



DERBY AND SANDIACRE CANAL TRUST

Working Party Health and Safety Guide

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Introduction.

Thank you for volunteering to help us restore the Derby and Sandiacre Canal.

This booklet contains part of our Health and Safety policy, that we think would be useful to everyone working on site. This is to ensure that you, your fellow volunteers and the general public are safe on our site.

When working on any outdoor project, there will always be a risk of injury to your body and general health. Our working sites can be considered as having the same risks as working on a full scale construction site, and are therefore subject to the same rules and regulations laid down by the Health and Safety Executive.

It is the Trust's, and your, responsibility to ensure that you and everyone around you work in a safe environment, without reducing the enjoyment of helping restore the canal to full use.

This guide is only a small part of the Trust's Health and Safety Policy, ensuring that you work in a safe manner, and forms part of the Site Induction given to you before work starts.

All work is to be as directed by the Site Leader and in line with the Site Safety Plan. Any queries about the job you have been asked to carry out or which tools you should be using should be directed to your Site Leader.

Do not carry out any job that you are unsure about.
If in doubt - Always Ask.

If you see anyone working in an unsafe manner it is your duty to report the incident to your Site Leader.

Anyone found to be working in an unsafe manner and refusing to comply with the instructions of the Site Leader will be asked to leave the site.

We hope that you enjoy your visit to our Working Party, that you will remain safe at all times and look forward to seeing you again.

General good working practice.

A tidy work place is a safe working place.

The major incident of injury in the work place, is a result of of poor site tidiness. A tidy site reduces the risk of injury due to trips, but also allows the work to be done more easily.

- Never leave tools lying around. Tools left unattended or in the wrong place can cause a trip hazard or risk of falling objects, to you and others around you. Put tools away from where you are working Don't leave them on the ground or on top of a wall.
- Always tidy up. Both, whilst you are working and when the task is complete.
- If you see anything that you think could cause a problem, move it to a safe place. This applies to materials or tools left in a place that could cause a hazard, for you, your fellow workers or the general public.
- Always store tools and materials in a safe manner. Put tools in a location that does not cause a trip hazard and do not over stack materials.
- Encourage your fellow volunteers to follow your efforts for site tidiness

Before you start work.

Check that the tools you have been given, are the correct tools for the job you are to do and that they are not broken or damaged. Do not use tools that you have not been trained to use.

Damaged or using the incorrect tools can cause injuries.
The right tool for the right job.

Plan the work you have been asked to do. Always use common sense to judge the work you will do. If in doubt always ask.

Make sure you have the correct Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) for the job. Ensure it is in good condition and suitable for the task in hand.

To ensure that you do not have any trips, slips and falls, always ensure that you -

- Are you wearing the correct footwear.
- Keep your work area tidy.
- Use ladders and scaffolding for working at height. Don't climb up scaffolding or brickwork.

Keep your eyes and mind on the work in hand.

Personal Protective Equipment. (PPE)

General notes.

On any work site you will come in to contact with objects and materials that could cause you harm.

Make sure that you have the correct PPE for the job that you have been asked to do.

Ensure that any PPE you have been given, or you have supplied yourself, is in good condition and conforms to current regulations. Always keep clothing and equipment clean and in good condition to prevent any injury to yourself or others that may use it.

Hi-Vis vests or coats are required on all Working Party sites.

Your site Leader will provide you with any mandatory PPE safety equipment.

**If you think that you need some PPE for the job,
ASK for it and make sure you get it.**

Head protection.

When you are instructed by your Site Leader or the task involves the possibility of head injury, you must wear a safety helmet that conforms to the EN397 standard.

Eye Protection.

You must wear eye goggles or other eye protection (to EN166) to protect your eyes whenever you are working in an area that may cause eye damage. These include dusty areas, working with cement, any flying particles, fumes, bright lights and extreme heat.

Make sure you have the correct eye protection for the work you are doing and wear it correctly.

If you are working on a job that creates dust, flying debris or sparks, remember the safety of passers-by and work colleagues. If necessary erect screens around the work area.

Hand and Skin Protection.

When working with your hands, you must always wear gloves. Ensure that the gloves are suitable for the task and in good condition.

Cuts and grazes are to be cleaned and the appropriate dressing or adhesive plaster is applied. Serious injuries must be reported to your Site Leader and treated by a trained First Aider.

If you find that the work you are doing is causing skin irritations, stop work and consult your Site Leader.

Always wash your hands at break times, after work or whenever they are contaminated. Use soap and water or cleansing hand wipes. Ensure hands are thoroughly dry.

Only use a mild cleaning agent or proprietary brand designed for that purpose. Wash with soap and water after use. Rinse well and dry thoroughly. Under no circumstance use petrol, paraffin or abrasives to clean your hands. These could lead to irritations and dermatitis.

Foot protection.

Safety footwear with steel toe caps must be worn on all Work Party sites.

The Site Leader is to ensure that only volunteers with the correct footwear perform tasks that could result in injury to feet.

No safety footwear, that requires repair, will be allowed on site.

Hi-Vis Coats and Vests.

To ensure that all workers are visible at all times, Hi-Vis coats and vests must be worn on all Working Party sites.

Protection to Hearing.

Prolonged exposure to high noise levels can seriously damage your hearing.

When working with noisy machinery, or close to someone that is, you must always wear ear protection.

Always consider other people around you when working with noisy machinery. Ensure they wear ear protections. Keep a lookout for passers-by. Stop working as they approach and only start again when they are safe distance away.

If you have to raise your voice to talk to someone close to you, then you and they should be wearing ear protection.

Protection from extremes of temperature.

Always take precautions when working in hot or cold weather.

In hot weather, use sun protection and drink plenty of cold drinks.

In cold weather, wear warm cloths and drink hot drinks.

Watch out for the signs of heat exhaustion, sunstroke and hyperthermia, in yourself and other volunteers. The effect of heat and cold can not only be dangerous to yourself but to others. Loss of concentration and the subsequent effect could put you and others at risk.

If you feel unwell, stop work and report to your Site Leader.

Site Hazards.

All work on sites can be dangerous.

Think about what you are doing and do it safely.

Control of Substances Hazardous to Health. (COSHH).

Whilst working on site you will come in contact with many substances that, if not handled correctly, will prove to be a hazard to your health. These include fuels, oils, grease, cement, and mortar.

Information on all Substances Hazard to Health, used on the site, will be available in the Site Safety Plan, with appropriate hazard data sheets. These sheets will show the medical treatment required in the event of contact, irritation and ingestion.

When handling any substance, suitable gloves must be worn.

Manual Handling and Lifting.

Correct manual handling and lifting of a load will prevent strains, injury and make the operation easy. Using a bad lifting method causes strain which could lead to permanent injury.

When lifting -

- Plan the whole lifting sequence, including number of people required, shape of object to be lifted and where the object is to be placed before you start.
- Make sure you have a clear path to prevent trips and falls.
- Use mechanical assistance if it is available.
- Check that there is nothing on the object that could injure you. Splinters, nails and exposed wires.
- Wear PPE when carrying out any lifting. Gloves and safety footwear.
- If you feel any strain whilst lifting stop immediately.
- When working in a group, ensure that only one person is giving instructions.

Always lift in the approved manner -

- Feet apart. Approx. 300 > 450mm (12 > 18 inches)
- One foot further forward than the other.
- Chin in. Avoid head dropping forwards or backwards.
- Knees in crotch position.
- Ensure a firm grip of the load.
- Lift with a straight back, using your leg muscles.
- Lift in easy stages.
- Do not change your hold during lifting.
- To lower the object, keep a straight back and use your legs.
- When pushing, pulling, dragging or shovelling any load, use the above technique.

If in doubt – STOP.

Hand tools.

- Always use the correct tool for the job.
- Do not misuse tools.
- Do not use damaged or broken tools.
- Report breakages to your Site Leader.
- When using sharp tools, ensure your hands are behind the blade.
- Do not keep sharp tools in your pocket.
- Keep all tools clean and in good condition. Sharp blades to be protected.
- Always wear the appropriate PPE when using any tool.
- Always ensure that you are working a safe distance from other people. Especially when anyone is using a tool that is swung or at arms length.

Portable power tools.

Portable power tools are to be only used as directed by your Site Leader. Rotary mowers, scythe bar mowers, strimmers and chain saws only to be used by full trained competent personnel.

Suitable PPE to be worn when using portable power tools.

Before you start a power tool, always make sure you know how to stop it.

If a tool breaks down ensure that it is repaired by a competent person. Otherwise a simple repair could become a major one.

• **Rotary Mowers, Scythe bar mower & Strimmers.**

Site versions are more powerful than domestic models and therefore more dangerous. They should only be operated by full trained operatives, and only after the Site Leader has verified your training and qualifications to operate the machine.

PPE must always be worn when operating a rotary mower or strimmer. These include steel toe capped safety footwear, leg protection (flying stones and other projectiles), eye protection and ear defenders.

Safety notes.

- Always remove the plug lead before cleaning under the machine or replacing blades or line.
- Remember. The cutting blades or lines continue to turn after the motor has stopped.
- Erect signs warning the public of the hazards.
- Keep the general public and others out of range of flying objects (recommended 10 metre away).

• **Chain saws.**

Site versions are more powerful than domestic models and therefore more dangerous. They should only be operated by full trained operated, and only after the Site Leader has verified your capability to operate the machine.

Ensure that fellow workers and the public are kept a distance, greater than twice the height of the tree being felled. Extra care to be taken if the operator is left handed, as the machines are designed for right handed operators.

Most accidents are serious and are caused by 'kick back' , i.e. when the tip of the blade touches the ground or a hard object and being thrown upwards. Only saws fitted with anti 'kick back' guards and 'dead hand' throttles to be used.

PPE must always be worn when operating a chain saw. These include steel toe capped safety footwear, leg protection (flying stones and other projectiles), padded gloves, face shield and ear defenders. Ensure that all padded items of PPE are constructed of ' Kevlar' or similar mesh which is designed to tangle and stop blades before they cut the flesh.

Safety notes.

- Always ensure machine is turned off before cleaning.
- Erect signs warning the public of the hazards.
- Keep the general public and others out of range of flying objects and falling trees. (recommended distance - twice the height of the tree).
- Ensure all fellow workers and public are behind the operator, in case of chain failure.

Storing and handling of fuels.

Storage and handling of all flammable liquids should be given careful consideration. Only suitable containers to be used and should be clearly marked.

- Do not store containers under stairways or adjacent to emergency exits or escape paths.
- Equipment must not be refilled whilst the machine is running.
- Care to be taken not to allow petrol or its heavy vapours, near hot exhausts or naked flames.

Working near or on the water.

When working near or on the water extra care too be taken to prevent falling into the water. All workers to work in a minimum of 2 people gangs. Life jackets to be provided to all worker when working from a boat or over water.

Life-ring with safety rope to be located on site at all times, when working near or on water.

Weil's Disease (Leptospirosis)

Weil's disease can be caught by people who work in or near water. It is carried by rats and is spread through their urine.

Humans contract the disease by contaminated water getting into cuts and skin abrasions. It is thought that at least one death every 5 years in the UK is due to Weil's Disease.

If, after working in or near stagnant water, you have influenza like symptoms, within 3 days to 3 weeks, consult your doctor. Telling him/her that you have been working in an environment where Leptospirosis is a possibility. The correct treatment can then be given.

Fire Prevention and Control.

Fire prevention.

Fire prevention is a key objective. General site tidiness will go a long way towards preventing fires. Fire extinguisher will be available on all sites.

Rubbish, paper, oily rags, etc. can be ignited by heat and fumes from mechanical plant or sparks from bonfires.

- Do not allow flammable materials to accumulate.
- Do not allow flammable materials to come in contact with any form of means of ignition.
- Allow engines to cool before refuelling.
- Be aware of the possibility of trenches and lock chambers filling with dense fumes.
- Do not smoke whilst operating equipment powered by flammable liquids or when refuelling.
- If you smoke, be careful with discarded cigarette ends.

Bonfire Safety.

Bonfires can be a safe method of disposing of cut down vegetation, etc. on site if you follow these safety precautions.

- Never use petrol or other accelerants to light a fire.
- Site the bonfire on level ground.
- Where it will not block access for volunteers or the general public.
- Ensure that the smoke will not be a nuisance or hazard on site, local residents or nearby roads.
- Away from dry grass or vegetation that might catch fire.
- Never site the fire under or close to trees or power lines.
- Never light a fire in strong winds, as it may blow out of control.
- Never over stack the fire as it may fall over.
- Watch out for sparks or flying embers, ensure that they do not set alight to anything.
- Never leave a fire unattended and always wait until it has burned down before leaving.
- Stop feeding the fire early enough for it to burn down before you leave.

Fire Emergencies.

Inform your Site Leader if a fire breaks out, a bonfire is out of control or if there is a risk of a fire hazard i.e. spilled petrol.

Ensure that you and other volunteers get to a place of safety away from the fire.

If a person's cloths are on fire, use water or powder fire extinguisher to put out the flames. Alternatively, throw a rug or blanket over them to smother the flames and roll them on the ground. Cool any burnt skin as soon as possible with cold water and seek medical attention.

Do not attempt to remove burnt on clothing.

Do not put yourself or other at risk.

Do not try to put the fire out.

Call the Fire Brigade.

Accidents.

All accidents must be reported at once to the Site Leader and entered in the site accident book. You should report and record all 'near miss' incidents, as this helps us to make our sites safer and reduce the risk of future incidents.

In the event of an accident involving personal injury, the most important thing is to prevent further injury to the victim and all others on site.

- Make plant safe by turning off engines and ensuring it cannot be moved.
- Make the adjacent area safe.
- Make the patient comfortable and keep them warm.
- Seek medical attention for the First Aider on site or contact the Emergency Services (Dial 112 from your mobile phone).

First Aid Kits.

First Aid kits will be provided on all Working Parties site. Under the control of the site First Aider or Site Leader.

- If you injury yourself – Use the kits.
- Report all uses of First Aid equipment, so that replacement items are provided.
- Accident Report form to be completed for serious injury.
- Do not remove First Aid kit from its location. Someone else my need it.
- Take care of the First Aid kit. Keep it and its contents clean. You could be the next person that needs it.

Conclusion.

The notes include in this guide are intended to ensure that your visit to our Working Party site is safe at all times and that we do not put our volunteers or visitors at risk of injury.

A safe working environment also ensures that your visit is enjoyable and that you will return for another visit.

Remember – Health and Safety is often common sense.

Acknowledgements.

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References.

Inland Waterways Association
Practical Restoration Handbook.

Inland Waterways Association / Waterways Recovery Group
WRG Volunteers' Health & Safety Guide – 2013