AT HEIGHT.				
4. Are there concerns that the policy could have a differential impact either positive or negative due to disability?	Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>				

<p>What existing evidence (either presumed or otherwise) do you have for this? Can any positive/negative impact be justified?</p>	<p>PHYSICAL IMPAIRMENTS CAN AFFECT PERSONNEL IN DIFFERENT WAYS LEAVING THEM AND THOSE AROUND THEM SUSCEPTABLE TO HIGHER RISK OF INJURY OR A FALL FROM ANY WORK UNDERTAKEN AT HEIGHT</p>	
<p>5. Are there concerns that the policy could have a differential impact either positive or negative on people with literacy issues?</p>	<p>Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/></p>	
<p>What existing evidence (either presumed or otherwise) do you have for this? Can any positive/negative impact be justified?</p>	<p>THE INABILITY TO READ WARNING SIGNS OR READ AND FOLLOW METHOD STATEMENTS OR SYSTEMS OF WORK COULD PLACE PERSONNEL AT HIGHER RISK OF INJURY RELATED TO WORKING AT HEIGHT</p>	
<p>6. Are there concerns that the policy could have a differential impact either positive or negative due to gender?</p>	<p>Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/></p>	
<p>What existing evidence (either presumed or otherwise) do you have for this? Can any positive/negative impact be justified?</p>	<p>INJURIES AND FALLS FROM HEIGHT DO NOT DISCRIMINATE BETWEEN GENDER.</p>	
<p>7. Are there concerns that the policy could have a differential impact either positive or negative on racial groups?</p>	<p>Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/></p>	
<p>What existing evidence (either presumed or otherwise) do you have for this? Can any positive/negative impact be justified?</p>	<p>INJURIES AND FALLS FROM HEIGHT DO NOT DISCRIMINATE BETWEEN ETHNICITY</p>	
<p>8. Are there concerns that the policy could have a differential impact either positive or negative due to their faith or religious belief?</p>	<p>Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/></p>	
<p>What existing evidence (either presumed or otherwise) do you have for this? Can any positive/negative impact be justified?</p>	<p>INJURIES AND FALLS FROM HEIGHT DO NOT DISCRIMINATE BETWEEN FAITHS AND / OR RELIGIOUS BELIEF.</p>	

9. Are there concerns that the policy could have a differential impact either positive or negative due to any other equality issues? (e.g. people with dependents and or/ caring responsibilities or people with a criminal record)		Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>		
What existing evidence (either presumed or otherwise) do you have for this? Can any positive/negative impact be justified?		INJURIES AND FALLS FROM HEIGHT DO NOT DISCRIMINATE BETWEEN PERSONNEL WHO MAY OR MAY NOT HAVE OTHER EQUALITY ISSUES. STAFF WHO HAVE AN INHERENT FEAR OF HEIGHTS OR OTHER HEALTH ISSUE THAT COULD AFFECT THEM WORKING AT HEIGHT			
10. Are there concerns that the policy could have a differential impact either positive or negative due to sexual orientation?		Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>		
What existing evidence (either presumed or otherwise) do you have for this/ Can any positive/negative impact be justified?		INJURIES AND FALLS FROM HEIGHT DO NOT DISCRIMINATE BETWEEN SEXUAL ORIENTATION			
11.	Could the differential impact identified in 3-10 amount to there being the potential for adverse impact in this policy?	NO. THE POLICY REMOVES THE AMBIGUITY OF WORK METHOD FOR ANYONE AFFECTED BY A NEGATIVE ISSUE AND MAKES CLEAR THE RESPONSIBILITIES OF EVERYONE CONCERNED.			
Can this adverse impact be justified on the grounds of promoting equality of opportunity for one group? Or any other reason?		NOT APPLICABLE			
Should a full impact assessment to be carried out?		Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>		
Area of Negative Impact	Action	Target Date	Responsible	Outcomes for Customers	Progress
