

WORK SITE VOLUNTEERS' HEALTH & SAFETY



INFORMATION NOTES



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Useful Information

To help keep you safe on site, these notes contain initial Health & Safety information that all work site volunteers need to know. It was up to date at the time of printing; however a newer version may be available on the CCT web site www.cotswoldcanals.com/documentstore. This website contains much more information, including downloadable versions of these notes.

Further information on all CCT Health & Safety matters, Driver Authorisation and further copies of these notes are available from the following address. Incident and Near Miss Report Forms should also be sent to:

mail@cotswoldcanals.com

Cotswold Canals Trust, Bell House, Wallbridge Lock, Stroud, Glos., GL5 3JS

These notes are based on a similar booklet published by the Waterway Recovery Group. The Cotswold Canals Trust gratefully acknowledges their permission to enable publication of this guide.

1. Introduction

To most of you, work on a waterway is a new experience. Despite its peaceful setting, the site you will be working on is basically a long linear construction site that presents hazards to you, your fellow volunteers and members of the public. It is therefore subject to the same safety rules as any professional building site.

The fact that we are a volunteer organisation without the resources of a large professional construction company does not mean we can compromise on such

an important matter as Health & Safety. This guide has been issued to explain some safety requirements and hazards and must be read before you start work.

It represents only one part of your Health & Safety induction; when you arrive on site you will be given all the training and information necessary for you to carry out your work safely and enjoyably. **A risk assessment and method statement will have been prepared for the task. In the case of Depot based activities, this is available for inspection in the Depot before starting the task** - you should consult this whenever you have a query; if you are unsure about anything you should ask **the nominated team leader for the activity (hereafter referred to as 'The Team Leader')** who should also have a copy with him/her.

You must please follow your Team Leader's instructions at all times.

IF YOU FAIL TO FOLLOW SAFETY INSTRUCTIONS YOU COULD BE BARRED FROM SITE.

Always remember that you are responsible not only for your own safety but also the safety of others working with you and the public.

If you see anyone else working in an unsafe way, you have a duty to notify your Team Leader to stop this - do not just ignore it and walk away. Encourage others by working safely and setting a good example, and look out for the safety of others including members of the public and other visitors to the site

We hope that you enjoy your work with us and you are more likely to do that if you follow these simple guidelines.

1.1 General work habits

THINK SAFETY - ACT SAFELY

The well-known phrase 'a place for everything and everything in its place' is one of the guiding principles of accident prevention. Keeping the work site tidy not only reduces accident risks by eliminating the physical hazards, but personnel can work more easily in clean and tidy surroundings than when disorder prevails. A great many accidents occur as a result of poor site tidiness.

The simplest contribution you can make to your safety and that of others is to keep your own work area tidy. For example:

Never leave tools in a position where they represent a hazard to yourself or others, for example on top of a wall or lying on the ground. When you have finished using them, put them away tidily and in a clean and serviceable condition.

Always tidy up after completing the job, and keep the site tidy while you work.

If you see any material or equipment in a position that is likely to cause an accident, move it to a safe place. For example broken glass and nails protruding from boards are common causes of injury.

Encourage others to follow your efforts in site tidiness.

Always store materials safely, neatly and tidily in the proper place and they should never be over-stacked so that they become a potential falling hazard.

1.2 Before you start a job

USE THE RIGHT TOOL FOR THE RIGHT JOB – IMPROVISED TOOLS CAUSE ACCIDENTS

Think carefully! Do not try to perform an unfamiliar job without instruction.

Always plan work fully before you start, observing common-sense safety practices. If in doubt, don't hesitate to ask.

Make sure you have all the Personal Protection Equipment you need for the job – and that it is in good condition.

1.3 Slips, Trips and Falls

KEEP YOUR EYES AND MIND ON THE WORK IN HAND

The most common site accidents are slips, trips and falls. They can be caused by unsuitable site footwear, inattention or by neglect of the principles in section 1.1

Make sure your footwear is suitable.

Keep all access routes and work areas free from obstruction at all times.

Always ensure there is safe access to wherever you are working. For example do not expose yourself to risk by climbing up scaffolding or brick work - use a ladder.

2. Personal Protective Equipment

2.1 Personal Protection

When working it is possible that you will come into contact with some form of material which can cause harm to you if protective equipment is not worn. Make sure you have the correct type of protection for the job as specified in. **the Risk Assessment / Method Statement / Safe System of Work.**

Always take good care of protective clothing and all other equipment required for your safety, otherwise it may become a danger to yourself and others who may use it.

Your Team Leader should provide you with a High Visibility Vest and all other mandatory safety equipment except the toe protector boots which you will have to supply yourself. If you think you need something to protect you, ask for it and make sure you get it.

2.2 Head Protection – On your Head be it!

It is mandatory that you wear a safety helmet conforming to the EN397 standard when instructed either by your Team Leader or in the **Risk Assessment / Method Statement / Safe System of Work.**

In practice, most CCT work sites are 'hard hat areas'. **In general,** Team Leaders should wear a white hat and other volunteers green **although hard hats which have attached ear defenders / face shields may be of a different colour e.g. for Forestry Work.**

2.3 Eye Protection

Whilst working, follow these rules:

It is mandatory that you wear goggles or other eye protection (to EN166) to protect your eyes whenever you are near any of the different types of potential eye hazard, even if you have stopped working. For example dust, splashes from concrete mixers or pouring concrete, flying particles, fumes, bright light (e.g. welding) and extreme heat can all cause injury.

Make sure you have the correct eye protection for the work and wear it properly.

If you are doing work which may cause sparks or chips etc., remember the safety of passers-by and where necessary, erect a screen.

2.4 Protection of Hands & Skin

Where gloves are required, make sure they are appropriate to the task and use them.

Cover up any skin breaks with a plaster or appropriate dressing as soon as possible.

If you experience any skin irritation, stop working and consult your Team Leader at once.

Wash your hands at break times, after work and whenever they are contaminated. Use soap and water and dry them thoroughly. The CCT vans also have hand basins which may be more convenient. Remember to fill them before leaving the depot.

If a mild cleansing agent is necessary, only use a proprietary brand designed for that purpose then remove it thoroughly with soap and water and rinse well. Do not use petrol, paraffin or abrasives to clean your skin. Use of these can cause skin irritations and dermatitis.

2.5 Protection of Feet

You are strongly advised always to wear safety boots or shoes with toe and sole protection - they have prevented many crippling accidents.

For some jobs - for example those involving moving heavy materials such as stone - the use of safety footwear is compulsory. Your Team Leader will ensure that only people wearing appropriate foot protection will be permitted to do these jobs. Do not wear boots or shoes that need repair.

2.6 Protection of Hearing

Prolonged exposure to high noise levels will lead to permanent impairment of your hearing. When working with noisy machinery, or when working close to somebody who is using noisy machinery, you must wear ear protection.

Always consider other people when you are using noisy machinery: make sure people working close to you are wearing ear protection; look out for passers-by: stop work if they come close to you and do not start again until they have passed.

A good 'rule of thumb' is that if you have to raise your voice to talk to people near you, then you (and they) should be wearing ear protection.

2.7 Protection from extremes of temperature

Take precautions against the effects of hot or cold weather conditions:

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

In cold weather wear warm clothing and drink hot drinks.

If working in hot or cold weather, watch out for any signs of heat exhaustion, sunstroke or hypothermia - in yourself and other volunteers.

If you start suffering from the effects of heat or cold, it is not only dangerous to your own health but could easily cause loss of concentration and consequent danger to others too. Stop work immediately and inform your Team Leader.

2.8 Protection from Drowning

Whenever you are working over water or within 2 metres of **deep** water, you should always wear a Life Preserver **appropriate to the task** if instructed by your Team Leader. This will be made available by your Team Leader as required.

3. Site Hazards

3.1 Substances hazardous to health

On a site you will meet many substances which, if not properly handled, may injure your health.

These may include fuel, oils, greases, creosote, tar, paints and

cement/concrete and lime/lime mortar.

Information on the hazards these present will be available in the Method Statement and hazard sheets attached to the Method Statement.

Where protective equipment is indicated, use it. It is provided for your safety.

Cement dust and wet concrete and mortars are particularly hazardous. With sensitive skins, burning can take place very quickly and all users should be fully aware of the hazard and of the precautions necessary. A particular danger is trapping of dust or splashes, e.g. around the top of boots, where damage is accelerated by abrasion and rubbing. First Aid measures for cement are:

Eye Contact: wash eyes immediately with plenty of clean water for at least 15 minutes and seek medical advice without delay.

Skin Contact: wash the affected area thoroughly with soap and water before continuing. Clothing contaminated by wet cement, concrete or mortar should be removed and washed thoroughly before use.

If irritation, pain or other skin trouble occurs, tell your Team Leader and seek medical advice.

3.2 Correct handling & lifting

Correct manual lifting and handling of a load prevents strain and reduces effort. Persistent use of bad lifting methods causes strains which may eventually become severe.

When lifting a load always:

Plan the whole lifting operation (include putting the object down safely) before you start

Make sure your path is clear

Get help if the load is beyond your capacity or is awkward in shape. Check the Method Statement, and use mechanical assistance if it is available.

Look out for splinters, projecting nails, wire or sharp edges.

Wear gloves when handling materials.

Stop work immediately if you feel a strain: to carry on might result in a serious injury.

When working in a gang, take your instructions from one person only.

Make sure that you have the correct type of protection for the job.

Always lift in the approved manner:

Feet apart about 12-18 inches (300- 450mm).

One foot further forward than the other

Chin in - avoid your head dropping backwards or forwards

Knees in the crouch position

Get a firm grip on the load

Lift with your back straight and use your thigh muscles

Lift in easy stages

Do not change grip whilst carrying and lifting.

To lower a load, always use the reverse of the above directions

When pushing, pulling, dragging or shoveling any load always apply the above principles.

3.3 Hand Tools

- Always use the correct tool for the job. Authorisation can be gained either by having an approved qualification or through CCT Volunteer Mentor Training. Talk to your Team Leader about becoming qualified.
- Do not misuse a tool
- Do not use damaged or worn tools.
- Report any breakages to your Team Leader.
- If using a sharp tool, keep your hands behind the cutting edge.
- Do not keep sharp tools in your pocket.
- Keep all tools clean and in good condition. Sharp tools when not in use should have their cutting edges covered.
- Always wear gloves and other personal protection if they are appropriate to the tool and the job.
- Always ensure that you are working a safe distance away from other people, especially when anyone is using tools such as mattocks and axes which are swung at arm's length.

3.4 Portable Power Tools

You may only use portable power tools if you are authorised to do so on the 'Connect' volunteer website. Authorisation can be gained either by having an approved qualification or through CCT Volunteer Mentor Training.

Always wear the correct protective clothing. Before you start a power tool, always make sure you know how to stop it.

If a power tool breaks down do not try to repair it yourself, take the tool to your Team Leader.

If it is an electrical Portable Power Tool the safest ones are battery operated. If it is fed from the mains you should use one fed via a 110 volt

centre tapped to earth transformer using yellow plugs and sockets. If it is fed directly from a 240 V source (**mains or generator**) then it must be fed via a circuit breaker fitted with a Residual Current Device that limits the current to 30 milliamps and operates within 40 milliseconds. **All 110 V and 240 V equipment is tested and should carry a green PAT label bearing the date the next test is due. Check before use!**

3.5 Weils Disease (Leptospirosis)

Weils Disease can be caught by people who work in or near stagnant water. It is carried by rats and spread through their urine.

Humans can catch the disease by contaminated water getting into cuts or skin abrasions. It is thought to be responsible for approximately one death per five years in the UK.

If you have influenza-like symptoms three days to three weeks after working in the canal, consult your doctor, telling him/her that you have been working in an environment where Leptospirosis is a possibility. This will allow correct treatment to be given.

3.6 Fire prevention & control

3.6.1 Fire Prevention

Fire prevention is the key objective. General site tidiness will go a long way towards preventing fires. Rubbish, paper, oily rags, etc. can ignite by heat and fumes from mechanical plant, or by sparks from bonfires.

Do not allow the accumulation of flammable material.

Prevent means of ignition from coming into contact with a flammable

mixture, e.g. petrol vapour near overheating mechanical equipment, faulty or over-heating electrical equipment. Allow engines on mechanical plant to cool before refueling.

Be aware of the possibility of trenches and lock chambers filling with dense fumes.

If you smoke, you should do so well away from the work site and be very careful when discarding cigarette ends.

3.6.2 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 accelerant to light a fire.

Choose your bonfire site carefully:

- On level ground.
- Where it will not block access for volunteers or passers-by.
- Where smoke will not be a nuisance or hazard on the site or to local residences or nearby roads.
- Away from dry grass or vegetation that might catch fire.
- Never light a fire under or close to trees or power cables.
- Never light a fire in a strong wind, as it may blow out of control.
- Never over-stack a bonfire such that it is likely to fall over.
- Always watch that sparks and flying embers do not set light to anything.
- Never leave a fire unattended: always wait until it has burned down

before leaving site.

Remember to stop feeding a bonfire early enough to allow it time to burn down before the end of the working day.

Always ensure a **suitable means of extinguishing the fire** is available for use before the fire is started.

3.6.3 Dealing with Fires & Emergencies

Inform your Team Leader if fire breaks out, if a bonfire has got out of control, or if there is a fire hazard e.g. spilled petrol.

If there is a fire on site or in the accommodation, follow the agreed emergency plan. Do not put yourself at any risk if you attempt to extinguish the fire - make sure that someone has called the Fire Brigade to deal with it.

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

If a person's clothing is on fire don't hesitate to use a water or powder extinguisher on them.

Alternatively throw a rug or blanket over them to smother the flames, and roll them on the ground.

As soon as possible cool any burnt skin with cold water. Do not attempt to remove burnt clothing.

Seek medical attention.

3.7 Wildlife

Every care has been taken to do a thorough survey prior to any work being undertaken along the canal. However, in carrying out operations, care is needed to protect the environment. Irrespective of the outcome of any prior surveys, it remains possible that during the course of carrying out such work that wildlife and protected species may be discovered.

Those working should report any significant observations to the Team Leader who will decide what course of action is appropriate. If the presence of a protected species is suspected (water voles, bats, great crested newts, native reptiles and badgers being perhaps the most likely), the Team Leader will call and seek advice from the Chief Executive, the Chairman or Dr Val Kirby, who will seek additional expert advice if necessary to establish what mitigation might be required. Until the matter has been resolved, work likely to cause disturbance will need to cease in the area where the observation has been made

4. Vehicles and Plant

4.1 Driver Authorisation

CCT requires all operators and drivers to have received training before using plant or vehicles. When trained this will be recorded on the 'Connect' Website and will also be shown on the back of your Volunteer Competency Card which will be issued within approximately 5 working days of your successful completion of this induction. Your Competency Card must be carried whenever you are using the equipment and must be shown on demand to anyone requesting to see it. Your Team Leader will give you full details of the CCT Volunteer Mentor Training scheme for CCT Road Going Vehicles and the WRG Training Scheme for Site Plant.

4.2 CCT Road-Going Vehicles

Before you can drive a CCT vehicle, you must fulfill the conditions below,

- Must have had a 'test' drive with an authorised observer/Depot Manager.
- have had you're driving license checked.
- **have your authorisation listed on 'Connect', by providing the webmaster with an authenticated copy of your driving license.**

Any driver must:

- Be 25 years of age or over.
- Have held a full driving license for this class of vehicle for one year.
- Have no current penalty points on his/her license.
- Have no medical condition which requires notification to DVLA.

Please Note:- If you have such a Medical Condition and have notified the DVLA and you have been allowed to drive by the DVLA then you must still notify the Trust Head Office as per the useful Information on page 3 of this document so that they can notify our insurers. This is a condition of our Insurance Policy.

- Have no special terms currently imposed on their own policies.
- Have their driving license on their person.
- Be a competent driver of that type of vehicle.
- Be authorised by your Team Leader or the keeper of the vehicle to drive it.
- Be entirely sober.

Some of the above requirements can be modified in individual cases by written application to Trust Head Office as per the useful Information on page 3 of this document.

If you are stopped by the police, you should tell them that all vehicle documents are held centrally at the registered office and will be produced on request at Stroud Police Station. If you do not have your license with you, you will have to travel to Stroud at your own expense to produce it.

4.3 Site Plant

Mechanical plant, including lifting gear, may only be driven or used by competent persons holding the necessary Volunteer Competency Card and with the permission of your Team Leader who must satisfy him/herself that drivers/operators are aware of the correct method of operating the plant.

It is a legal requirement that anyone operating lifting gear of any type must be over 21.

Before you start an item of mechanical plant, always make sure you know how to stop it.

When the plant is being checked, prior to each working day, the most important points to look at are:-

- Tyres or tracks
- Steering
- Brakes
- Cracks and leaks in the hydraulic hoses and fittings
- Oil and engine coolant levels and leaks.
- All plant and machinery must be kept and maintained in a safe state and in good working order.

You must report any defects to your Team Leader.

4.4 Points to Watch

When plant is being operated in a confined space or the operator's view is restricted, the operator must have a competent 'banksman' to guide him/her. Never reach under the raised body of a tipper lorry or dumper.

- Always use the seat belt if provided.
- Never use plant or equipment for work it has not been designed to do.
- When using dumpers or earth-moving plant that has dangerous crush or slew zones, keep clear and ensure that warning notices are displayed.
- Never carry passengers unless there is proper provision for them.
- Never load a dumper with the engine running.
- Never remain seated on a dumper whilst it is being mechanically loaded e.g. by an excavator or crane.
- Never begin loading a dumper mechanically until the dumper driver has stopped the engine, got off and is out of reach of your machine.
- Never reach your arm into the drum of a concrete mixer while it is running.
- Make sure that you "pocket" the ignition key if you are working in or on any plant so that no-one else can start the machine when you are in Danger.

5. Accidents

All accidents must be reported at once to your Team Leader. You should also report and record any 'near miss' incidents as this helps us to make our site safer and reduces risks to future volunteers.

5.1 What to do

The following is general information applicable to all sites. Additional information for your site will be provided by your Team Leader.

The location of the nearest A&E Hospital will be found on the first page of your Method Statement which your Team Leader will have.

A copy of the Reporting & Investigating Incidents Procedure will be found in each CCT vehicle and on the Depot Notice Boards. Use them and follow the Procedure laid down for your own safety and the safety of others.

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 it off and making any adjacent hazards safe.

Carefully support the patient and make comfortable. Keep the patient warm.

5.2 First Aid Kits

First aid kits are provided in CCT vehicles and on every site.

If you injure yourself - use them!

Report all uses of a first aid kit to your Team Leader who will ensure that replacement items are provided; decide whether you need further attention and whether an accident report form needs to be completed.

Do not remove first aid kits from their proper place.

Take care of first aid kits and keep them clean - you never know when you may need one!

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6. General Health, Safety and Welfare of the trust

1. It is the firm intent of the Cotswold Canals Trust (the Trust) to take all reasonable steps to ensure the Health, Safety and Welfare of all employees and volunteers in fulfillment of its moral, legal and economic responsibilities. These measures will also be aimed at protecting others who may be affected by our day to day activities.

2. It is a Management function of the Trust to provide the right circumstances under which work may be carried out safely. However, all employees and volunteers must understand that they have a legal duty not only to work in a safe manner, but also to co-operate with the Trust in any efforts to fulfill their responsibilities.

3. The Trust will maintain close co-operation with land owners, Inland Waterways Association, Waterway Recovery Group, Local Councils, Environment Agency, Health and Safety Executive and Safety Advisors to ensure, so far as is reasonably practicable, that procedures and practices are satisfactory. The Trust will ensure that every possible liaison and co-operation is given to interested parties in regard to Safety requirements.

4. The Trust will make every reasonable effort to promote amongst its employees and volunteers a genuine awareness of Health, Safety and Welfare Matters and to create an understanding of the importance of Safe Working Practices and the use of Personal Protective Equipment, Work Clothing and Safety Equipment where appropriate.

5. Employees and volunteers will be encouraged to involve themselves fully in Safety activities and the reporting of unsafe conditions, near misses or bad practices. Where relevant, particular importance will be paid to the latest requirements of the Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999, the Construction (Design and Management) Regulations 2007, the Working at Height Regulations 2005, the Provision and Use of Work Equipment Regulations
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1998, Manual Handling Regulations 1992, the Work Place Health and Safety and Welfare Regulations 1992, the Control of Noise at Work Regulations 2005, the Control of Vibration Regulations 2005, the Electricity at Work Regulations 1989, the Dangerous Substances and Explosive Atmosphere Regulations 2002 and the Health and Safety Display Screen Regulations 1992 and all other relevant Regulations. Employees and volunteers will be required to abide by any Risk Assessments, Method Statements and Safe Systems of Work made by the Trust.

6. The Trust will establish appropriate documentation & procedures and will define responsibility & accountability for Safety at all levels. The Construction division of the Trust have appointed Mr M Jones, CMIOSH, RSP, MaPS, Registered Occupational Safety and Health Consultant, Safety and Training Services, to assist and advise the Construction Division of the Trust on health, safety and welfare matters. The Health and Safety Consultant will attend a meeting with the Construction Director every twelve months to review and update arrangements relating to any changes in health and safety legislation.

7. The Construction Director is the person appointed by the Council of the Trust to be responsible for health and safety in the Construction Division and he shall co-ordinate all health and safety matters within the Construction Division of the Trust.

8. The Trust will permit such Safety representation as prescribed under the Safety Representatives and Safety Committees Regulations 1977 and the Health and Safety (Consultation with Employees) Regulations 1996 and will consult with such Safety representatives on all matters appertaining to Health and Safety.

9. The Trust will ensure adequate resources both in monetary terms and in time are made available to ensure that health and safety legislation is met in full.

10. This policy statement may be amended, monitored and added to from time to time, and a summary will be issued to all employees and volunteers as part of the Induction Procedure. In addition, a copy will be displayed at Head Office, in the two Depots and on the Cotswold Canal Trust web site. The policy will be reviewed and amended as required at intervals not exceeding twelve months.

7. Health, Safety and Induction confirmation

I hereby confirm that received a Health & Safety Induction Briefing before commencing work on the Cotswold Canals in accordance with the requirements of section 4 of the Cotswold Canals Trust, (CCT) Construction Division, Health & Safety Manual.

Signed Date.....

Print Name

CCT/ SDC Construction Manager/ Team Leader

I (full name) do hereby confirm that I have received the leaflet entitled Volunteer's Health & Safety Information Notes and that I have viewed the DVD entitled Working Safely for Restoration.

I also confirm that I will carry out my work on the Cotswold Canals in a Safe Manner bearing in mind my responsibilities not only for my own safety but also for the safety of others working with me and for the safety of the General Public who may be nearby or who may visit the site after we have left.

I also confirm that I will follow the instructions of the Team Leader at all times and that if I fail to follow safety instructions I could be barred from the site.

I also confirm that if I do not understand a Method Statement or a Risk Assessment or a Safe System of Work presented to me I shall ask the Team Leader and when satisfied, I shall agree to abide by its recommendations and requirements.

Signed Date.....

Please Provide the name and contact telephone number of your **normal** Next of Kin **on the date of your induction** for inclusion on your Volunteer Competency and Contact Details Card.

Name.....

Telephone number.....

Please Note that the CCT does not hold a permanent record of any medical information that may be relevant to your wellbeing and the CCT will assume that your Next of Kin **on the day** will hold all such information and that you will inform us of your Next of Kin on the day, who may be different from your **normal** Next of Kin, using the prescribed Team Hours Worked and Briefing Acceptance Record sheet.