

Tunbridge Wells Commons Conservators

Health and Safety Policy Statement

Introduction

Tunbridge Wells Commons Conservators (TWCC) are committed to maintaining high standards of health, safety and environmental protection in all of its operations and practices in accordance with The Health and Safety at Work etc Act 1974 (as amended) and the Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999 (as amended), so far as is reasonably practicable.

Objectives

- To manage health and safety risk to prevent accidents and work-related ill health to officers, employees, contractors, volunteers and members of the public.
- To commit to continual improvement in health and safety management and performance.

Requirements

- TWCC to ensure that **employees** are provided with clear instructions, information, appropriate equipment, personal protective equipment and adequate training to ensure they are competent to do their work safely.
- The Ranger to ensure that **contractors** confirm that they are insured, are trained and hold relevant certifications, wear appropriate personal protective equipment and have conducted task specific risk assessments to competently complete the required task or project safely. The above is monitored via a contractor checklist, which the company's responsible person must sign and submit to the Clerk annually, with a copy of their public liability and employers' liability insurance, which is to be maintained on the One Drive. The Ranger will provide the contractors with clear work instructions for each instruction.
- The Ranger and Clerk to ensure that **volunteers** are provided with clear safety instructions and personal protective equipment to complete the required task or project safely. The Ranger will supervise volunteers when using hand tools.
- The Ranger and Clerk to produce risk assessments for carrying out tasks and activities on the Commons, where risk has been identified and needs managing. Risk assessments to be shared with participants and discussed via safety briefings, prior to starting the tasks and activities, or emailed to participants working without supervision. Risk assessments to be reviewed in accordance with their review date. **Action: The Ranger to review and update all risk assessments.**
- The Ranger to carry out checks and maintenance of all hand and battery-operated tools after each use, checks to be recorded by the Ranger in a maintenance book. Volunteers are allowed to use their own tools; the Ranger will check these for safety.
- As part of day-to-day duties, the Ranger will identify potential hazards and report to the Clerk and or Committee for assessment and mitigation.
- Accident and incident logs to be maintained by the Ranger in a hard copy logbook, to be summarised and reported quarterly to the Conservators.

- Complaints to be recorded on the One Drive, reviewed, responded to and reported quarterly to the Conservators.
- The Ranger and Clerk to keep their first aid qualifications up to date and to ensure that first aid equipment is in date and replenished.
- The Ranger and Clerk to ensure that any vehicles used on TWCC business must have insurance for business use.

Limitation of responsibility

Members of the public have a duty of care to themselves on Common land. Unless TWCC set out to create a risk, or is reckless about whether a risk is created, TWCC is not liable for any injury caused by:

- any natural feature of the landscape including any tree, rocks, shrub, plant, river or stream
- any ditch or pond, whether natural or not
- people passing over, under or through a wall, fence or gate, except if they're making proper use of a gate or stile

The interpretation of the legislation on liability to the public is a matter for the courts to decide as referenced in this link: <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/open-access-land-management-rights-and-responsibilities#your-liability-to-the-public>

Responsibilities

TWCC are ultimately responsible for managing their health and safety responsibilities on the Commons and of officers, employees, contractors, volunteers and visitors. The Ranger and Clerk have day to day responsibility for managing TWCC's health and safety responsibilities on the Commons.

Training

Staff training will be reviewed annually as part of the development reviews. Records of training certification and renewal dates to be kept by the Clerk and reviewed annually.

Insurance

It is the policy of TWCC to take out insurance for employers' liability, public liability and personal accident. Details of the policy are available at <https://twcommons.org/financial-records/>

Last reviewed: October 2024

Date of next review: October 2025