



# Health and Safety Policy

<b>Approval date: 01/04/2026</b>	<b>Approved by: Board</b>
<b>Applies to:</b> Board Members, officers and employees of the Board.	<b>Linked Documents:</b> Corporate Risk Register   Employee Handbook
<b>Frequency of review: Annually</b>	<b>Next review date: April 2027</b>

## 1. Health and Safety Policy Statement

- 1.1 The North Kent Marshes Water Level Management Board recognises responsibility under the Health and Safety at Work etc. Act 1974, the Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999, and all relevant Regulations made under them as an employer and provider of services. The Board will provide a safe and healthy workplace for all employees, visitors, and other persons that may be affected by their activities.
- 1.2 This policy sets out the Board’s commitment to ensuring the health, safety, and welfare of all staff, contractors, and visitors. It aims to provide a framework for continuous improvement in health and safety management, in compliance with legislative requirements and aligned with industry good practice.
- 1.3 The Board will ensure access to competent technical advice on Health and Safety matters to assist in meeting objectives.
- 1.4 There are four parts to this policy:
  - Aims and objectives.
  - Roles and responsibilities.
  - Monitoring and review.
  - General Arrangements.
- 1.5 It is a requirement of the Board to ensure this policy statement and its implications are understood and acted on by all staff and Board Members. Linked to this policy statement is a General Arrangements document to support implementation of this policy.
- 1.6 Copies of this policy will be issued to all staff and Members and be made available on the Board's website.

## 2. Policy Aims

- 2.1 The key Health and Safety Policy Aims of the Board are:
  - To be a Board where everyone can undertake their roles and responsibilities and fulfil their potential, free from work-related injury or ill health.
  - To conduct all activities safely and in compliance with legislative standards.
  - To provide safe working environments.
  - To ensure a systematic approach to the identification of risks and the allocation of resources to control them.
  - To be a Board that promotes a positive Health and Safety culture that is demonstrated by open communication and a shared commitment to the importance of health, safety, and welfare.
  - To promote the principles of sensible risk management, which enables innovation and learning.



## Health and Safety Policy

### 3. Legislation and Guidance

This policy is prepared in accordance with the Health and Safety at Work etc. Act 1974 and associated regulations. The Board also has responsibilities under the:

- Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999.
- Control of Substances Hazardous to Health (COSHH) Regulations 2002.
- Display Screen Equipment Regulations 1992.
- Reporting of Injuries, Diseases and Dangerous Occurrences Regulations 2013 (RIDDOR).
- Provision and Use of Work Equipment Regulations 1998 (PUWER).
- Lifting Operations and Lifting Equipment Regulations 1998 (LOLER) – where applicable.

The Board also considers guidance issued by the Health and Safety Executive (HSE), including Approved Codes of Practice and sector-specific advice.

### 4. Policy Objectives

4.1 The Board will adopt a planned, risk-based approach to Health and Safety management by monitoring the implementation of the Policy Aims by ensuring;

- The assessment of hazards and associated risks of all activities, assets, and workspaces.
- The identification and implementation of preventative and protective control measures to reduce risk.
- The effectiveness of those measures including the enforcement of proper working practices via regular monitoring audit and reporting.
- That the resource required for instruction, training, and protective personal equipment for staff (and visitors where required) is available.
- That Risk Assessments, Method Statements, procedures, and practices are reviewed at regular intervals (and at a minimum, annually) and where additional information is gained via monitoring or following an incident.
- The Board's approach to risk is proportionate and preventative. Risks are managed through reasonable, practical measures that support innovation and operational delivery without compromising safety.
- The Board recognises that health includes mental as well as physical wellbeing. We are committed to fostering a work environment that promotes positive mental health and provides support where issues arise.



## Health and Safety Policy

### 5. Roles and Responsibilities

5.1 There are several specific responsibilities relating to the Board, Clerk, Works Manager employees, and contractors. There are also particular responsibilities for First Aiders and Fire Wardens.

#### Board

Health and Safety is a collective responsibility of the Board. In practice, the Board's oversight of Health and Safety can be conducted at Board level or through a dedicated Health and Safety Committee (or another committee delegated with these responsibilities).

Regardless of how the responsibility is carried out in practice, it is important to note that the responsibility is carried out at a strategic level. The operational management of Health and Safety issues are delegated executive responsibilities. For example, it would be appropriate for a Board to receive a Health and Safety audit and scrutinise the executive management, however it would not be appropriate for a Board member to conduct the audit.

The Board and/or Committee reviews reports and information to monitor the Board's practice against policy to ensure compliance with legislation, good practice, and mitigation against risks.

Although not a statutory requirement, some Boards choose to nominate a dedicated Board member to have specific oversight of Health and Safety and to report to the Board on any compliance or presenting issues, however the Board retains its collective responsibility.

#### Employees

All employees have legislative responsibilities under Health and Safety law to take care of their own health and safety and that of others who may be affected by actions at work by:

- Taking reasonable care for their own Health and Safety at work and of those who may be affected by their actions or omissions.
- Co-operating with the Works Manager and Clerk to work safely, to comply with Health and Safety instructions and information, and undertake appropriate Health and Safety training as required.
- Reporting accidents, incidents and near misses.
- Not intentionally or recklessly interfering with or misusing anything provided in the interests of health, safety, and welfare.
- Reporting to their line manager any Health and Safety concerns, hazardous conditions or defects in the health and safety arrangements.
- Supporting the Clerk and Works Manager in embedding a positive safety culture.



## Health and Safety Policy

### Clerk

It is the responsibility of the Clerk to ensure compliance with all statutory responsibilities and that the aims and objectives of the Health and Safety policy are met. For the purpose of this policy, 'the Clerk' refers to the Chief Executive Officer and the designated Responsible Person under the Health and Safety at Work etc. Act 1974. The Clerk will do this by:

- Monitoring the effectiveness of the policy and in consultation with the Board, review and amend as necessary.
- Promoting safe working practices among contractors to the Board.
- Maintaining an up-to-date knowledge of legislative requirements and codes of practice.
- Ensuring only competent contractors are appointed.
- Identifying and delivering appropriate training to staff and contractors where appropriate.
- Cooperating with and acting upon, any requirements of the Health and Safety Executive, or other appropriate body.
- Ensuring that there are accessible means of distributing and communicating health, safety, and welfare information from the HSE, safety organisations, trade associations, and any appointed Health and Safety Consultant regarding new methods of accident prevention, new legislative requirements, and Codes of Practice.
- Ensuring the monitoring and maintenance of plant and equipment.
- Undertaking periodic safety inspections of the workplace, particularly in operational areas, and bring to the attention of others, any matters where failure to comply with statutory regulations has occurred.
- Being responsible for accident reporting procedures, and to liaise with the enforcing authority to ensure appropriate steps have been taken as required by RIDDOR 2013.
- Ensuring entries have been made into the accident book as appropriate.
- Ensuring all visitors and contractors abide by the Board's stated policy with respect to Health and Safety matters.
- Ensuring that suitable and sufficient protective clothing and equipment is made available, where appropriate, and that is used properly and effectively.
- Undertaking the inspection of equipment and clothing at regular intervals and monitor the provision of suitable accommodation for PPE when not in use.
- Always setting an example with respect to Health and Safety.
- Ensuring that relevant and pertinent Health and Safety information is conveyed to contractors as and when appropriate.

### Works Manager

With a direct supervisory role over the workforce and contractors, it is the responsibility of the Works Manager to:

- Familiarise and co-operate with the requirements of this Health and Safety Policy and actively promote safety on site.
- Organise work so that operations or work activities are carried out safely.
- Develop responsible attitudes towards Health and Safety and institute an effective Health and Safety culture.



## Health and Safety Policy

- Plan and maintain a tidy working area, including access to and from the plant and equipment being used.
- Ensure that the plant and equipment to be used are suitable for their intended use.
- Ensure that adequate information, training, and supervision is provided as appropriate.
- Provide the necessary support to enable management and employees to implement all aspects of the Policy.
- Ensure that all visitors to site abide by the Board's stated policy with respect to Health and Safety.
- Ensure that any authorised information regarding Health and Safety matters is effectively communicated to all employees/contractors as appropriate.
- Ensure that emergency arrangements are conveyed to employees.
- Ensure that an effective lone working system is implemented.
- Assist the management in investigations and reports of all accidents/injuries and/or dangerous occurrences in all areas under their control using prescribed reporting procedures.
- Ensure that suitable and sufficient assessments of risk have been undertaken and that the findings have been effectively communicated to all those who may be affected.
- Ensure that protective and preventative measures are implemented to control the risks identified.
- Ensure that Risk Assessments and Safe Systems of Work are appropriate for the tasks being undertaken and are reviewed as appropriate.
- Ensure that all machinery and plant, including power and hand tools, are maintained in good condition.
- Set a personal example at all times with respect to Health and Safety.
- Monitoring contractors to ensure that they adhere to their terms with particular respect to Health and Safety.

### First Aiders

It is the responsibility of First Aiders to:

- Ensure that first aid facilities, equipment, and appointed persons are identified.
- carry out First Aid in accordance with the Health and Safety (First Aid) Regulations 1981.
- Ensure that all accidents are reported.
- Ensure that the first aid box stock levels are maintained and that items are replaced before passing expiry dates.

### Fire Wardens

Fire Wardens are required to:

- Ensure that fire prevention and fighting equipment procedures and notices are readily available and visible,
- Carry out fire drills and evacuations as required.
- Ensure that records are maintained for all relevant incidents and that management actions are taken to prevent their recurrence.
- Alert fire authorities during any incidents with information regarding products,



## Health and Safety Policy

equipment, and substances which may be on site, which may be relevant to the Health and Safety of firefighting.

### Contractors

Whilst the Board shall not be directly responsible for staff of appointed contractors, as part of the approval of appointed contractors, it will need to be demonstrated that the contractor and their staff understand their health and safety responsibilities. This can be achieved by the contractor:

- Demonstrating their Health and Safety policy.
- Cooperating with the Board on Health and Safety matters.
- Carrying out suitable and sufficient risk assessments.
- Ensuring suitable measures are in place to control the risks.
- Ensuring that employees are suitably trained.
- Ensuring that work equipment is suitable and is inspected and maintained as appropriate.
- Demonstrating that they are appropriately insured.
- Providing their own safety equipment, including PPE.

## **6. Monitoring and Review**

- 6.1 The effectiveness of the Health and Safety policy will be monitored through the analysis of accident reports, sickness records, staff turnover, reports on fire drills, and progress reports on actions recommended by external auditors.
- 6.2 The Clerk and Board Members will specifically review the progress of Health and Safety objectives at the November meeting of the Board.
- 6.3 A summary of accidents and of Health and Safety training undertaken by employees will be presented to Members on an annual basis. Formal reports on each of the major health and safety areas will be submitted to the Board once per annum for their formal acknowledgement and review.
- 6.4 It is recognised that the effective management of Health and Safety relies equally on a proactive approach and the arrangements detailed in this policy.
- 6.5 The Health and Safety policy will be reviewed biannually and will be due for review in November 2024.

## **7 Joint Consultation/Employee Participation**

- 7.1 Under the terms of the Health and Safety (Consultation with Employees) Regulations 1996, the employer has a duty to consult with all employees on matters affecting their Health and Safety. Consultation may be either directly or via a representative.
- 7.2 It is recognised that proper engagement with employees on Health and Safety matters can make a significant contribution to creating and maintaining an effective health and safety culture, resulting in positive motivation, awareness, and importance given towards health and safety amongst employees.
- 7.3 At present, health and safety information is relayed to employees through the Clerk and Works Manager via:
  - Team meetings.
  - Provision of information relating to safe systems of work and Risk Assessments.



## Health and Safety Policy

- Staff briefings.
- Toolbox talks.
- Health and Safety noticeboard.
- New staff induction.



# Health and Safety Policy

## Appendix A GENERAL ARRANGEMENTS

### North Kent Marshes Water Level Management Board Health & Safety General Arrangements

#### 1. Risk Assessment

- 1.1 The Clerk will assess the risks to the Health and Safety of all staff and anyone else that may be affected by a work activity. The clear identification of all foreseeable risks will enable the necessary preventative and protective measures to be implemented.
- 1.2 The Clerk will ensure that staff who carry out risk assessments will be competent to do so and, where appropriate, will engage with a Health and Safety consultant to assist in the preparation and review of assessments.
- 1.3 When a decision on the suitable risk controls is made, the risk assessment will be recorded, and copies will be made available to all those who require them. Where it is identified as being necessary, additional training or information will be provided.
- 1.4 The Clerk will bring to the attention of staff all the necessary precautions detailed in the risk assessment and, in conjunction with the Works Manager, monitor and audit systems of work and the working environment to ensure that staff act in accordance with the details outlined in the written assessment.
- 1.5 The Clerk will put into practice all the control measures that have been identified as being necessary in the risk assessment.
- 1.6 Health surveillance will be carried out where required by risk assessment or regulatory guidance (e.g. noise, vibration, COSHH), and records will be maintained in line with data protection regulations.
- 1.7 All Risk Assessments and Method Statements will be reviewed annually, or earlier should the need arise e.g., following an incident, change of method of work etc.

#### 2. Fire Safety

- 2.1 The Board's Fire Risk Assessment and Fire and Emergency Plan will be reviewed annually, or sooner following any significant changes to the building or room use, as part of any refurbishment/construction projects, following a fire or other emergency incident, or after an unacceptable fire drill.
- 2.2 The procedures detailed in the Fire and Emergency Plan may be implemented in other circumstances where there is a need to evacuate the building or the site(s); this may include incidents such as gas leaks, bomb threats etc. Where there is information relating to a specific threat, it will be included in the appropriate section of the plan.
- 2.3 Appropriate instruction and training relating to fire safety, including safe evacuation and emergency procedures, will be provided to staff and recorded. Appropriate information/instruction will be provided to pupils/visitors/contractors.
- 2.4 All staff should undertake Fire Warden training at least every three years.
- 2.5 Where any staff or regular visitors are identified as needing additional support or assistance to evacuate the building in the event of an emergency, a personal emergency evacuation plan (PEEP) will be developed and implemented.



## Health and Safety Policy

### 3. Fire Drills and Alarm Activations

- 3.1 Regular fire drills will be undertaken twice a year upon completion of the necessary Fire Warden training, in conjunction with the first-floor tenants.
- 3.2 Where there is a planned test of the fire alarm system or a planned drill, appropriate arrangements are in place to ensure that the fire service does not respond unnecessarily.
- 3.3 Following either a planned or unplanned evacuation of the building, a de-brief session will be held to review the effectiveness of the evacuation and consider where any review of the fire and emergency plan is required.
- 3.4 All activations of the fire alarm system will be recorded. The fire service will be informed of all incidents of fire, even if small and extinguished.

### 4. Financial Resources

- 4.1 Board Members, along with the Clerk will ensure there are adequate resources deployed to ensure a high standard of Health and Safety management and controls.

### 5. Control of Substances Hazardous to Health (CoSHH)

- 5.1 Regulations that cover the control and the safe use of all materials, chemicals, and substances, are covered by The Control of Substances Hazardous to Health Regulations (COSHH). The Clerk will ensure the following arrangements are followed:
  - An inventory of all hazardous substances on site is kept and updated regularly.
  - Wherever possible, non-hazardous substances are used, and if this is not possible, the least harmful substance is used.
  - A COSHH risk assessment will be completed for all hazardous substances used and shared with relevant staff.
  - Wherever possible exposure to hazardous substances is prevented, where exposure cannot be prevented, a risk assessment will be carried out and control measures implemented.
  - Where identified as part of the risk assessment, appropriate PPE will be provided to staff.
  - Any need for exposure monitoring or health surveillance will be carried out.
  - Sufficient information, instruction and training is given to staff to ensure full understanding of the hazards to health posed by substances in the workplace, and the importance of control measures provided.
  - Training records are maintained for those who receive training.
  - Information will also be given to others who may be affected, such as contractors, temporary staff, and visitors.
  - Only substances purchased through the Board's procurement systems can be used on site.
  - Substances are stored correctly, and those that are no longer used are disposed of properly.
  - COSHH risk assessments are monitored regularly and reviewed annually.



## Health and Safety Policy

### 6. Defect Reporting

- 6.1 The Board has a defect reporting procedure whereby any damage or defect to the plant and assets is reported. Defective equipment is isolated and labelled as defective to prevent use until replaced or repaired. Where premises defects are identified, a dynamic assessment is carried out to decide whether an area should be isolated or cordoned off whilst awaiting repair.

### 7. Display Screen Equipment

- 7.1 Regulations that cover the use of display screen equipment are covered by the Health and Safety (Display Screen Equipment) Regulations. The Clerk will ensure the following arrangements are followed:
- 7.2 Any employee who uses a computer receives information on Health and Safety relating to display screen equipment use, alongside the dissemination of the most up to date HSE Display Screen Equipment (DSE) self-assessment.
- 7.3 DSE self-assessments covering work regime, workstation equipment, workstation layout and environmental factors are undertaken and documented for:
- All staff who use display screen equipment as a significant part of their normal work, and,
  - Those who normally use display screen equipment for continuous or near-continuous spells of an hour or more at a time; use it in this way more or less daily; have to transfer information quickly to or from the display screen equipment, and also need to apply high levels of attention and concentration.
- 7.4 Actions identified in self-assessments are implemented.
- 7.5 Self-assessments are reviewed regularly, when a new workstation is set up or when a substantial change is made to an existing workstation (or the way it is used). Self-assessments are repeated if there is a reason to suspect they may no longer be valid e.g., if a user starts complaining of pain or discomfort.

### 8. Electrical Systems and Equipment

- 8.1 The Board maintains and services electrical systems and equipment in line with statutory guidance and best practice. Electrical systems (hard wiring) is periodically inspected every 5 years by a competent contractor and records are maintained; any remedial works recommended are acted upon in a timely manner.
- 8.2 Portable electric appliances have a portable appliance test (PAT) carried out, in line with HSE guidance 'Maintaining portable electrical equipment in offices and other low environments' (INDG236), by a competent contractor with records maintained.
- 8.3 Formal monthly workplace inspections are undertaken, whereby all equipment is visually inspected. Staff are instructed to undertake a visual inspection of equipment prior to use and not to use any equipment that appears damaged or defective. The Board's defect reporting procedure is followed as required.



## Health and Safety Policy

### 9. First Aid

- 9.1 Health and Safety Executive advice states, *'there are no hard and fast rules on how many trained First Aiders you should have'* and that *'it depends on the nature of your work and its location'*. As a small organisation, it is prudent that the Board has a least one First Aid Appointed person at all times and in practice this means that all staff should have formal First Aid training.
- 9.2 All First Aiders and appointed persons hold a valid certificate of competence; the Board maintains a register of all qualified staff and will arrange re-training as necessary.
- 9.3 HSE strongly recommends that first-aiders undertake annual refresher training, over half a day, during any three-year certification period. Although not mandatory, this will help qualified first-aiders maintain their basic skills and keep up to date with any changes to first-aid procedures.
- 9.4 First Aid notices are clearly displayed around the office and depot.
- 9.5 Sufficient numbers of suitably stocked first aid boxes are available and checked monthly to ensure they are adequately stocked.
- 9.6 A suitable area is available for the provision of first aid at both the office and depot.
- 9.7 Staff are regularly informed of First Aid arrangements, through induction, training days, and the staff handbook which is issued annually.
- 9.8 Where First Aid has been administered, this is recorded in the first aid treatment book.

### 10. Machinery and Equipment

- 10.1 Maintenance schedules and servicing schedules for heavy plant are in place to ensure that all equipment is safe. Guidance notes will be kept individually by departments on the relevant machinery and equipment used by staff. Where manufacturer's instructions are not available, the Clerk and/or Works Manager will prepare instructions for maintaining the equipment, for machinery.

### 11. Moving and Handling

- 11.1 All equipment must be moved safely. Large pieces of equipment must only be moved by people who have received Manual Handling training.

### 12. Training

- 12.1 The Board ensures training records are maintained for both office staff and the workforce for any training undertaken for the purposes of undertaking the Board's functions.

### 13. Audit

- 13.1 Internal audits of operational tasks and depot and office facilities will be undertaken monthly and recorded.



# Health and Safety Policy

## Version Control

Version	Date Approved	Summary of Changes
1.0	01/04/2026	Initial policy approved