

## SP30 Health & Safety Policy



### Statement of intent by the Board and Chief Executive

The Board and Chief Executive recognise the importance of occupational health, safety, welfare and asset compliance, in the successful operation of all its activities, and accepts its responsibilities as an employer and provider of services. This policy is a declaration of the Board's intent to establish and maintain a safe and healthy (H&S) working environment where the wellbeing of its staff, supply chain and all other people who may be affected by the activities of Soha, is actively promoted and harm eliminated wherever possible.

This document sets out our policy for the organisation and arrangements for H&S for our employees and others affected by service delivery, for both Soha Housing and Soha Response. Implementation of this policy, associated policies, guidance and management systems will contribute to improving health and safety performance.

Our H&S system is based upon the structures details in the Health and Safety Executive's (HSE) HSG65 and will work towards, ISO 45001:2023 (Occupational Health and Safety Management Systems).

Soha's diverse activities present many and varied H&S risks. It is essential that we have an effective H&S management systems throughout the organisation. All employees, service delivery partners, contractors and other third parties have a role to play in achieving and maintaining the highest level of H&S.

We will seek to ensure that all buildings, plant and equipment meet recognised H&S standards and we recognise that by complying with this policy we will positively contribute to business performance by reducing injuries, ill health and protecting the environment.

The Board will ensure that:

- A positive working environment is promoted, by the delivery of training and instruction to ensure staff have the necessary skills and knowledge to perform their work safely and efficiently
- Health and safety remains a priority in commercial decisions and adequate finance and resources are made available to implement our H&S management system
- Conduct all undertakings in such a way to ensure, so far as reasonably practicable, that employees and residents will not be exposed to risk as a result of our activities
- Adhere to the relevant statutory provisions and other appropriate standards whilst undertaking all work activities that ensures a safe home for residents
- Healthy working conditions are maintained and facilitate staff and resident consultation
- Maintain a constant and continuing interest in health and safety matters applicable to the company's activities, and management sets an example of safe behaviour

- Systems are in place that will allow Soha to maintain, monitor and, where necessary, take action to improve safety performance

The Board recognises that for this policy to be effective, the management of H&S must be fully integrated into our business objectives and in unison with resident involvement. This policy and its objectives form an integral part of our H&S management system and will be reviewed annually or sooner, if required by business or legislative changes or where improvements are identified.

It is a requirement that this policy statement and its implications are understood and acted upon across all levels of the organisation. Linked to this policy statement are the organisational arrangements by which Soha will ensure that this policy is implemented. Copies of the policy will be brought to the attention of all employees and will be available on the Soha Hub.

SIGNATURE

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Chair of the Board  
Soha Group

SIGNATURE

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Peter Hargreaves' in a cursive style.

Chief Executive  
Soha Group

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## **1. Introduction**

The rest of the Policy sets out Soha's approach to the management of Health, Safety, Welfare (HSW) and Asset Compliance. It explains how we will develop our organisational responsibilities and implement our arrangements for H&S.

The Policy is split into three parts

- a) **The H&S policy statement** – Sets out the intention of Soha to comply with legislative requirements and to ensure the HSW of employees, residents and other such as visitor and contractors, and asset compliance
- b) **Organisation and responsibilities** - This details who has responsibility for HSW including overall for specific duties for key areas
- c) **H&S arrangements and procedures** – This details policy statements, arrangements and references associated procedures for managing the hazards and risk from a particular type of activity or work.

## **Soha Housing and Soha Response**

Soha and Soha Response come under the umbrella of Group H&S in relation to staff safety and wellbeing. Soha Housing, as Parent, also manages H&S matters in its housing stock and deals with the following

- Asbestos
- Electricity
- Gas safety
- Water management/legionella
- Lifts
- Fire Safety
- Damp and mould
- General health and safety

## **2. Organisation**

Soha will implement that following organisation and arrangements for H&S management under HSG65, Managing for Health & Safety. Plan, do, check, act.

### **Plan – Planning the direction of H&S**

This H&S Policy is established to assist the Board members and CEX in attaining an effective H&S management system. By producing this policy, the Board and CEX are leading the way in H&S management. This policy is a living document and will be amended as required.

To ensure H&S remains as a high priority the following actions will be taken

- H&S will be an agenda item on all project, team and management meetings
- Competent H&S advice has been employed, to ensure compliance with H&S legislation
- Soha will set targets, that will be communicated to all managers and employees
- Job descriptions will include H&S responsibilities, and reviewed during performance appraisals

## **Do – Delivering the plan for H&S**

To ensure the delivery of an effective H&S management system, Soha will provide a safe place of work and do everything that is reasonably practicable to achieve this. Soha aims to protect people whilst carrying out their work by introducing safe working practices, that deal with risk in a sensible responsible and proportionate way.

To achieve good leadership

- All members of the Board, CEX and management team will lead by example.
- Risk assessments will be carried out and communicated to employees. Safe systems of work will be produced and implemented.
- A procurement and contractor management will be adopted and managed to ensure no new hazard standards are introduced, and Soha supply chain are assessed regularly to ensure they comply with regulations, Soha standards and is adequately managed in regards to H&S

## **Check – Monitoring H&S performance**

To ensure all the arrangements in this policy are met and that safe systems of work are adhered too, the company must monitor/check performance.

The monitoring process must coincide with the content of this policy. Where there are any shortcomings, they must be addressed, and the policy updated.

The monitoring process can be part of the appraisal system, whereby good health and safety practice is celebrated

## **Act – Reviewing H&S Performance**

Review of Soha's H&S performance must be carried out, annually at Board level. The review will establish whether the essential H&S principles have been embedded in the organisation.

The review process will

- Examine whether the H&S Policy reflects Soha's priorities, plans and targets
- Examine whether risk management and H&S systems have been effectively reported to the CEX and Board, and produce an action plan for any areas of non-compliance

## **3. Responsibilities**

The effectiveness of the policy is dependent on the people who are responsible for ensuring that all aspects of work, are carried out with due consideration for safety and with minimum risk to health.

Although some duties and responsibilities may be delegated to others according to their experience and training, accountability is not transferrable, so ultimate responsibility lies with the Chief Executive and Board.

To clarify roles and responsibilities for H&S, the following duties have been allocated to nominated employees.

Job descriptions should include H&S responsibilities and these should be reviewed during annual appraisals. Arrangements are in place for dealing with poor performance.

### **3.1. Chief Executive and Board**

The Chief Executive (CEX) and Board have ultimate responsibility for providing effective governance of health, safety, welfare and asset compliance, within Soha Group. They are responsible for the major policy decisions and arrangements for the adequate provision of finance and resources to achieve the objectives of this policy.

The CEX and Board is specifically responsible for

- Assigning authority to the Senior Leadership Team (SLT) to monitor and review implementation of the health and safety policy
- Ensuring that the SLT members are committed to the objectives of this policy and that they support the CEX and Board in actively pursuing these objectives.
- Acting on H&S, asset compliance matters that
  - SLT members cannot resolve
  - Relate to issues outside the control of SLT
  - Form the subject of a report, complaint or concern from an statutory enforcement agency
- Approving management structure for implementing the health and safety policy and arrangements
- Ensuring that the company health and safety performance is regularly reviewed and improvements are resourced and introduced as required
- Make arrangements to review this policy annually, or when significant changes affect the implementation and, or effectiveness of this policy
- Ensuring monitoring arrangements are in place that cover the activities of Soha Group to determine the efficiency, effectiveness and reliability of the overall H&S management system and where necessary, ensure plans are implemented when corrective action is identified.
- Ensure H&S plans and objectives, highlighting initiatives and improvements are produced annually, are effectively implemented and monitored.
- Monitoring the H&S performance of SLT members to ensure they have carried out their H&S responsibilities.

### **3.2. Members' Forum**

The Members' Forum consists of a group of engaged resident members, who meet regularly to maintain a residents view of the running of the organisation. The meetings provide a forum for residents to consult the management team regarding matters of H&S affecting Soha and its business operations.

- Annually report to the CEX and Board on HSW and asset compliance performance
- Review and comment, as appropriate on H&S policies and arrangements, before making recommendations to the CEX and Board
- Knowledge and training – It is intended for members to receive training on health and safety matters

### **3.3. Senior Leadership Team (SLT)**

The purpose of the SLT is to set the business strategy and objectives considering relevant H&S implications. The SLT is chaired by the CEX and the meetings provide a forum to consult with SLT members on matters affecting Soha and its business operations

SLT members have senior responsibility for:

- Ensuring they make strategic business decisions that give proper consideration to all H&S implications
- Monitoring the impact of their business decisions on Soha's H&S management systems and taking appropriate action as identified
- Keeping the CEX informed of H&S matters likely to have a negative impact on Soha's' business, performance and activities as a result of their decisions
- Monitoring H&S performance
- SLT will receive a quarterly report from the H&S Committee. SLT will study the report and decide if any H&S matters from the H&S Committee should be escalated to the CEX and Board
- SLT will disseminate information from the H&S Committee to their direct reports for further distribution to Heads of Service and Team Managers
- Approving Policies and Procedures/Arrangements that have an impact on health, safety, welfare and compliance for employees, residents and their assets
- Performing informal and formal inspections of the workplace, and consult with the staff on issues raised. Inspections are to be monitored by the H&S Committee and included within annual performance objectives

### **3.4. Director of Property Services**

The CEX and Board has given specific responsibilities to the Director of Property Services for the corporate organisation and arrangements for H&S. This is to assist the CEX and Board to fulfil their responsibilities details in this policy.

Specific responsibilities for the Director of Property Services are:

- To ensure that the H&S compliance and asset management teams fulfil their responsibilities and ensure that the Group H&S objectives are progressed
- Provide SLT with high level monitoring of H&S performance
- To oversee the creation, auditing and review of corporate H&S documents
- To ensure effective arrangements are in place and implemented to protect the health, safety and wellbeing of employees, contractors, visitors and residents, and any other persons who could foreseeably be affected by operational activities.
- To ensure property and equipment assets are maintained and serviced as required, by statutory requirements, approved codes of practices and industry best practice.
- To ensure that 'director' responsibilities are followed for their area of service
- Ensure, adequate resources are available for the implementation of control measures identified from risk assessments and inspections and audits

### **3.5. Directors**

They will be accountable for H&S and welfare in their service areas of responsibility

They will ensure that

- H&S objectives are included in their overall business plans

- A positive H&S culture is promoted to secure the effective implementation of this policy
- Risk assessments are completed
- Training is identified and arranged, to ensure staff are competent to undertake their duties safely
- H&S is a standing item on management and team meetings throughout their directorate
- All significant known H&S risks are communicated to SLT
- Their service complies and adheres with all H&S arrangements and associated legislation
- Their service remains abreast and are made aware of all relevant changes in H&S, legislation, technical and authoritative guidance
- Staff have access to competent and specialist H&S advice where required
- Their service engages with the H&S committee, and all relevant actions from the H&S committee minutes, where applicable are completed within relevant timescales
- There is an effective programme of H&S surveillance for staff where statutory provisions have identified health surveillance as a control measure
- H&S responsibilities are incorporated into individuals job descriptions
- Staff, receive appropriate information, instruction, training and supervision to enable them to undertake their duties in a safe manner
- H&S risks that can not be managed through their normal day to day operational demands are communicated to the H&S Committee for further discussion.
- Local arrangements are in place that are regularly reviewed
- They set a good example in relation to H&S

### **3.6. Head of Health and Safety**

Is responsible for

- Implementing the companies health and safety management system, in accordance with Managing for health and safety (HSG65) and ensure they meet the needs of the business
- Ensure policies, procedures and arrangements are fit for purpose and kept up to date in relation to legal and regulatory changes
- Maintain awareness of legislative and regulatory changes
- Keep the Director of Property Services updated on all relevant H&S matters, and advise SLT on H&S matters that are relevant to, or affect the day to day business activities
- Advising SLT on any new legislation or changes in existing legislation
- Reviewing and revising this health and safety policy, including emergency procedures
- Monitor and review the Groups H&SW and compliance performance, including carrying out periodic inspections and audits, ensure corrective action is implemented
- Reporting H&S performance and improvements required to the Director of Property Services and, or SLT.
- Ensure arrangements are in place to ensure incidents, are investigated, proportionate to severity of the incident and recommend means of preventing reoccurrence
- Ensure incidents are reported to the Enforcing Authorities as required

- Ensure monitoring and auditing arrangements are in place, which can be monitored and reported to the H&S committee and SLT, identify trends and recommend improvements
- Along with HR, ensure line managers are trained to ensure risk assessments are in place for work undertaken by their staff
- Ensure suitable and sufficient risk assessments have been carried out and are maintained
- Ensuring the appropriate number of first aiders and fire marshals are appointed
- Promote an enthusiasm and interest for H&S matters
- Work with the Head of Assets to ensure Soha remains compliant with gas, electrical, legionella/water management, asbestos, fire safety and mould & damp
- Ensure adequate arrangements are in place for the management of self-delivered and contracted works

### **3.7. Head of Human Resources**

- Work with the H&S Manager to ensure Soha is able to provide online HS&W training as identified to staff
- Work with the H&S Manager to ensure incidents are adequately investigated and monitored
- Provide HR advice to all managers on H&S issues as required
- Assist line managers to ensure H&S responsibilities are included in job descriptions
- Attend SLT meetings
- Ensure HR is represented at the H&S Committee meetings.

### **3.8. Head of Asset Management**

- Ensure Soha complies with all property related H&S legislation and regulations
- Including but not exclusively, asbestos, gas, electrical, fire and water/legionella safety

### **3.9. Heads of Service**

The Heads of Departments, within their remit of responsibility shall

- Demonstrate and pursue high H&S standards
- As identified, create, implement and monitor local H&S policies and procedures/arrangements
- Drive improvements in H&S standards in their area of responsibility
- Ensure risk assessments are in place in the service delivery areas they are responsible for, and staff have been briefed on the contents of the risk assessments.
- Ensure risk assessments are periodically reviewed and monitored
- Keep up to date with relevant changes in H&S legislation, standards and good practice relevant to their service area
- Detail employees H&S responsibilities within their job descriptions
- Assess the competence of employees to undertake their roles
- Detail specific H&S participation necessary by employees in their service area
- Communicate H&S changes and developments to their employees
- Identify and keep H&S records, where these are not maintained by other service areas

- Ensure all incidents are adequately investigated with appropriate remedial actions taken
- As appropriate, participate in the H&S Committee
- Implement actions required by SLT

### **3.10. Line Managers**

Line managers at all levels at Soha have specific H&S responsibilities, over and about their general responsibilities as employees. These responsibilities are detailed in their job description and should be included in their annual performance objectives

Line managers are required to:

- Identify hazards, develop risk and COSHH assessments, record significant findings and implement necessary control measures
- Check and document the working environment, including equipment, materials, work areas etc are used safely and that H&S procedures/arrangements are effective and complied with, and take remedial actions where necessary
- Involve staff in this process and encourage hazard reporting staff may come across
- Providing information, instruction, training and supervision with employees and provide them with equipment, materials, PPE and devices to enable them to work safely
- Organise and allow staff time to attend H&S training.
- Deliver H&S training, such as toolbox talks when required
- Complete a H&S induction checklist for all new employees at the start of their employment.
- Ensure all Soha response staff complete health screening questionnaires.
- Ensure all incidents are reported, and undertake or assist in any investigation and take remedial action to prevent reoccurrence
- Review and act on Display Screen Equipment (DSE) assessments and initiate occupational referrals when required

### **3.11. Soha employees including, contract, temporary and agency**

All employees, regardless of seniority, must be aware that they have a duty to take reasonable care of their own H&S and that of others who may be affected by their acts or omissions..

Employees must:

- cooperate with others and work in accordance and all safe working procedures/arrangements and instructions. For example, wear personal protective equipment, attend, complete and follow etc
- Not intentionally or recklessly interfere with or misuse anything provided in the interest of health, safety or welfare
- Report any hazards and incidents in accordance with Soha accident and incident reporting arrangements.
- Make suggestions to improve any aspect of H&S
- Stop work, if the place, condition or method of work is dangerous and seek advice
- Read and understand this Policy and carry out their work in accordance with its requirements, and associated procedures and arrangements
- Use the correct tools and equipment for the job, and keep those tools and equipment in a good condition

- Adhere to safety signs and signals
- Work in a safe manner at all times

Employees, at all levels within Soha are reminded that if they fail to comply with this Policy action can be taken in accordance with Soha disciplinary policy and procedure

### **3.12. H&S Committee**

In accordance with the Health & Safety (Consultation with Employees) Regulations 1996, an internal Safety Committee will meet regularly, and will be representative of all levels of the organisation. Meetings will be held quarterly, and copies of the agendas and minutes made available to all staff.

The composition of the H&S Committee will be, but not limited to:

- Director of Property Services or their representative
- Head of H&S
- Members of the senior leadership team
- Members from Soha Response management and or supervisory team
- Employee representatives
- Union representatives (as applicable)
- Resident representative(s)

The purpose of the H&S Committee is to:

- Review on behalf of the CEX, the Groups' H&S Policy and procedures / arrangements
- Recommend annual corporate H&S objectives and targets to the CEX and Board
- Monitor the Groups' compliance with its health and safety management system, taking into consideration changes in best practice, legislation and guidance
- Review any accidents or incidents that have occurred since the last meeting, and identify/discuss trends
- Received and discuss reports of visiting enforcing authorities
- Report and communicate on H&S matters with other employees
- Provide an open forum for the development of best practice, and to discuss breaches in legislation and agree steps to prevent re-occurrence

### **3.13. Contractors**

All contractors will be expected to comply with this H&S Policy, and their own H&S policy and safety management system. All contractors will be assessed for their compliance with H&S legislation.

All contractors must:

- Provide a copy of their H&S Policy for review, prior to works being awarded
- Comply with Soha's H&S rules, construction phase plan and associated information and guidance
- Work in accordance with statutory provisions and take into account the safety of others
- Ensure risk assessments and method statements (RAMS) are suitable and sufficient and communicated to staff before undertaking works. Provide RAMS to Soha as requested.
- Ensure adequate supervision is provided

- Ensure plant, equipment and tools are safe and in a good working order
- Ensure staff are adequately trained and where required provide evidence of training to Soha
- Inform Soha of any incident that occurs whilst undertaking work for Soha
- Work in accordance with Soha site rules
- Comply with, the Construction (Design and Management Regulations) all relevant legislation and with their H&S contract obligations

### **3.14. Multi-occupancy buildings**

In buildings where Soha share it with other organisations, the responsibility for H&S depends on mutual agreements, leasehold/tenant agreements and landlord duties.

## **4. Health and Safety Arrangements**

This section details the arrangements that we will use to help implement our Health and Safety Policy and ensure compliance with current Health and Safety Legislation.

### **4.1. Supplementary H&S Policies & Guidance**

This policy is supported by a number of supplementary policies, guidance and procedures, which address specific H&S issues or topics. All H&S documentation is available on Soha Housing and Soha Response's H&S hub.

- Asbestos Policy
- Fire Safety Policy
- Legionella Management Policy
- Damp and Mould Policy
- Driving Safely Policy
- Gas Safety Policy
- Electrical Safety Policy
- Lift Safety Policy
- Pest Policy

### **4.2. Accident reporting**

All incidents, accidents and dangerous occurrences, including those who affect tenants, contractors or someone who is not a member of staff, are to be formally reported i.e. recorded; investigated; remedial actions completed.

These tasks are to be carried out within the timescales contained in statutory provisions and Soha's procedure/arrangements on such incidents. The level of management involvement in such incident investigation should be proportional to the seriousness of the incident. Statistical data arising as a result of accidents shall be prepared by the Head of Health and Safety and presented to the SLT and the H&S Committee at agreed intervals. Following any incident, including a near miss the risk assessment for that particular activity must be reviewed and additional mitigation measures identified and implemented. Process detailing Soha's arrangements is available on SharePoint

### **4.3. Asbestos**

Soha will comply with the Health & Safety at Work etc. Act (HSWA), the Control of Asbestos Regulations (CAR), Approved Codes of Practice and related Guidance.

Any asbestos removal works, must be carried out by persons who have received the proper training and who have the necessary prospective equipment. All non-domestic buildings built before the year, 2000 must have an asbestos management survey. If any works are required to the fabric of a building, then a refurbishment or demolition survey must be undertaken. Soha will instruct competent persons to undertake these risk assessments and surveys, and asbestos awareness training will be provided for all staff as identified on the training matrix. A register will be maintained and residents will be provided with details of any known asbestos and its location in their homes at the start of their tenancy.

Soha will take all reasonable and practical measures to prevent the exposure of employees, tenants and members of the public to asbestos fibres when visiting, living and/or working within any properties owned or rented by Soha

Soha's arrangements are available on SharePoint.

#### **4.4. Asset Compliance**

The company Health and Safety Policy, of which these arrangements are a significant part, will assist in providing safe working procedures and processes to Soha employees, enabling them to work safely in our office, whilst working away from the office, in our tenant's homes and communities. There are other Regulatory Standards applicable to Soha that must be met as registered providers of social housing – these are classified as 'economic' standards and 'consumer' standards. The latter includes the 'Home Standard' which states the following: Repairs and maintenance Registered providers shall: (b) meet all applicable statutory requirements that provide for the health and safety of the occupants in their homes.

The safety of residents in their homes is primarily managed through the Asset Compliance Arrangements.

#### **4.5. Bird Fouling**

There are potential risks to personnel when working in and around bird droppings or debris. It is also a risk to the occupants of the building especially when the nesting area or droppings are in or around the air conditioning system. Diseases from such substances include Ornithosis and Chlamydia Psittaci which cause flu like symptoms, hospitalization and even death. Active roosts present the greatest danger and will prevent work being carried out.

When, it is foreseeable that staff will be working around droppings and debris a risk assessment will be undertaken to identify the required control measures.

#### **4.6. Blood Borne Viruses (BBVs)**

As an employer, Soha has a duty to assess the risk of work activities. If the activity produces a known risk of infection, precautions must be in place to protect employees' health.

These viruses can be found in body fluids. In particular, the fluids that Soha employees and sub-contractors may be in contact with include urine, feces, saliva, sputum, sweat, tears and vomit. Although these fluids carry a minimal risk of BBV infection, care should still be taken.

The main BBVs of concern are:

- Hepatitis B virus (HBV), hepatitis C virus and hepatitis D virus, which all cause hepatitis, a disease of the liver.
- Human Immunodeficiency Virus (HIV) which causes Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome (AIDS), affecting the immune system of the body.

Some jobs may mean coming into contact with raw sewage (plumbing, property maintenance works). Other types of work or activities where there may be contact with blood/body fluids include:

- Disposing of waste into skips (needles may be thrown into skips, therefore no one should get into a skip or grab anything out of the skip);
- Providing first aid;
- Plumbing works

Safety measures can help prevent infection, mostly transmitted by hand to mouth contact, during eating or smoking, or wiping the face with contaminated gloves. Wash hands thoroughly after working in the area, cover all cuts and grazes before working, take rest breaks away from the working area, wear protective clothing and gloves, avoid hand /mouth contact, use anti-bacterial soaps.

When providing first aid, the first aider must wear sterile nitrile gloves, and must check that there are no holes in the gloves. First aiders must always wear gloves to protect themselves and the casualty.

Hepatitis A has the most severe impact and is contracted through faeces. Blood and bodily fluids transmit Hepatitis B and C. 'B' can be life threatening but also carriers often show no symptoms but are still contagious. Hepatitis C carriers can carry the virus for 20 Years before any problems arise.

Specific legislation on hazards that arise from working with biological agent such as BBVs is contained in the Control of Substances Hazardous to Health Regulations 2002. A good source of guidance can also be found in the HSE leaflet INDG342 Blood Born Viruses in the Workplace: Guidance for Employers and Employees.

#### **4.7. Consultation and Communication**

Soha acknowledges its responsibility to consult in good time on matters that could affect health and safety, specifically:

- The introduction of new technology
- Arrangements for appointing competent persons to assist with health and safety
- Information that should be passed to employees under various regulations and government guidance
- Training required under health and safety legislation.

Effective health and safety management involves consultation between people at all levels. Consultation in Soha will be carried out via department representatives at regular

meetings of the Health and Safety Group and, where appropriate, by direct consultation when required. All policies, arrangements, procedures and safe working practices will be developed in cooperation with relevant managers, employees and employee representatives to ensure full involvement and ownership. The Board of Soha will communicate to employees their commitment to health and safety and ensure the Soha Health and Safety Policy and relevant sections of the safety arrangements are available and communicated. Communication methods include:

- the structure of the Health and Safety Committee being communicated
- regular newsletter updates
- verbal instruction or guidance by managers or supervisors
- leading by example

#### **4.8. Control of Noise at Work**

All tasks and work activities will be planned and arranged to the Noise at Work Regulations, and relevant British Safety Standards and industry guidance into account.

Soha will procure and hire, plant and equipment which takes into account the effects of noise on workers, general public and the end users of the property. Measures will be implemented to reduce noise to levels considered to be safe, if this is not practicable, suitable hearing protection must be identified and provided to staff. Regular noise monitoring of noise levels and frequencies will be planned as required.

All Soha Response employees must undertake the company hearing loss self-assessment form during induction.

The process supporting the above can be accessed on SharePoint.

#### **4.9. Control of Vibration at Work**

Soha, will comply with its duties under the Control of Vibration at Work Regulations, as part of its risk assessment procedures. All activities which may place operatives at risk of exposure to vibration will be thoroughly assessed by a competent person and alternative methods of work will always be considered.

There are 2 main forms of vibration hazard they are:

**Hand-arm Vibration (HAV)** – Hand transmitted vibration from tools, equipment and certain processes that produce vibration.

**Whole Body Vibration (WBV)** – Vibration that is transmitted to the body through the seat of the plant or the feet of the operative.

Soha are committed to providing a safe and healthy working environment for all employees and those affected by our activities. Operations are to be carried out, so as to ensure, so far as is reasonably practicable, that the health and safety of any employee will not be adversely affected. Arrangements associated with this policy set out how the organisation will comply with the Control of Vibration at Work Regulations

#### **4.10. Contractor Management**

Potential and existing trade/specialist contractors and consultants will be assessed at pre-tender stage and regularly throughout the Contract by the Contract Administrator for competence, to undertake their work in accordance with health and safety requirements. Only contractors who are assessed to be competent will be engaged to carry out work for Soha.

All contractors will be given access to relevant Health and Safety documentation (refer to the Contractor Management procedure), or have it issued to them where necessary. Trade contractors will be required to comply with the Construction (Design & Management) Regulations and identify significant hazards, prepare risk assessments and, where appropriate, method statements for the work they are required to carry out. The process supporting the above can be accessed on SharePoint. Management of contractors involved in maintaining Asset Compliance are referred in that section of this Policy.

#### **4.11. Construction (Design and Management) Regulations (CDM)**

Soha will comply with the CDM regulations. Depending on contract terms Soha could be the Client, for construction, repair and maintenance projects outsourced by Soha Housing to competent contractors. In order to fulfil the company's client responsibilities, the Director of Property Services, with advice from the Head of Health and Safety, will appoint a competent, Principal Designer to oversee any construction, repair and maintenance project from inception and throughout the construction phase to completion. Where in-house competence exists to manage a CDM project the Director of Property Services will ensure compliance with the CDM Regulations, and Projects will be notified as applicable.

Soha Housing, will appoint Soha Response as the Principal Contractor (PC) and Soha Response, will comply with all PC requirements.

#### **4.12. Control of Substances Hazardous to Health (COSHH)**

Soha will comply with legislation as set out in the Control of Substances Hazardous to Health Regulations (COSHH). Before work starts, the relevant supervisor or manager, will ensure adequate control measures are in place, or are implemented ahead of the substance being used.

If a Soha Contractor required the use of hazardous substance, the relevant Contractor is responsible for ensuring there are adequate control measures in place or are implemented ahead of the new substance being used

Where there is a risk of exposure to hazardous substances in the workplace, an assessment will be carried out to identify the nature and level of risk. Wherever possible, risk of exposure to hazardous substances will be eliminated or, where this is not possible, measures will be implemented to minimise and control the risk.

The process supporting the above can be accessed on SharePoint

#### **4.13. Co-ordination**

Soha will ensure that health and safety management is co-ordinated to ensure that:

- resources are allocated appropriately, and necessary training provided
- policy, procedures and safe working practices are consistent and standardised wherever possible

- best practice is shared
- duplication of effort is avoided.

Director of Property Services will be jointly responsible for this co-ordination.

#### **4.14. Display Screen Equipment**

Soha will take all reasonable steps to secure the health and safety of employees who work with display screen equipment (DSE) whether in the office environment or elsewhere.

Soha acknowledges that health and safety hazards may arise from the use of this equipment. It is therefore Soha intention to ensure that any risks are reduced to a minimum. Whilst it is generally recognised that DSE can be used without undue risk to health, it is appreciated that some employees may have genuine reservations and concerns. To manage the potential risks and concerns, Soha provide a recognised software package providing training to employees that also helps the employee to assess the risks presented by incorrect use of equipment and furniture related to the use of computers. The process supporting the above can be accessed on SharePoint.

#### **4.15. Documentation**

HR and H&S will ensure that a complete copy of, or where appropriate, relevant extracts from the company Health and Safety policy are made available for reference. A copy of the current Employer's Liability Insurance Certificate and company rules will also be issued for display.

A list of information that is required to be displayed at the workplace can be found below (List not exhaustive):

- Health and Safety Law Poster
- Company structure
- Insurances – Public, Employers
- Health and Safety Policy statement
- Health and Safety Inspection Records
- Fire Safety Plan
- Fire procedures and precautions
- Company and Site rules
- Emergency numbers/services numbers
- Accident reporting and first aiders
- Directions and map to nearest A&E hospital
- Health and safety information relevant to current activities

#### **4.16. Driving at Work**

Soha employs staff that need to drive during their work and are committed to reducing the risks that may be created as a result, whether you are using a company, your own or a hired vehicle. Anyone driving for work must always obey speed limits. Managers must lead by example, both in the way they drive themselves and by not tolerating poor driving practice by others. Processes are in place to ensure the vehicles owned by Soha and driven by staff are roadworthy and subject to regulatory tests (MOT) and serviced/maintained in accordance with the manufacturers' recommendations. Processes

are in place to ensure that Soha drivers are qualified to drive the vehicles and maintain qualification through annual license checks. The process supporting the above can be accessed on SharePoint.

#### **4.17. Drugs and Alcohol**

Where staff recognise that they may require confidential advice or guidance on the misuse of drugs and alcohol, they should contact their manager or HR in the first instance. Where staff are, or are suspected of being, either under the influence of drugs or alcohol, or suffering from the effects of drug or alcohol usage at work, their behaviour may result in disciplinary action. Further information and support available can be found in Soha's Employee Wellbeing policy, available on SharePoint Any staff or visitors found to be under the influence of drugs or alcohol on Soha property will be required to leave the building.

#### **4.18. Electrical Safety**

Staff and contractors, must not interfere with any electrical equipment in the workplace (other than operating machines correctly and for their designed purpose) unless specifically authorised to do so, e.g. electrical engineers and IT.

Soha will take all reasonable steps to ensure a safe working environment for Soha employees, residents, contractors, visitors, and other persons on Soha premises. Electrical risks must be assessed and controlled by the use of:

- Statutory inspections and testing of portable electrical appliances, by a competent person
- 5 yearly statutory inspection and testing of fixed installations will be tested and certified in accordance with the current/relevant edition of Institute of Electrical Engineers (IEE) Regulations for Electrical Installations
- Any power tools used, for example drills are to be low voltage and must be inspected and maintained. Portable appliances will be tested in accordance with Institute of Engineering and Technology (IET) Guidance.
- Prohibition of any employee to access live electrical installations

Employees are required to visually check any equipment that they use and report any defects noted to:

- Faults with office equipment to be reported to Office Services or IT Helpdesk
- Estates operatives should report any faults with this equipment to the Estates and Neighbourhoods Manager
- Soha Response operatives should report any faults to their Supervisor

Electrical items will be included on a POWER register.

Soha will seek to mitigate any risk associated with electrical works across the organisation and set out clear roles of responsibility for electrical safety complying with all relevant electrical safety legislation applicable to those premises owned and occupied by Soha.

Employees are prohibited from bringing any private electrical equipment in to work. For employee work tasks involving the use of electrical equipment see risk assessments.

The process supporting the above can be accessed on SharePoint.

#### **4.19. Emergency Procedures (offices)**

In the event of the fire alarm being activated, or in any other emergency situation, all employees must leave the office by the nearest signed exit and assemble at the designated assembly point, unless instructed otherwise by emergency services or evacuation marshal. Practice evacuations will be conducted at least twice per year to ensure familiarity with emergency evacuation procedures. Evacuation procedures will be displayed in the building and communicated to all employees, visitors and contractors. In the event of an emergency occurring, you should observe the following procedure:

- evacuate the building in an orderly fashion as directed by evacuation marshal
- make your way to designated assembly point
- await further instructions arising from the implementation of the emergency response procedures. If the building is seriously damaged or not available because of a major emergency which occurs either outside normal office hours or at any other time when you are not present, you should await further information.

#### **4.20. Environment**

A lot of Soha work activities can generate conditions that are detrimental to the environment. These work activities must comply with the Environmental Protection Act and not cause any effects to the surrounding environment. Work activities may include:

- Concrete and cement being washed into watercourses
- Vehicle movement – oil spillage and destructive capabilities
- Petroleum storage – bund around tanks
- Use of aerosols and other substances that harm the environment
- Waste disposal to land fill – Waste Management Plans

Every person at Soha has a duty of care when it comes to the environment. All our work activities should be done with the environment in mind. The examples above are only a few of the possible effects we as a company may have on the environment. Other effects include leaving lights and computers on in the office, burning materials (which is illegal) and releasing toxic gases into the atmosphere. For further guidance and advice please refer to the Soha Environmental Policy.

#### **4.21. Fire Safety – Royal Scot House**

Fire represents a significant hazard to health and safety in all premises. The Director of Property Services is the person with overall responsibility for the provision and maintenance of fire prevention and detection equipment in Royal Scot House. A fire risk assessment will be carried out for Royal Scot House, and where applicable additional fire risk assessments will be undertaken for work undertaken by Soha Response. Managers are responsible for keeping their work areas safe from fire by promoting good housekeeping practices, reducing the storage of combustible materials near to means of ignition e.g. power sources, laptop/phone chargers. The people responsible for testing and

maintaining the fire alarm system, emergency lighting, fire call points and fire extinguishers are engaged by the Head of Asset Management. Office Services will arrange for a fire alarm test to be carried out every week at Royal Scot House and ensure it is recorded in the fire logbook. The test will be regularly carried out at times when the premises are occupied so that people become familiar with the sound of the alarm. A practice fire evacuation will take place twice a year, and the results will be recorded in a fire logbook. Fire Marshals will review the effectiveness of the drill with the Director of Property Services, the Head of HR & the Head of H&S. The Director of Property Services is responsible for carrying out periodic inspections of the fire precautions. These checks are recorded.

#### **4.22. Fire Safety**

Soha will comply with the Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order, Fire Safety Act and BS999: Code of Practice for fire safety carry out regular Fire Risk Assessments of its schemes and blocks of flats with internal communal areas, and fire door inspections. Take all reasonable steps to ensure a safe working and living environment for all Soha employees, residents, contractors, visitors and other persons on premises under the control of Soha; Put in place all reasonable and practical measures to ensure the effective management of fire safety and proactive control of fire risk within and around its premises; Set out clear roles of responsibility for fire safety within the organisation; Comply with all relevant fire safety legislation applicable to those premises owned and occupied by Soha; Positively seek to reduce the likelihood of fires occurring at any premises owned and occupied by the Soha; Minimise the impact of a fire at any premises owned or occupied by Soha, on personal safety, property, finance, business continuity, delivery of service, and the environment.

We will also adhere to the building regulations in accordance with fire safety for means of warning, escape routes; internal and external fire spread.

#### **4.23. First Aid**

Qualified First Aid at Work (FAW) persons and Emergency First Aid at Work (EFAW – formerly Appointed Persons) will be provided at Royal Scot House, and where determined by a first aid needs assessment additional mobile staff will be identified and trained. The names and locations of the persons are posted on notice boards. First aid competence is managed by either the Head of HR (Royal Scot House) or the Estates Neighbourhood Manager (Estates minor repairs) or Director of Property Services for Surveyors/Housing Officers. Certificates should be renewed before they expire. Appropriate levels of first aid equipment in all work areas is determined by risk assessment, a first aid box will be provided in all void properties and all Soha Response vans. Contractors are responsible for compliance with their first aid risk assessments and providing first aid to their employees.

#### **4.24. Gas Safety**

Soha will comply, with The Gas Safety (Installation and Use) Regulations (GSIUR) thereby ensuring the safety of our tenants; Implement regular maintenance and servicing of gas equipment within its properties is of paramount importance in ensuring the safety of our residents. We recognise the potential dangers posed by gas and gas fired appliances and therefore treats gas safety as a fundamental objective. Soha has a target of obtaining 100% current gas certificates serviced within a 12-month period; Ensure that all our gas appliances are checked and serviced annually using approved Gas Safe registered

personnel in accordance with the GSIUR. Soha will also comply with the Health & Safety at Work etc. Act 1974 (HSWA); Implement gas safety procedures to complement this policy which explains our approach, in particular to “no access” issues, breakdowns, quality checks, gas leaks, void properties and the mechanism by which data is recorded.

#### **4.25. Hazard Reporting**

Soha encourages all its staff and contractors to be observant and to report anything hazardous that could compromise safety, with the aim of preventing unnecessary accidents. Under the Health and Safety at Work Act, every employee has a duty of care to report defects or hazards that may cause injury to themselves or others. The process supporting the above can be accessed on SharePoint.

#### **4.26. Health and Safety Committee**

The roles and responsibilities of the Health and Safety Group members are documented in the Committee Terms of Reference and under ‘Health and Safety Roles and Responsibilities’. The Health and Safety Committee will meet quarterly, to discuss current safety matters, suggested proposals for change in H&S management and future developments. Attendees should include representatives from relevant departments. Minutes will be prepared and distributed by the Head of Human Resources or a nominated Deputy. Terms of reference and committee constitution can be accessed on the health safety SharePoint page.

#### **4.27. H&S Systems and processes**

Soha have adopted the following systems to ensure compliance with health, safety, welfare and asset compliance

**Accident and incident notification tool** (AIN) - Incident reporting

**Atlas** - mandatory online training portal

**Continuum** – driver safety portal

**Horizon** – asbestos and vulnerable resident warning flags available on Horizon

**People Safe** – Lone working system

**Safety Culture** – auditing tool

#### **4.28. Health Surveillance**

Soha, will ensure that all employees are provided with health surveillance if deemed appropriate, due to hazards identified by detailed risk assessments. The primary benefits of, and therefore the objective, of health surveillance will be to detect adverse health effects at an early stage, enabling further harm to be prevented. Once it has been decided that health surveillance is appropriate, it will be maintained during the employees employment unless the risk to which the worker is exposed and associated health effects are short term. Health surveillance will be recorded on individual records.

The frequency of the use of surveillance methods will be determined either on the basis of suitable general guidance or on the advice of a qualified practitioner.

#### **4.29. Lead**

Working with lead can put your health at risk, causing symptoms including headaches, stomach pains and anaemia. Other serious health effects include kidney damage, nerve and brain damage and infertility. Soha are committed to providing a safe and healthy working environment for all employees and those affected by our activities. Arrangements Procedures associated with this policy sets out how the organisation will comply with the Control of Lead at Work Regulations (CLAW) and how they will carry out of their operations so as to ensure, so far as is reasonably practicable, that the health and safety of any employee will not be adversely affected.

#### **4.30. Legionella**

Soha will comply with the Approved Code of Practice L8, Health and Safety at Work Act 1974, Control of Substances Hazardous to Health and the Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations. We will take all reasonable and practical measures to prevent the exposure of employees, tenants and members of the public to legionella bacteria when visiting, living and/or working within any properties owned or rented by Soha; Keep a log of all locations of communal stored water systems and the associated risk assessments; Provide information, training (where appropriate), instruction and where necessary supervision as identified by risk assessment; Ensure contractors follow defined, detailed procedures where work is carried out on our water systems.

#### **4.31. Leptospirosis (Weil's Disease)**

The Leptospira bacterium is predominantly spread by the urine of animals such as cattle, and more specific to work undertaken by Soha, rats. Infection is only from direct contact with the urine or where urine has transferred into water. The bacteria enter the body via cuts to the skin or through the nose/mouth. The organism is not airborne unless the water is being sprayed. Staff must report to their supervisor any signs of rats being present whether that is from finding excrement or seeing rats in the area. The risks must be assessed and precautions put in place to prevent infection before work continues.

#### **4.32. Lifting**

Lifts Passenger lifts, stair lifts and through floor lifts Soha will: Manage our portfolio of passenger lifts, stair lifts and through floor lifts to ensure their safe operation, as required by the Lifting Operations & Lifting Equipment Regulations (LOLER) and minimise risk to users; Ensure that all passenger lifts are regularly inspected as per statutory requirements. This will be achieved by complying with all relevant legislation guidance and aligning to industry best practice; Provide all relevant information, training (where appropriate), instruction and where necessary supervise staff, contractors and/or the public.

Any lifting equipment and lifting gear must be accompanied by a thorough examination certificate before being allowed to be used. Soha Response, will operate a LOLER register to that all lifting equipment can be logged maintained and monitored.

#### **4.33. Lone working**

A lone worker is someone who has no visual or audible communication with another person who is capable of providing assistance without delay, should illness, injury occur, or they are in danger (violence or assault). In practice, lone working can occur at any time, for example, at the start and end of the working day, during holiday periods, at weekends, whilst working away from Royal Scot House. In many cases, the risks are low, and work takes place without incident. A personal security devices provided for employees who regularly work alone and/or drive on business alone. Soha will carry out risk assessments

for employees working alone to determine if an unaccompanied person can do the work safely. The process supporting the above can be accessed on SharePoint.

#### **4.34. Manual Handling**

Manual handling, that involves a risk of injury, will be avoided as far as is reasonably practicable. Where this is not possible, risk assessments will be carried out to identify the levels of risk involved and the precautions needed to manage them effectively. Risk assessments will be reviewed whenever there is reason to believe that they may no longer be valid. Appropriate training and information will be provided to anyone who is required to undertake manual handling operations. Managers are responsible for monitoring the effectiveness of training, risk assessments and safe working methods. The process supporting the above can be accessed on SharePoint.

#### **4.35. New and Expectant Mothers**

New and expectant mothers may require additional protection in the workplace. When the expectant mother makes the HR team aware of their pregnancy, a risk assessment must be carried out, to determine whether certain aspects of their job are detrimental to the H&S of themselves, their unborn child or their new born child. Risk and workstation assessments, maybe required at different times during their pregnancy/return to work. The process supporting the above can be accessed on SharePoint.

#### **4.36. Occupational Health**

Soha provide an Employee Assistance Programme for all employees. This is a confidential, outsourced service designed to assist employees with health and welfare advice and counselling (also see Workplace Welfare and Wellbeing (physical and mental health) There are circumstances where Soha may require independent medical advice on a condition which affects a member of staffs' ability to carry out their role to the required standards. In this event, following guidance from HR, the staff member may be required to attend an occupational health appointment arranged by Soha. Further information can be provided by HR.

#### **4.37. Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) including Respiratory Protective Equipment (RPE)**

The range of activities carried out by Soha employees may include tasks where the use of PPE and RPE is required. PPE does not include protective face covering, or gloves provided to employees to control the transmission of COVID-19 virus. PPE includes face masks, gloves, boots etc and includes overalls to provide protection against dust/dirt and known infestations in void properties or lofts etc The details of PPE required will be recorded in relevant risk assessments. All members of staff who are issued with PPE will receive appropriate training and information on its safe use, storage and maintenance. The process supporting the above can be accessed on SharePoint.

#### **4.38. Protection of the Public**

All necessary measures required for the protection of the public will be allowed for and planned, taking into account Section 3 of the Health and Safety at Work Act 1974.

All working areas should be protected with suitable barriers, fencing or screens to reduce the risk of injury and prevent unauthorised access into the working area by the general public or unaccompanied visitors. Adequate signage will be put in place to also prevent any

unauthorised access and warn the public of the hazards that are present on site.

Where work involves working in occupied premises, communication with the occupants will be continual throughout the work.

Issues to note in respect of the public or adjacent land occupants are:

- Noise
- Vibration
- Dust
- Exposure to other hazardous substances
- Fire and Explosion
- General inconvenience and danger caused by delivery vehicles, machinery and cranes.

#### **4.39. Risk Assessment**

Soha accepts that some of its activities, if not adequately controlled, may create risks to employees or others and will take all reasonably practicable steps to reduce these risks to an acceptable level. It is Soha policy to comply fully the Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations regarding risk assessment. Soha adopts the practice and approach as set out in the HSE guidance INDG163 Risk Assessment - A brief guide to controlling risks in the workplace. Specific risk assessments, relevant to employee tasks, will be identified, planned and coordinated by the Director of Property Services, Head of HR liaising with Head of H&S. Any employee who discovers a hazard during their work should report the hazard to their manager in the first instance. This should be done by email and copied in to H&S@soha.co.uk so that the necessary remedial action can be taken. The process supporting the above can be accessed on SharePoint.

#### **4.40. Safety Inspections and Audits**

Health and safety inspections of workplaces will be carried out at regular intervals by H&S Committee representatives. The results of the inspections will be reviewed by the Committee, and any required remedial action will be taken as appropriate. Off-site workplace inspections of employee tasks e.g. Estates and Soha Response teams should be subject to regular, recorded inspections by the Estates and Neighbourhood & Repairs Manager. Contractor operations and places of work should be subject to regular, recorded inspections by the Director of Property services or nominated deputy as part of the contractor management procedure. Staff in planned maintenance, housing and independent living should provide regular, written updates on any issues in resident properties and communal areas under Soha management. In addition, a nominated external Consultant will undertake an annual review of the Soha safety management systems against legislation, best practice and an agreed safety management standard. The process supporting the above can be accessed on SharePoint.

#### **4.41. Safety signs**

Appropriate safety signage will be displayed in all Soha offices, schemes and sites to ensure compliance with The Health and Safety (Safety Signs and Signals) Regulations. The Director of Property Services will arrange for the appropriate signage to be installed and displayed where identified as required by Fire Risk Assessment (FRA), general or

specific risk assessments or other requirements. During health & safety inspections the display of compliant safety signage will be regularly checked.

#### **4.42. Security**

The security of our people whilst at work is of major importance to us. However, it is also very important to ensure that our offices are fully accessible to clients and visitors. As a consequence, we remain vulnerable to unauthorised persons entering our premises either by using a 'lost' employee key fob or by 'tailgating' behind an employee through a security door. We are all responsible for ensuring that our office remains a secure place to work. We can help in this by:

- being wary of anyone unfamiliar attempting to follow you through a security door, especially if they are not displaying an ID badge
- being fully co-operative and pleased to show your ID badge if challenged
- displaying your ID badge at all times when in the office
- taking good care of your access fob and reporting its loss immediately to IT

#### **4.43. Sharps/Needles**

Soha acknowledge that some activities can expose employees to the hazard of used needles and 'sharps' that could present risks to their health and wellbeing. All employees working on tasks and activities with this hazard potentially present will receive information, guidance and equipment to be able to deal with the discovery of such items.

#### **4.44. Stress**

Soha are committed to protecting the health, safety and welfare of our employees. Irrespective of cause, employees are encouraged to discuss concerns regarding stress and anxiety and any perceived contributory factors with their Manager or HR to enable appropriate support and advice to be provided. Also see the Occupational Health and Workplace Welfare and Wellbeing (physical and mental health) sections of this document. A full Stress at work risk assessment is available on the health and safety SharePoint site.

Staff are given access to free counselling services via their benefits package and are encouraged to use it as the need arises.

#### **4.45. Sun/UV Light**

Soha acknowledge that some activities can expose employees to the hazard of prolonged excessive exposure to sunlight that could present risks to their health and wellbeing. All employees working on tasks and activities with this hazard potentially present will receive information and guidance on how to protect themselves from too much sunlight.

#### **4.46. Training and Information**

All health and safety training required as an element of competency and/or to satisfy a legal requirement will be provided. All new employees will, on their first day, receive a basic health & safety induction, which includes, information regarding emergency arrangement. Within their first month of employment all new employees will be required to complete a generic, online health and safety training program and staff should receive

training, in their responsibilities as defined in this policy. Line Managers are to retain records of induction training and they will select employees to attend safety training courses, as identified in the relevant training matrix, and will co-ordinate training. Health and safety training records are held by HR and H&S, their respective Manager shall be responsible for organising the delivery of training courses. Contractors, will receive general health and safety induction training and are required to demonstrate their employees have undergone appropriate training and are competent to undertake their work. They will then receive task specific health and safety training from their employer as required by legislation. The process supporting the above can be accessed on SharePoint.

#### **4.47. Visitors**

Soha will ensure that all reasonable measures are taken to safeguard visitors from risks to their health and safety and that they are made aware of those health & safety provisions which may affect them e.g. procedures to be followed in emergencies. The Soha host at Royal Scot House, independent living and extra care schemes must ensure that visitors are properly supervised in the event of an emergency.

#### **4.48. Violence & Harassment at work**

Soha recognises that violent and aggressive behaviour can be demonstrated in many ways and come from a variety of sources. Our policy is to implement safe and secure systems and procedures to ensure the health, safety and wellbeing of all employees while at work. The process supporting the above can be accessed on SharePoint.

#### **4.49. Vulnerable Persons**

There are certain groups of people who may require additional assistance or guidance to ensure they are not placed at additional risk when on our premises or carrying out the company's business. Additional assistance may be required for, but not be limited to children and young persons (up to 18 years old), lone workers, expectant mothers, disabled people, staff who work from home. Employees are required to inform the Head of HR if there is additional assistance required for them to be able to use the office and its facilities safely. If invited visitors require additional assistance, Soha will take reasonable steps to ensure their needs are met. A Personal Emergency Evacuation Plan (PEEP) is an assessment and plan required whenever an employee or visitor to the company premises is unable to access or utilise the general emergency evacuation arrangements that are in place. The purpose of the PEEP is to record a realistic alternative or refined "emergency escape plan" that is to be implemented and followed so that the identified person can safely evacuate the premises in an emergency. Once completed a copy is to be kept in the safety folder at the location and a copy provided to the person that is the subject of the assessment. The person who is the subject of the PEEP must be involved, together with a 'competent' health and safety risk assessor in the discussion and proposed plan. A copy is then to be made available to the subject person, to any persons identified as providing assistance e.g., evacuation marshals and a copy retained in the employees personnel file in Human resources.

#### **4.50. Welfare**

All offices and facilities, will be maintained in accordance with Workplace (Health, Safety and Welfare) Regulation, and the Construction (Design & Management Regulations). These regulations apply to the main office and construction sites.

The following will be monitored in accordance with above regulations.

- Maintenance of workplace, and of equipment, devices and systems
- Temperature of indoor workplaces
- Room dimensions and space
- Work stations, area and seating
- Conditions of floors and traffic routes
- Ability to clean windows etc safely
- Welfare facilities, to include sanitary conveniences, washing facilities, drinking water, changing rooms and rest facilities

Wellbeing (physical and mental health) Soha aims to create and maintain a happy and healthy working environment, supporting all staff whether office based, working from home or remote working. To support this, we have an Employee Wellbeing Policy and procedures available on the SharePoint.

#### **4.51. Work Environment**

Soha will endeavour to maintain a comfortable working environment. Workplaces will be maintained in a clean condition and free from accumulated waste. Floors should be kept clear of obvious hazards that could result in slips, trips and falls, including loose carpet tiles and slippery surfaces. Regular, recorded inspections of the working environment are carried out by Health and Safety Reps with records retained. The process supporting the above can be accessed on SharePoint Work Equipment Legislation such as Provision and Use of Work Equipment Regulations (PUWER) and the Lifting Operations and Lifting Equipment Regulations (LOLER) sets out the standards and requirements required of Soha for the provision and maintenance of safe equipment in the work place. Soha aims to provide equipment that is, as far as is reasonably practicable, safe and without risk to health, in accordance the PUWER. Equipment will be provided that is appropriate for the work for which it is intended to be used and it must be checked before each use in accordance with the manufacturer's guidance. Information, instruction and training will be provided for all users of work equipment. Training will include the risks associated with use of the equipment, protective and preventative measures, correct use of guards, safe systems of work and any PPE that must be worn. Employees must not use any work equipment, unless they have received the necessary information, instruction and training, and are wearing the necessary personal protective equipment. Any damaged, unsafe or malfunctioning equipment must be reported to the line manager, and the equipment clearly marked as faulty and removed from service until satisfactorily repaired. The process supporting the above can be accessed on SharePoint.

#### **4.52. Work Equipment**

The Provision and Use of Work Equipment Regulations (PUWER) cover all kinds of work equipment, including hand tools. Soha will make sure that all equipment is suitable for its intended use, taking in to account the local environment, working conditions and hazards in the workplace. Soha will provide adequate information, instruction and training and will ensure that all equipment conforms with the EC product directive and be CE marked. Soha will operate a PUWER register so that all work equipment can be logged, maintained and monitored.

#### **4.53. Working at height**

Soha, will comply with its duties under the Work at Height Regulations. Work at height activities will be assessed and alternatives to work at height will always be considered. The use of ladders for any work at height will only be approved where other more suitable work equipment is not considered to be appropriate. Soha will following the hierarchy of control measures listed in the regulations, and will be considered in the risk assessments and method statements.

It is Soha policy to ensure that all working at height equipment is:

- fit for purpose
- adequately maintained and inspected on a regular basis
- safely used by employees
- kept secure when not being used
- regularly inspected and tagged, or logged in a register, with date of inspection

If employees identify a need for working at height equipment. Supervisors must ensure suitable equipment is procured. Soha employees will receive instruction on the safe use of work at height equipment before use.

#### **4.54. Young persons at work**

A young person is anyone aged between 16 and 18 years of age. Young persons could be and employee or on work experience placements or could visit the premises as a student or group of students. HR will ensure a risk assessment is agreed with the young person and the Manager of the work area hosting them. The process supporting the above can be accessed on SharePoint.

|                          |             |                 |               |
|--------------------------|-------------|-----------------|---------------|
| Members' Forum noted     | 15 May 2025 | SLT approved    | 16 April 2025 |
| EIA completed            | 2 June 2025 | Board approved  | 27 March 2025 |
| DPIA Checklist completed | 2 June 2025 | Review due date | By March 2026 |

#### **Version control**

| <b>Date reviewed by H&amp;S</b> | <b>Reason for review</b>     | <b>Version no.</b> | <b>Changes made (if applicable)</b>                                                 | <b>Changes made by</b>         |
|---------------------------------|------------------------------|--------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------|
| 20/11/24                        | Annual review                | 2.0                | Updated information                                                                 | Health and Safety Manager      |
| 20/03/2025                      | To incorporate Soha Response | 3.0                | Refresh to include Soha Response and expansion of responsibilities and arrangements | C Goakes - Interim Head of H&S |