



Skipton Town Council

Policy Name:	Safe Working At Height Policy
Date of Last Review:	Adopted 15 th May 2025
Version Number:	01
Responsible Officer:	Estate Supervisor
File Location:	Estate Team Procedures
Next Review Due:	14 th May 2026
Added to Policy Register:	Yes

1.0 Introduction and Context

- 1.1** A fall from height is one of the most common causes of serious injury or death in the workplace and the risks must be properly managed.
- 1.2** Skipton Town Council seeks to mitigate the risks of working at height, in the first instance though working at height should be avoided wherever possible.
- 1.3** The Council appreciates there will be occasions where working at height is unavoidable, this policy sets out practical measure for reducing risk as much as possible.
- 1.4** Working at height includes any place above or below ground level which “if a person fell they would be likely to suffer injury” (Health and Safety Executive (HSE), 2014). Examples include: An opening in the floor, working up a ladder or where someone could fall through a fragile surface, such as a roof.
- 1.5** The Work at Height Regulations 2005 place duties on employers to ensure that any work carried out at height is done in a safe manner that prevents persons or equipment falling from height.
- 1.6** The selection of access equipment, such as ladders or mobile work platforms must be carefully considered and should be suitable for the task it is designed to be used for. Access equipment includes step stools, stepladders, leaning ladders, scaffold and specialist access equipment such as ‘cherry pickers’.

2.0 Aims & Objectives

- 2.1** The purpose of the policy is to ensure that where work at height cannot be avoided:
- A suitable and sufficient risk assessment is carried out by a competent person before work is carried out.
 - Work is properly planned, appropriately supervised and safely carried out.
 - The correct access equipment is selected for the type of work being carried out.
 - Employees who are required to work at height are appropriately trained.
 - Suitable controls are put in place to reduce the risks of working at height, these should include control measures to prevent persons not involved in the work from being struck by falling objects.

3.0 Scope

- 3.1** This document cannot set out a solution for every situation where working at height is unavoidable and is intended as a guide to assist staff to properly assess each instance of working at height before work commences.

The policy applies to All Council staff working anywhere within the Estate. Contractors working on behalf of the Council will also be required to comply with the standards described within the policy, they will be informed of this when they receive a site induction. Staff must, in the first instance, report any concerns or non-compliance to their line manager.

- 3.2** Ultimate responsibility for ensuring the correct access equipment is selected and setup correctly lies with the individual carrying out the task and a risk assessment should be carried out before commencement of the activity.

4.0 Responsibilities

Title	Responsibilities
Chief Officer	The Chief Executive has overall accountability for ensuring compliance with statutory regulations including the Work at Heights Regulations and to ensure that a suitable management structure is in place to manage health and safety.
Estate Supervisor	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Carrying out a risk assessment of all tasks that could be classed as working at height.• Determining the most appropriate means of access/egress and involving staff/contractors and others in the decision of a safe system of work.• It is important to note that working from ladders should only be used for light work undertaken for periods up to a maximum of 30 minutes.• Procuring or checking that any access equipment provided by contractors is suitable for the task and of an appropriate standard.• Checking that staff carrying out the task are competent to use the equipment. This includes correct assembly, appropriate fixing and securing.

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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensuring all staff are trained in using access equipment. For example, scaffolds and access equipment would require documented formal training by a manufacturer/supplier or similar, whereas a stepladder/step stool could be by local demonstration. • Ensuring that suitable and sufficient measures are put into place to minimise the risk of falling objects whilst working at height. • Monitoring the regular inspection of any system of access equipment in use for extended periods to ensure it remains safe. • Ensuring that access equipment undergoes a regular formal inspection by a competent person and that the inspection is recorded. • Engaging specialist contractors where heights are considered beyond the capability of untrained staff.
Staff	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Carry out a pre-use check of any equipment for visible damage or defects before use on every day where the equipment is used. • Immediately take the equipment out of use if it is damaged. • Immediately report any defects to their manager. • Report any difficulty or danger regarding the height or the means of access to it. • Make use of any equipment designed to prevent individuals or objects falling. • Be trained to use any access equipment or work at heights system. • Use the equipment properly, in accordance with training and instructions. • Assist in the inspection of equipment which is subject to a periodic maintenance regime, and check that it has been maintained before using it. • Report any accidents or near miss incidents

4.1 Contractors All work undertaken by contractors must only be carried out following approval of relevant risk assessments and method statements detailing how the work will be carried out in a safe manner. Risk assessments and evidence of insurance will be requested from contractors prior to them starting work

5.0 Selecting the correct equipment. Only equipment that meets British and European standards and is suitable for the work being carried out should be purchased or hired. Guidance on whether a piece of access equipment is suitable for the task at hand can be obtained from the manufacturer. When hiring or purchasing new equipment consideration must be given to:

- Likely ground conditions – most equipment needs a firm solid surface that is able to withstand the weight of the equipment and any load it may carry.
- The expected weight of any load that might need to be carried. E.g. The combined weight of the worker, materials, tools and equipment. Equipment will be marked with a maximum load capacity by the manufacturer.

5.1 Ladders and Stepladders

Ladders may be used where a risk assessment has shown that the risk is low and any work to be carried out is of short duration (usually up to a maximum of 30 minutes).

Only light materials and tools should be used. Class 1 'industrial' or EN 131 ladders or stepladders must be used at work. Class 3 ladders are designed for domestic use and are not suitable for work purposes, they must not be used in any circumstance.

Ladders or stepladders must be:

- A suitable size or length for the intended work so that over reaching is avoided.
- In good condition with no damage to any part of the ladder and no oily or slippery substances on the rungs or stiles.
- Tied at the top to a fixed structure, using a ladder stabiliser or anti-slip device at ground level.
- Used on a firm flat surface, some stepladders have a top platform. This should only be used if the ladder has a handrail that extends above the height of the platform.

5.2 Scaffolding and Mobile Access Equipment

When the use of scaffolding or mobile access equipment is required the Council will employ contractors to assist with this, ensuring any contractors comply with legislation, complete risk assessments and have the appropriate insurance.

6.0 Training

Training will be provided for staff required to work at heights. As a minimum, all staff who use ladders or stepladders as part of their work must be made aware of the HSE guidance provided on working at height.

7.0 Related Documents (links to procedures etc)

7.1 Health and Safety Policy

7.2 [Health and Safety at Work Act 1974](#)

7.3 [Workplace \(Health, Safety and Welfare\) Regulations 1992](#)

7.4 [The Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999](#)

7.5 [Working at height: A brief guide \(hse.gov.uk\)](#)

7.6 <https://www.hse.gov.uk/work-at-height/step-by-step-guide.htm>

7.7 PPE Policy