

ECONORTH LTD.

Health & Safety

Policy and Procedure

John Thompson

Next Review Date: 14.02.24



This policy and procedure applies to all EcoNorth Staff / Internships / Consultants / Placements who work on behalf of the company and is reviewed annually to ensure its continuing suitability.

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Health and Safety Policy and Procedure

A. Statement of Intent

EcoNorth is a professional consultancy that provides a complete ecological service for development and infrastructure projects across the UK and Ireland. Services include protected species surveys, licencing and mitigation, all ecological assessment, land management, Ecological Clerk of Works and GIS mapping.

In order to consistently deliver a high quality service, EcoNorth operates a health and safety management system in accordance with the requirements of ISO 45001.

EcoNorth is fully committed to the health and safety of its employees, interns, placements and subcontractors, and those that use its facilities, sites, services and products. Furthermore, we commit ourselves to complying with best professional practice, client requirements and applicable compliance obligations in all that we do.

This policy sets out the overall commitment of EcoNorth to prevent injury and ill health, to monitor and continually improve health and safety performance and, at a minimum, comply with relevant legislation. EcoNorth is dedicated to managing and reducing risks associated with its facilities and operations by maintaining a robust health and safety management system. Our team contributes to the development and implementation of health and safety improvement objectives, which are authorised and reviewed by the Senior Management Team and Board.

EcoNorth is committed to:

- Providing adequate control of the health and safety risks arising from our work activities.
- Consulting with its employees on matters affecting their health and safety.
- Providing and maintaining safe equipment.
- Ensuring safe handling, storage, use and eventual disposal of substances.
- Providing information, instruction and supervision for employees, interns, placements and subcontractors.
- Ensuring all employees are competent to do their tasks and to give them adequate training and resources to do so safely.
- Maintaining a culture of reporting of accidents, near misses and causes for concern.
- Preventing accidents and cases of work-related ill health.
- Maintaining safe and healthy working conditions.
- Setting and exceeding health and safety Key Performance Indicators.

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- Delivering quarterly health and safety updates to the Board.
- Reviewing and revising this policy as necessary as a result of changes in activity and on an annual basis.
- Promoting physical and mental wellbeing and activities and measures which support these.

B. EcoNorth Health and Safety Policy Structure

The EcoNorth Health and Safety Policy is divided into twenty two sections:

1. Health and Safety Roles and Responsibilities
2. Fire
3. Physical and Mental Health, including Fatigue
4. Hygiene and Welfare
5. Drugs and Alcohol
6. Control of Substances Hazardous to Health
7. Lone Working
8. Risk Assessment
9. Accidents and Near Misses
10. Accident Reporting and Investigation
11. First Aid
12. The Workplace
13. Provision and Use of Equipment
14. Manual Handling
15. Children and Vulnerable Adults
16. Contractors
17. CDM Regulations
18. Out of Control Behaviour
19. Vehicles and Driving
20. Infectious Diseases
21. Smoking
22. Vaccinations

1. Health and Safety Roles and Responsibilities

1.1. Responsibilities

In order to discharge the responsibilities set out in this policy, EcoNorth will:

- Maintain a written and up to date Health and Safety Policy.
- Carry out risk assessments of all activities and/or work sites.

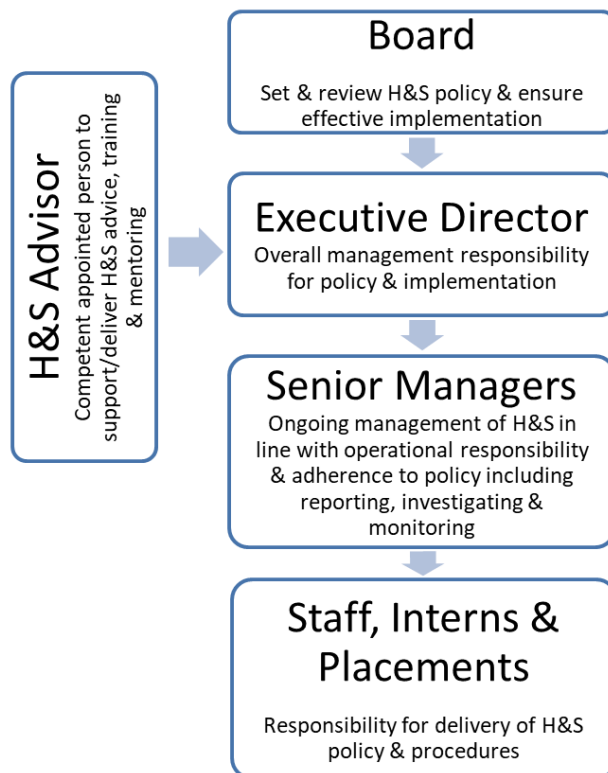
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- Display all relevant certification and health and safety law information.
- Monitor, record and review health and safety performance and implement changes where necessary.
- Provide all staff with relevant and current health and safety training and equipment as required.
- Ensure continued access to the services of a health and safety professional advisor.

1.2 Roles

All personnel working within EcoNorth have a role to play in ensuring that the organisation meets its health and safety responsibilities. Table 1 summarises key personnel and their roles within EcoNorth's health and safety system and these are set out in the organisational chart 1 below.

Chart 1: EcoNorth's Organisational Health and Safety Roles and Responsibilities



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1.3 Health and Safety Representatives and Senior Managers

1.3.1 Introduction

It is the responsibility of EcoNorth to ensure that staff undertaking defined health and safety roles are permitted sufficient time, training and support to undertake their duties.

It is the duty of the Board, Executive Director and Senior Managers to ensure that the staff, volunteers, contractors, placements and interns are not exposed to activities or sites which would expose them to safety risks, as far as is reasonably foreseeable.

It is the duty of the Senior Management Team to ensure that EcoNorth is made aware of any instances or circumstances where its health and safety procedures are not being followed, or do not fully meet EcoNorth's health and safety requirements.

It is the duty of all staff to abide by the requirements of EcoNorth and take reasonable care of themselves and other staff, contractors and the general public in the course of fulfilling the requirements of their role.

All staff are encouraged to report instances or circumstances where procedures are not being followed or where they could be improved.

Any failure by an employee to comply with any aspect of EcoNorth's health and safety procedures, rules or duties specifically assigned to the employee with regard to health and safety will be regarded by EcoNorth as misconduct which will be dealt with under the terms of EcoNorth's disciplinary procedure, as set out in the Staff Handbook.

1.3.2 The Duties of the Management Team

The EcoNorth Senior Management Team will support the EcoNorth Executive Director in monitoring all aspects of occupational health and safety as it pertains to the work of EcoNorth. Its members include the Executive Director of EcoNorth and all Senior Managers, plus the Health & Safety Officer. The Executive Director will make a quarterly report to the Board by means of a paper. The Board will review the Health and Safety Policy on an annual basis to ensure that it remains fit for purpose.

The standing agenda for the health and safety element of Senior Management Team meetings will be as follows:

- Monthly
 - Site Monitoring Audit reports.
 - Accidents and Near Misses – review of reports.
 - Vehicles – Responsible Person (RP) report, any issues.

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- Quarterly (each April, June, September, December)
 - Fire – RP report, any issues.
 - Health, Hygiene and Welfare – RP report, any issues.
 - Non-conformities and Complaints.
- Annually (each May)
 - COSHH – RP report, any issues.
 - Lone Working – any issues.
 - Risk Assessment – any new competency records or other RAs to be approved.
 - Workplace – RP report, any issues.
 - Provision and Use of Equipment – RP report, any issues.
 - Manual Handling – any issues.
 - Children and Vulnerable Adults – any issues.
 - Contractors – any issues.
 - Out of Control Behaviour – any issues.
 - Any other health and safety business.
- Annually (each September)
 - First Aid – any issues.
 - Extent to which objectives and targets are being met.
 - Internal Audit Programme
- Annually (each January)
 - Annual H&S Review.

Table 1: Key Personnel Roles and Responsibilities

Name	Role	Responsibilities
John Thompson	Executive Director	As defined in the Health and Safety Policy, “Overall management responsibility for policy and implementation”.
	Health & Safety Manager	The role of this person is to act as EcoNorth’s appointed person as required under health and safety and first aid legislation. He will be a member of the management team and will liaise on EcoNorth’s behalf with EcoNorth’s Specialist Advisor. He will also act as principal Fire Safety Manager and will ensure that EcoNorth complies with the requirements of its fire policy. He will also liaise with Auditors/Consultants on advice and support and work alongside the H&S Officer to provide advice and guidance on H&S documentation, reporting and function.

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Name	Role	Responsibilities
	Responsible Person (RP)	Responsible Person to undertake duties as set out in this policy in relation to: • Fire. • COSHH. • Lone working (specifically for EcoNorth personnel). • Physical and mental health, including fatigue. • Hygiene and welfare. • First aid. The duties of the Responsible Person will include regular reporting to the Senior Management Team.
Sandi Davison	Health & Safety Officer	The role of this person is to provide a co-ordination function for all health and safety documentation, reporting and monitoring. This will include: • Being responsible for managing the internal and external audit process including scheduling of audits. • Maintenance of all EcoNorth health and safety records in an accessible format. • Contributing to the review of EcoNorth health and safety documentation. • Assisting with development of EcoNorth health and safety systems. • Collating and disseminating all EcoNorth health and safety reporting to the management team.
	Responsible Person (RP)	Responsible Person to undertake duties as set out in this policy in relation to: • The workplace. • Provision and use of equipment. The duties of the Responsible Person will include regular reporting to the Senior Management Team.
Claire Snowball	Responsible Person (RP)	Responsible Person to undertake duties as set out in this policy in relation to: • CVA. The duties of the Responsible Person will include regular reporting to the Senior Management Team.
Thomas Wilson / Henry Barrett	Responsible Person (RP)	Responsible Person to undertake duties as set out in this policy in relation to: • LOLER checks. • Ladder checks.
Alex Douglas	Responsible Person (RP)	Responsible Person to undertake duties as set out in this policy in relation to: • Vehicles. • Annual PPE / equipment audit.
Henry Barrett	Health Champion	The role of the Health Champion is to introduce one significant Health and Safety initiative per year or a number of smaller initiatives throughout the year.

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Name	Role	Responsibilities
John Thompson / Sandi Davison	Mental Health Champion	The role of the Mental Health Champion is to introduce one significant Mental Health and Wellbeing initiative per year or a number of smaller initiatives throughout the year.
Henry Barrett	Mental Health First Aider	The role of a Mental Health First Aider is to be a point of contact who can provide early intervention support for an employee who is experiencing a mental health issue or emotional distress.

1.4 Line Managers Responsibility

1.4.1 Introduction

EcoNorth has appointed a number of health and safety Responsible People (RPs) who fulfil the role as described under the Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999 (S2(4)). These roles are voluntary and are not part of Trade Union negotiations. Responsible Persons' duties are designed to assist EcoNorth's Executive Director and Line Managers. The health and safety RPs do not reduce the legal requirement to manage good health and safety practice on the part of the Board or Executive Director of EcoNorth.

1.4.2 Policy

It is the responsibility of EcoNorth, through the line management, risk assessment and competency records systems to ensure that staff, interns, placements, sub-contractors and visitors are kept safe.

1.4.3 Method

- Identify hazard burden:
 - ~ Who are Line Managers responsible for – staff, interns, placements, subcontractors.
 - ~ Identify and record what competencies are required – individuals or groups.
 - ~ Record all individuals who are competent to undertake monitoring and recording programmes.
- Create personal/group records of competencies:
 - ~ Individual staff/intern requirements.
 - ~ Secondary responsibilities (ie where staff are responsible for others).
 - ~ Group competencies (what a group can do with named trained people).

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- Through appraisal meetings and visits ensure competencies are in place:
 - ~ Update when training is renewed.
 - ~ Ensure competencies are referred to when roles change.
 - ~ Record where staff have responsibilities for others.
- Lodge records of competencies and relevant risk assessments on file:
 - ~ Include dates for review of both.
- Determine how often monitoring should occur:
 - ~ Higher risk level greater frequency.
 - ~ Higher turnover of new people greater frequency.
 - ~ Lower the degree of supervision greater the frequency.
 - ~ Schedule as a result of accident or near miss report.
- Monitoring:
 - ~ Are the proper risk assessments in place, including records of competency?
 - ~ Are they being followed?
 - ~ Are they suitable and sufficient?

2. Fire

2.1 Fire Definition

For EcoNorth, fire precautions relate to its office premises at Unit 11, Enterprise Court, Cramlington, NE23 1LZ. Other locations such as client site offices where EcoNorth base staff and activities but does not accept health and safety responsibility, are covered by the responsible organisation and their guidance will be followed. Fire hazards related to activities etc must be dealt with under specific risk assessments.

Fire is any hazard relating to the combustion of any material, or emission of gases of whatever type or for whatever reason that results in an adverse change in environmental conditions to the work place.

2.2 EcoNorth Policy

EcoNorth will maintain all fire prevention, fighting and evacuation procedures as recommended by Northumberland Fire and Rescue Service and independent advisors as appropriate and in accordance with insurance requirements and Regulatory Reform (Fire

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Safety) Order 2005. This will be achieved through the appointment of the Fire RP who will report any issues to the Senior Management Team at their monthly team meetings and appropriate action taken.

2.3 Fire Requirement

EcoNorth's Fire RP is responsible for ensuring that:

- All fire detectors, alarms, blankets and extinguishers are maintained as per requirements, and that all fire escapes are clear and working.
- All responsible staff and volunteers are aware of their duties in the event of a fire, including introductory talks and emergency evacuation procedures for meetings.
- Relevant fire safety exercises are completed at the correct time intervals.
- The Fire RP should review the procedures in place and fire risk assessment annually or with any significant change in the activities of EcoNorth.

2.4 Fire Method

- At least once per month the Fire RP should check that all of the requirements listed previously are correct and report to the Senior Management Team quarterly.
- The Fire RP will maintain communication with Northumberland Fire and Rescue Service as required.
- If at any time, the Fire RP suspects a health and safety hazard, as defined previously, they should undertake whatever actions they deem necessary to either remove the hazard or protect all people from the hazard.
- The main principles to be applied in the event of a fire are:
 - ~ Evacuate the building and take a roll-call.
 - ~ Raise the alarm: call the Fire Brigade.
 - ~ Only tackle the fire if you can do so without putting your own safety at risk and have had appropriate training.

3. Physical and Mental Health, including Fatigue

3.1 Physical and Mental Health, including Fatigue Definition

For EcoNorth, health includes physical and mental wellbeing.

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Physical wellbeing includes promoting physical health and avoiding preventable fatigue, injuries, diseases and conditions which can reduce levels of staff sickness and increase their energy and concentration levels.

Mental health is a state of mental wellbeing that enables people to cope with the stresses of life, realise their abilities, learn well and work well, and contribute to their community. It is an integral component of health and wellbeing that underpins our individual and collective abilities to make decisions, build relationships and shape the world we live in. Mental health is more than the absence of mental disorders - it exists on a complex continuum, which is experienced differently from one person to the next, with varying degrees of difficulty and distress and potentially very different social and clinical outcomes. There are many types of mental health issues. An issue can happen suddenly, because of a specific event in someone's life, or it can build up gradually over time. Common mental health issues include stress, depression and anxiety. Less common issues include bipolar disorder and schizophrenia.

Fatigue is a feeling of constant tiredness or weakness and can be physical, mental or a combination of both. It can affect anyone and may result in slower reactions, reduced ability to process information, memory lapses, absent-mindedness, decreased awareness, lack of attention, underestimation of risk and reduced coordination.

3.2 EcoNorth Policy

EcoNorth aims to promote physical and mental wellbeing in the workplace, by encouraging positive behaviour patterns and minimising work related stress, in order to:

- Make staff happier and healthier and feel valued and supported.
- Improve performance and make staff more productive.
- Reduce absence levels.
- Reduce workplace disputes.
- Make the organisation more attractive to prospective employees.
- Be compliant with current health and safety regulations.

EcoNorth takes active steps to promote and support staff in making choices which are beneficial to their physical and mental wellbeing. This will include but not be limited to:

- Flexible working arrangements.
- A pet policy which allows staff to bring suitable pets into the office environment.
- Identification of suitable workplace health initiatives.

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3.3 Requirement

Line Managers will be responsible for ensuring:

- The Mental Health At Work Plan is fully implemented.
- They are aware of the latest guidance on managing mental health issues and have completed the relevant training.
- A healthy work/life balance is promoted and team members are encouraged to use their flexi/annual leave effectively.
- Changes to team members' physical and mental wellbeing eg fatigue, stress, injury or medical conditions, are reviewed and their workload/responsibilities/physical environment amended accordingly.
- Activities, responsibilities, working relationships and planned changes in the workplace which are likely to cause stress to team members are minimised.
- Changes to activities, responsibilities and working relationships which may help ease or avoid stress are identified and implemented in a timely manner.
- Team members have an understanding of ways to maintain or improve their health and wellbeing.
- Team members are trained to identify signs of poor health and wellbeing and are aware of the support services available both within and outside EcoNorth.
- Team members feel empowered to make decisions about how and when they complete the work for which they are responsible, so long as such timescales are clearly communicated and agreed and fit overall project and client requirements. Project resourcing is reviewed weekly to identify where work can be reassigned where necessary.
- Team members who are identified (or self-identify) as being at risk of fatigue and/or stress are provided with relevant support.
- Employees are consulted to identify what they see as a good working environment.

The H&S RP will be responsible for ensuring:

- Healthy eating is promoted in the workplace and a suitable and hygienic kitchen environment with essential cooking equipment is made available for healthy food preparation.
- Regular screen breaks are encouraged.

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- Team members are encouraged to build activity into their working day and their commute to work eg exercising during lunchbreaks, cycling/walking to work.
- Changes in EcoNorth activities and requirements are reviewed by the H&S RPs and the Senior Management Team.

3.4 Method

- Staff are encouraged to work sensible hours, take breaks and to rest and recuperate after busy periods, avoid working at weekends and take their full annual leave entitlement.
- Staff are required to take minimum 'good quality rest times' in any given period, and to take adequate breaks when driving to/from site. This includes as a minimum:
 - A minimum of 7 hours good quality sleep or rest between periods of work.
 - A minimum 30 minute break for every 2 hours of driving where journey times reach 2 hours or more.
 - A minimum of 11 hours break between periods of work on construction sites.
- Restrictions apply to the number of out of hours surveys which anyone can carry out per week.
- EcoNorth facilitates flexible working options, including some provision for home / remote working. Accrued flexi time is used effectively to encourage effective control of workload and avoid burn out.
- All staff are encouraged to let the team know when we are 'offline', especially following or in advance of out of hours work.
- Bi-weekly team catch ups are held via Microsoft Teams to discuss workload commitments and the delegation of work.
- Online spreadsheets highlighting staff workload commitments (including report writing and survey preparation) are maintained.
- Robust policies and processes are in place to ensure the right person is recruited for each job, to avoid stress on new employees and negative impacts on the company down the line.
- All staff involved in the recruitment process have undergone mental health and equality, diversity and inclusion training to ensure candidates are not discriminated against at any stage. EcoNorth's commitment to staff physical/mental health and equal opportunities are communicated during our recruitment processes.
- Appropriate workplace adjustments are offered to candidates for the interview and/or the job itself.

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- Candidates can disclose confidentially, and any health issue or disability is kept separate from the application form so the recruitment panel does not see it.
- Employees are provided with a clearly defined job description and an effective induction programme.
- Health and Safety training and mental health awareness are embedded in our induction process.
- The office environment is regularly checked to ensure it is suitable for all staff.
- Upon request, EcoNorth will pay the cost for a standard VDU eye test at NHS recommended intervals for staff who use display screen equipment in the course of their work. The cost should be claimed back via an expense claim in the usual manner. In addition, if an optician confirms by letter that an employee needs glasses solely and specifically for computer use, then EcoNorth will pay up to £50 towards the cost of frames or lenses.
- Social events are encouraged and, where appropriate, EcoNorth will fund or part fund activities to boost staff health, wellbeing and teamwork.
- Line Managers are trained on how to spot the signs of poor mental health among their team members and monitor their team members wellbeing, mental health, engagement and satisfaction levels through observation and regular 121s and team meetings.
- Regular 121 meetings are conducted where team members can raise any concerns or opportunities for improvements in a safe, supportive environment. Specifically, Line Managers can use 121 meetings or annual Personal Risk Assessments to identify changes to medical status or conditions, medication or sources of influence outside of work which may have a bearing on their health or wellbeing at work.
- Line Managers are available for confidential 121 meetings for any employee wanting to discuss their physical or mental health concerns.
- Staff are encouraged to access medical services where relevant, including talking to a GP, and provided with access to Mind's Wellness Action Plans.
- Line Managers keep in touch with staff when they are off sick to stay aware of their situation and provide support where possible. 'Return to work' meetings between Line Managers and employees are held to ensure any physical and mental wellbeing issues are addressed at the earliest opportunity.
- A confidential annual survey of staff satisfaction levels is conducted.
- Team members are actively consulted about planned changes to the organisation and all agreed changes are effectively communicated to team members in a timely manner.

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- EcoNorth's robust policies ensuring team members are protected from discrimination, bullying and harassment are easily accessed and well publicised.
- Staff are provided with an individual training budget each year to develop their career, in addition to their mandatory H&S training, as well as on the job training from highly skilled and experienced colleagues.
- A Health Champion and Mental Health Champions are appointed to identify and implement initiatives, and provide reliable physical and mental health information, in order to promote staff wellbeing. Key dates in the mental health calendar such as Mental Health Awareness Week will be celebrated in 2023 and beyond.
- Mental Health first aider training has been arranged for one team member and will be arranged for others where relevant.
- Issues causing physical or mental health concerns are reported at monthly Senior Management Meetings and relevant actions identified.
- The H&S RP/Adviser will monitor changes in HSE regulations and report to the Senior Management Team.
- EcoNorth's Health and Safety Manager reports to the Board on a quarterly basis on health and safety matters, including the physical and mental wellbeing of the team.
- EcoNorth's Mental Health At Work Plan has been approved by the team and is currently being implemented, with the aim of being fully in place by September 2023. Progress will be periodically reviewed against the plan.

4. Hygiene and Welfare

4.1. Hygiene and Welfare Definition

For EcoNorth, hygiene and welfare provision relate only to the built premises and surrounds that it owns, leases or operates. For site-based activities, hygiene and welfare provision will be dealt with by specific task and site risk assessments.

Hygiene refers to conditions or practices conducive to maintaining health and preventing disease, especially through cleanliness.

Welfare facilities are those that are necessary for the wellbeing of EcoNorth staff, interns, and placements.

4.2. EcoNorth Policy

EcoNorth will provide and maintain a suitably hygienic environment and all welfare facilities at our office, as recommended by the Health and Safety Executive (HSE). This will be achieved through the appointment of the H&W RP who will report any issues and appropriate action taken to the Senior Management Team at their monthly team meetings.

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4.3. Requirement

Line Managers will be responsible for ensuring:

- Staff are familiar with the hygiene practices and welfare facilities provided by EcoNorth.
- Consulting with staff regarding planned changes to the office environment and all agreed changes are effectively communicated to team members in a timely manner.

The H&W RP will be responsible for ensuring:

- There are suitable eating and rest areas for team members to use during breaks.
- Suitable drinking water and other refreshments, as well as kitchen equipment are provided.
- Changing facilities are available at all times.
- Suitable and sufficient toilet and washing facilities are provided and are in full working order where recommended.
- All staff are working in safe and suitable workplaces including adequate space, lighting, ventilation, heating, workstations and noise levels.
- All office areas are easily accessed with no obstructions on the floor or to traffic routes.
- All staff and interns/placements are aware of relevant welfare facilities and regulations.
- Regular office checks are conducted to ensure hygienic environment and welfare facilities continue to be fully operational.
- Changes in EcoNorth activities and requirements are reviewed by the H&W RP and the Senior Management Team.

4.4. Method

- An established and highly regarded cleaning provider will be appointed. Maintaining effective communications with them and addressing issues in a timely manner.
- Regular office checks are conducted to identify issues and required changes. Any problems with hygiene and welfare facilities are reported to the H&S RP.
- Team members are actively consulted about planned changes to the office environment and all agreed changes are effectively communicated to team members in a timely manner.

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- The H&W RP will monitor changes in HSE regulations and report to the Senior Management Team.

5. Drugs and Alcohol

5.1. Drugs and Alcohol Definition

Alcohol and drug misuse can have an adverse effect, not just on an individual but on their colleagues, customers and the public. Having a safe working environment, providing excellent customer service by maintaining productivity levels and avoiding days being lost to illness are all critical to our success.

5.2. EcoNorth Policy

EcoNorth requires all employees to comply with its Alcohol and Drugs Policy. Breaches of the company policy will be taken very seriously and may be dealt with under the appropriate company disciplinary procedure.

5.3. Requirements

- EcoNorth strongly discourages employees from drinking any alcohol prior to driving or reporting to work (including at lunchtimes).
- EcoNorth employees must be aware of relevant legal limits in relation to alcohol consumption – this is especially relevant as staff are regularly required to work within Scotland which has a lower legal limit.
- Employees must ensure that they are not intoxicated by alcohol and are free of any illegal drugs when they report for work.
- Employees must not drink alcohol during working time or in advance of attending work for any given day or work shift. Working time is any time between when an employee reports for work and the time when they finish work. It includes any period of call out done whilst on standby duty or overtime working.
- Employees must be aware of what they drink and take into account how long it takes for the alcohol to clear their system. This must be taken into account when partaking in surveys which commence in early morning periods.
- The use, possession, storage, transportation, promotion and/or sale of illegal drugs of drug equipment is forbidden during working time, in the workplace or at a client's site.
- When employees are prescribed medication or are taking over-the-counter medicines or herbal remedies that may affect their work performance or the safety of themselves or others, they must advise their Line Manager.
- Employees may be required to undergo testing for alcohol or illegal drugs in their system in certain defined circumstances.

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5.4. Method

- Line Managers should report any alcohol or drug related matters at Senior Management Meetings.
- If EcoNorth suspects that an employee's work performance or conduct has been impaired through substance abuse, it reserves the right to deal with the matter under the terms of EcoNorth's disciplinary procedure.
- If an employee refuses to undergo a medical examination in such circumstances, their refusal will constitute gross misconduct in accordance with EcoNorth's disciplinary procedure.
- If, having undergone a medical examination, it is confirmed that the employee has positively tested for a controlled drug, or they admit there is a problem, EcoNorth reserves the right to suspend them from their employment to allow EcoNorth to decide whether to deal with the matter under the terms of EcoNorth's disciplinary procedure or to require them to undergo treatment and rehabilitation.
- If they are offered rehabilitation, EcoNorth will determine in consultation with a medical advisor an appropriate period of time during which they will be required to undergo medical treatment. During the period of rehabilitation, EcoNorth will determine whether they are fit to return to work. If they are not judged fit to return to work, they will take unpaid leave.
- If at any time an employee disobeys an instruction given to them by EcoNorth with regard to the rehabilitation or suffer a relapse during or following treatment, the company reserves the right to withdraw support and to proceed to deal with the matter under the terms of EcoNorth's disciplinary procedure.
- On an employee's return to work after having been declared fit for work by a qualified medical advisor, should there be any recurrence of the original problem or their performance has been impaired by the problem and they can no longer perform at the required level, they will be subject to disciplinary action under EcoNorth's disciplinary procedure.
- EcoNorth reserves the right to inform the police of any suspicions we may have with regard to the use of controlled drugs by an employee on EcoNorth's premises.

6. Control of Substances Hazardous to Health

6.1. Control of Substances Hazardous to Health (COSHH) Definition

Precautions relating to the purchase, transport, use, storage and disposal of chemicals and other substances potentially hazardous to health.

6.2. EcoNorth Policy

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- EcoNorth will ensure all hazardous substances purchased or generated by EcoNorth are transported, used, stored and disposed of securely and safely and that staff and interns are trained in their safe usage.
- Where possible any substances covered under COSHH will be substituted with substances without a potential hazard to health.

6.3. Requirements

- EcoNorth will appoint a COSHH RP.
- COSHH RPs will carry out an annual audit of all chemicals used by or stored by EcoNorth.
- All new product orders will be accompanied by a COSHH note; if any staff are in doubt as to the COSHH status of a product they must not make a purchase or purchase order.
- All staff must complete COSHH assessments for all relevant substances.
- All EcoNorth's ecology and arboriculture staff will complete annual asbestos awareness training.
- All staff must carry out spillage risk assessment of chemical storage (not near rain water drains etc) and have an action plan in place in the event of spillage.
- All hazardous chemicals to be stored in a secure location.
- All staff must ensure all hazardous chemicals are disposed of according to COSHH guidelines.
- Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) to be supplied where applicable.

6.4. Method

- The COSHH RP will check on audits of chemicals and ensure safe storage at least monthly.
- Relevant staff and interns will be trained and certified in the safe use of any COSHH products by a competent person.
- COSHH reports are stored centrally.
- All COSHH reports to be reviewed annually.
- Any unattended hazardous chemicals should be made safe by a competent person and reported to the relevant H&S RP.
- COSHH RP to make a COSHH report to the Senior Management Meeting bi-annually.

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7. Lone Working

7.1. Lone Working Definition

Lone working is defined as any employee or intern of EcoNorth, or other person for whom EcoNorth accepts a level of responsibility, who is working by themselves without close or direct supervision, including home working. Exceptions are where people are travelling between projects, commuting or attending meetings where they know other attendees. While travelling to meetings is not part of 'lone working' as defined within this policy, staff are encouraged to communicate their whereabouts with colleagues or relevant emergency contacts as a matter of course. Specific project risk assessments where longer journeys are required will stipulate the frequency of breaks and associated check ins with a buddy.

7.2. EcoNorth Policy

- A Lone Working RP will be appointed and attend the Senior Management Meeting.
- If practicable, lone working will be avoided.
- Students, young people, trainees, interns and placements will not be allowed to undertake lone working until assessed as competent to do so.
- Lone working will not be permitted where site or activity risk assessments have identified risk associated with hazards such as isolation, water, heights, and/or confined spaces which cannot be mitigated for, or where competencies are not recorded.
- Where lone working cannot be avoided agreed requirements, as set out in the Lone Working Procedure, must be adhered to.

7.3. Requirement

- All competency records will include a presumption against lone working or record appropriate levels.
- Where lone working is unavoidable the requirement for lone working must be acknowledged within a task specific risk assessment.
- Risk assessments will include what activities the lone worker will be undertaking, the location of lone working and what safe systems have been put in place and what emergency procedures have been identified.

7.4. Method

- Lone working will only be permitted after Line Managers have agreed risk assessments and competency records.
- Anybody undertaking lone working will carry a fully charged mobile phone and an emergency pack (eg first aid kit) appropriate to the activity.

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- Anybody wishing to undertake lone working must identify an emergency procedure, which includes a named competent person/buddy who has clear guidelines as set out in the Lone Working Procedure to follow in the event of a failure of the lone worker to report in at suitable periods. This need not be a member of staff. Where the contact is not a member of staff they do, however, need to have access to senior staff contact details.
- Where routine lone working in low risk environments takes place staff, volunteers and contractors will be expected to follow a set of guidelines developed with their Line Manager.

8. Risk Assessment

8.1. Risk Assessment Definition

A Risk Assessment (RA) is a considered examination of what could cause harm to people to weigh up whether enough precautions are in place to prevent harm, the aim of which is to ensure that no one gets hurt or becomes ill.

8.2. RA Policy

- EcoNorth recognises RAs as the tool by which it identifies and acts upon hazards to any people for which it accepts a level of responsibility. RAs are not in themselves a protection from harm but methodologies by which EcoNorth staff and volunteers identify hazards and plan for safe activities and EcoNorth monitors and demonstrates its commitment to health and safety.

8.3. RA Requirement

- All staff and interns will have competency records, identifying what equipment, training, experience and degree of competency they possess, as part of their routine work with EcoNorth. This will be subject to regular review and include an action plan for additional training / update requirements.
- EcoNorth will risk assess all sites prior to undertaking survey (or other) work on third party land. EcoNorth will also comply with mitigation requirements outlined in landowner/managers own risk assessments. Risk assessments will be subject to review and, where new or unforeseen hazards are identified on sites, these will be assessed prior to any further work proceeding.
- All events and activities which are not covered by competency records, existing generic risk assessments or other suitable safe systems will require separate RAs.
- The RA will ensure that all groups and individuals seeking permission to visit places for which EcoNorth accepts a responsibility without a member of EcoNorth staff present, will be issued with a site or task RA and guidelines, which they will be expected to adhere to.

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- All contractors will work to site and task RAs agreed with EcoNorth.
- All staff will be encouraged to be hazard aware and identify any unforeseen risks not identified in site or activity risk assessments. These will be reported as a cause for concern. Where new risks are identified, works will stop until safe means of working is established.

8.4. RA Method

- All staff and volunteers will be trained in generating and assessing RAs commensurate with their roles, and how to act upon them before they are permitted to take charge of any sphere of activity for which RAs takes responsibility.
- Competency records will be addressed and amended where required at every appraisal meeting.
- RA is a standing agenda item at every Senior Management Team meeting, where issues relating to RAs are discussed.
- All RAs will be authorised by a Senior Manager before going out on site/undertaking activity.

9. Accidents and Near Misses

9.1. Accident and Near Miss Definition

Accidents and near misses relate to any sites or activities where EcoNorth accepts an area of responsibility and are defined as:

- An accident is an incident where an unforeseen injury or loss occurs.
- A near miss is an incident that had the potential to result in an accident.
- A cause for concern is an incident that requires remedial action to be undertaken.

9.2. EcoNorth Policy

Through training and the creation of risk assessments EcoNorth will ensure that:

- The risk of accidents or exposure to hazards of any kind is as low as reasonably foreseeable.
- The appropriate number of first aiders will be present and appropriate first aid equipment is provided.
- H&S RPs will report to the Senior Management Team meeting about any accidents, near misses or causes for concern. All accident and near miss reports and investigations will

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be considered by the Senior Managers at monthly meetings with outcomes disseminated and lessons learned applied.

9.3. Requirement

- All accidents must be reported using the accident report procedure and all major accidents reported to the H&S Executive (RIDDOR).
- All near misses and causes for concern must be reported to H&S RPs.
- All first aid kits must be checked regularly and clearly labelled.
- Staff and volunteers should be trained in how to fill in the accident book and be aware of the location of the book.
- Subcontractors should be made aware of the requirement for and process for accident, near miss and cause for concern reporting.

9.4. Method

- Sufficient health and safety information and tool box talks will be given by a competent person on site before every task, event or activity.
- Health and safety information will be supplied in EcoNorth vehicles and offices.
- All accidents will be followed up by an EcoNorth Senior Manager to ensure procedures are put in place/adhered to where necessary in order to prevent the accident re-occurring (see Section 10: Accident Investigation).
- Review areas where accidents have occurred and put signage in place or improve area as necessary.
- If anyone identifies a hazard, they should implement whatever action they deem necessary to either remove the hazard or protect all people from the hazard.

10. Accident Reporting and Investigation

10.1. Accident and Near Miss Definitions

Refer to 9.1.

10.2. EcoNorth Policy

EcoNorth will investigate all accidents and near miss incidents with the aim of ensuring they do not happen again and findings are used to update safe working practices/procedures.

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10.3. Requirement

- EcoNorth will notify the H&S Executive as required under RIDDOR.
- All staff, subcontractors, volunteers, interns and placements will report on all minor accidents, near misses and causes for concern to the Senior Managers using the accident book and near miss/cause for concern reporting forms.
- For accidents and near miss incidents, a Senior Manager will investigate and report on reported accidents; for serious accidents an investigation team might be required involving some/all of the following:
 - Line Manager.
 - Senior Manager.
 - H&S Advisor.
 - Chair of the Board.
 - Relevant HSE Officer or Technical Expert.

10.4. Method

- All EcoNorth Line Managers are aware of their duties under RIDDOR and will follow the procedures under these regulations.
- In the event of any accident or near miss incident (RIDDOR notifiable or not), an investigation will be undertaken by the appropriate person/team. It is the responsibility of Executive Director to assess the level of investigation required and guidance from Senior Managers may be sought before reaching a decision.
- If an accident/near miss investigation report is required, the relevant H&S RP / Inspectors / Advisors will be notified as required.
- When accidents or near miss incidents occur, the investigation procedure will be followed and an accident investigation/near miss form completed using the following structure:
 - Gather information.
 - Analyse findings.
 - Review risk control measures.
 - Plan and implement changes required.

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- The detailed accident/near miss incident report will be submitted to the Senior Management Team meeting and discussed under the health and safety standing agenda item.

11. First Aid

11.1. First Aid Definition

For EcoNorth, first aid precautions relate to all people, buildings and any activity or event for which EcoNorth accepts any responsibility.

First aid is the procedure followed when someone is injured or becomes ill.

11.2. EcoNorth Policy

- EcoNorth will ensure that a suitable number of people are trained in first aid at any event or activity where EcoNorth accepts any responsibility.
- It is EcoNorth's policy to ensure that all EcoNorth staff have up to date first aid training.
- EcoNorth has appointed a Mental Health First Aider in 2023. All EcoNorth employees have completed Mental Health Awareness Training since 2020.
- All EcoNorth groups should have at least one staff member or volunteer who is first aid trained.
- EcoNorth will maintain all first aid procedures as recommended by the HSE. To ensure this is maintained, a First Aid RP is appointed.

11.3. Requirement

EcoNorth's First Aid RP is responsible for ensuring that:

- All first aid kits and equipment are maintained as per requirements.
- All responsible staff and volunteers are aware of their duties in the event of a first aid incident, including up to date training, refresher courses etc.
- Procedures are reviewed with any significant changes in activities of EcoNorth.

11.4. Method

- Bi-annually the First Aid RP should check all staff and volunteer requirements are correct and report to the Senior Management Team meeting.
- The First Aid RP will maintain communication with St John's Ambulance or other suitable training body to keep up to date with new guidelines and equipment etc.

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- If the First Aid RP suspects a health and safety hazard, as defined previously, they should undertake whatever actions are necessary to remove the hazard to protect people from hazard.

12. The Workplace

12.1. The Workplace Definition

The workplace relates to the EcoNorth premises: Unit 11 Enterprise Court, Cramlington, NE23 1LZ.

12.2. EcoNorth Policy

- EcoNorth shall ensure that the workplace is a safe working environment for all staff, visitors and volunteers.

12.3. Requirement

- EcoNorth will appoint a Workplace RP.
- EcoNorth's WP RP will make routine health and safety checks of all areas of the workplace and report to the Senior Management Team meeting monthly.
- The WP RP will assist all staff within their area in COSHH management, training identification and Personal Protective Equipment.

12.4. Method

- The WP RP will routinely check hazards throughout the buildings and grounds and report to the Senior Management Team monthly.
- If at any time a WP RP suspects a hazard, as defined previously, they should undertake whatever actions they deem necessary to either remove the hazard or protect all people from the hazard.

13. Provision and Use of Equipment

13.1. Provision and Use of Equipment Definition

- Equipment is any item that does not fall into one of the following categories:
 - Driving on the highway is covered under section 19 below.
 - Substances and materials are covered under COSHH.
 - The fabric or fittings of any buildings.

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- Equipment does include: personal protective equipment, climbing equipment, hand and power tools, furniture, gazebos, computers, photocopiers, dispensers, bins, microscopes, binoculars, ladders, fridges, cookers, microwaves, stationery (this non-exhaustive list should help people define whether what they are considering is equipment or not).
- Provision is making available any item for use by any person for whom EcoNorth accepts responsibility.

13.2. EcoNorth Policy

EcoNorth will ensure that all equipment provided for use is:

- Suitable for the intended use.
- Safe for use, maintained in a safe condition and where necessary, inspected to ensure this remains the case.
- Used only by people who have received adequate information, instruction and training.
- Accompanied by suitable safety measures.
- On request, EcoNorth will provide eye and eyesight tests and spectacles if they are specifically necessary for the use of display screen equipment.

13.3. Requirement

- EcoNorth will maintain an inventory of all significant pieces of equipment including a register and record of health and safety checks, including Portable Electrical Appliance Testing.
- WP RP will include equipment checks with their routine workplace inspections.
- All staff and volunteers will be trained, commensurate with their roles, to recognise hazards that may arise from faulty or incorrectly used equipment.
- All staff and volunteers will be trained in the safe use and care for equipment they use or are responsible for.
- Where practicable, in order to ensure that all equipment is suitable for its intended use:
 - ~ All tools will be purchased from an approved trade supplier.
 - ~ All protective equipment will be purchased from an approved supplier of health and safety equipment.
 - ~ All office equipment will be purchased from an approved trade supplier.

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- ~ All equipment used for working with children will be purchased from a specialist education supplies outlet.
- ~ Where this is not possible due to the supply of goods in kind, second-hand equipment, donations or for any other reason, permission will be sought from a Senior Manager prior to making equipment available for use.

13.4. Method

- Equipment can only be purchased from a list of approved suppliers, catalogues, websites etc held by members of EcoNorth. Where this is not possible due to the supply of goods in kind, second hand equipment, donations or for any other reason, express permission will be sought from a Senior Manager prior to making equipment available for use.
- The WP RP will arrange and organise portable electrical appliance testing and create a record of maintenance schedules for all equipment under their responsibility.
- EcoNorth WP RPs will check that equipment within their area of concern is maintained as per maintenance schedules. However, legal responsibility for maintenance remains with the Line Management system.
- The Fire RP will ensure all fire safety equipment is tested and maintained at EcoNorth.

14. Manual Handling

14.1. Manual Handling Definition

A person moving or lifting any object from one place to another without the use of fully automated equipment designed expressly for the purpose.

14.2. EcoNorth Policy

- EcoNorth will not require any person to lift, or in any way handle an object that the person does not feel fully competent to do so.
- EcoNorth will ensure that a procedure is in place to ensure that an individual has relevant training to evaluate and be competent in manual handling.
- Where possible manual handling will be reduced wherever practicable or removed. However, it will be understood that many tasks are valued because of the exercise potential offered through manual handling tasks and these will be retained where appropriate.

14.3. Requirement

- All EcoNorth staff and volunteers must have an understanding of safe manual handling commensurate with their tasks.

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- The WP RP will have a good understanding of manual handling procedures (via formal training where required) and will assist other members of staff and volunteers in risk assessing manual handling tasks.

14.4. Method

- All job descriptions, risk assessments and competency records will include manual handling requirements (where appropriate).
- All WP RP area checks will include identification of handling risks such as high storage, heavy and/or bulky products, unbalanced or difficult to grasp products, ground conditions and who is doing the handling.
- Where any items or procedures are identified as posing a manual handling risk, alternatives will be sought.

15. Children and Vulnerable Adults

15.1. Children and Vulnerable Adults (CVA) Definition

Any child from 0–16 and/or vulnerable adult deemed by law or a guardian as not totally capable for assuming responsibility for themselves (including young people between 16 and 18) for which EcoNorth has accepted responsibility for their care, or where EcoNorth has provided opportunities for these groups to participate in an activity or to visit sites for which EcoNorth has some responsibility. Vulnerable adult also includes pregnant women.

15.2. EcoNorth Policy

- EcoNorth will seek to provide an environment where children and vulnerable adults will be safe from harm.
- EcoNorth will adhere to legislation and good practice as provided by the various agencies involved in children and adult welfare and safety.
- EcoNorth does not normally recruit employees, interns or subcontractors who are under the age of 18.
- EcoNorth does not accept volunteers under 18 unless accompanied by an appropriate adult.

15.3. Requirement

The EcoNorth CVA RP will ensure that:

- All workers who are involved with working with CVAs have adequate checks to ensure their suitability.
- Staff and volunteers are suitably trained and aware of their duties and responsibilities.

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- Activities, venues and equipment have been risk assessed and are deemed or made suitable for the purpose.

15.4. Method

- Risk assessments for activities and sites.
- Equipment will be correctly purchased and checked as suitable for purpose.
- DBS checks and references will be undertaken for staff and volunteers where required.
- In the event of accidents that staff/helpers have appropriate training and equipment to deal with the problem.
- Training will be reviewed and updated at all levels on a regular basis.
- Situations that pose an identifiable risk will be acted upon immediately.
- The CVA RP will keep the Senior Management Team informed of changes in practice.
- All staff working with CVAs will receive an induction and training in the implementation of EcoNorth's detailed CVA policy and associated documents.

16. Contractors

16.1. Contractors Definition

Contractor means anyone brought in by EcoNorth to work in any area for which EcoNorth assumes some responsibility, who is not an employee, volunteer or visitor of EcoNorth.

16.2. EcoNorth Policy

- All routine or call-out contractors will be entered onto EcoNorth approved contractors and/or subcontractors list before they are allowed to start work for EcoNorth.
- Only contractors deemed competent will be included in the approved contractors list.
- All contractors will work to an agreed contract.

16.3. Requirement

- All contractors will lodge relevant documentation (insurance details, risk assessments health and safety record etc) with EcoNorth.
- All projects or work carried out by contractors will follow a safe system of work agreed by the contractor and EcoNorth.

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16.4. Method

- All contractors who cannot supply written safe systems will work to an agreed method statement and risk assessment, provided by EcoNorth.
- All contractors on the approved list who may be called out for immediate or emergency work will have pre-lodged contracts held at EcoNorth. No contractor may send out a subcontractor or member of staff who is not fully aware of the conditions described in that contract.
- All contractors undertaking single projects will work with a competent Project Manager, with the assistance of their health and safety representative if necessary, to create a risk assessment which identifies safe systems of work.
- Where a competent member of staff is to supervise contractors directly at all times, records and written safe systems of work may not be required.

17. CDM Regulations

17.1. Construction (Design and Management) Regulations 2015 Definition

Everyone controlling construction site work has health and safety responsibilities. Checking that working conditions are healthy and safe before work begins, and ensuring that the proposed work is not going to put others at risk, requires planning and organisation. This applies whatever the size of the site. The Construction (Design and Management) Regulations 2015 aim to:

- Sensibly plan work so the risks involved are managed from start to finish.
- Have the right people for the right job at the right time.
- Cooperate and coordinate work with others collaboratively.
- Have the right information about the risks and how they are being managed.
- Communicate this information effectively to those who need to know.
- Consult and engage with workers about the risks and how they are being managed.

CDM Regulations 2015 came into force in Great Britain on 6 April 2015 and replaced CDM 2007. The regulations are divided into five parts:

- Part 1 deals with the application of CDM 2015 and definitions.
- Part 2 covers the duties of clients for all construction projects. These duties apply in full for commercial clients, however, the duties for domestic clients normally pass to other duty holders.
- Part 3 covers the health and safety duties and roles of other duty holders, including:
 - ~ Designers.
 - ~ Principal designers.
 - ~ Principal contractors.
 - ~ Contractors.
- Part 4 contains general requirements for all construction sites.
- Part 5 contains transitional arrangements and revocations.

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The regulations can be found here: [H&S Legislation\Construction - Design & Management Regulations SI 2015.pdf](#).

Contractors

In construction, a contractor is anyone who directly employs or engages construction workers or manages construction work. Contractors include subcontractors, any individual self-employed worker or business that carries out, manages or controls construction work. They must have the skills, knowledge, experience and, where relevant, the organisational capability to carry out the work safely and without risk to health. EcoNorth will typically be in the role of contractor.

Contractors and the workers under their control are most at risk of injury and ill health from construction work. Contractors therefore have an important role in planning, managing and monitoring their work to ensure any risks are controlled.

17.2. EcoNorth Policy

- EcoNorth is committed to adhering to the CDM Regulations 2015 and best practice.
- EcoNorth staff are typically contracted to attend pre-, active, and post construction / development sites to undertake ecological assessments, operate as ecological clerk of works and implement ecological or arboricultural mitigation requirements. These sites are managed by our clients who are normally the principal contractor or subcontractor. On occasion, EcoNorth can operate on site as a subcontractor to the designer. At times we may subcontract other workers to support our work eg other professional ecologists.

17.3. Requirement

Contractors **on all projects** are required to:

- Make sure the client is aware of the client duties under CDM 2015 before any work starts.

EcoNorth does this in our terms and conditions of contract with the client.

- Plan, manage and monitor all work carried out by themselves and their workers, taking into account the risks to anyone who might be affected by it (including members of the public) and the measures needed to protect them.

See point 17.4 below – Planning, Managing and Monitoring Work.

- Check that all workers they employ or appoint have the skills, knowledge, training and experience to carry out the work, or are in the process of obtaining them.

See point 17.4 below – Planning, Managing and Monitoring Work.

- Make sure that all workers under their control have a suitable, site-specific induction, unless this has already been provided by the principal contractor.

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See point 17.4 below – Communicating Health and Safety Information.

- Provide appropriate supervision, information and instructions to workers under their control.

See point 17.4 below – Communicating Health and Safety Information.

- Ensure they do not start work on site unless reasonable steps have been taken to prevent unauthorised access.

See point 17.4 below – Preventing Access By Unauthorised Person To Site.

- Ensure suitable welfare facilities are provided from the start for workers under their control, and maintain them throughout the work.

See point 17.4 below – Provide Adequate Welfare Facilities.

In addition to the above responsibilities, contractors working **on projects involving more than one contractor** must:

- Coordinate their work with the work of others in the project team.

See point 17.4 below – Planning, Managing and Monitoring Work.

Also, EcoNorth manages projects in order to hit client deadlines with all project deliverables achieved through use of effective project management systems and processes, along with regular project meetings to discuss work.

- Comply with directions given by the principal designer or principal contractor.

EcoNorth works to an agreed contract and work schedule with the client/principal contract and abides by site rules and relevant legislation.

- Comply with parts of the construction phase plan relevant to their work.

See above point.

Other parts of the CDM Regulations 2015 which do not apply to EcoNorth as an ecological consultancy (for information only):

- Where a contractor is **the only contractor working on a construction project**, they must ensure a construction phase plan is drawn up before setting up the site.
- When working as the only contractor for a domestic client, the contractor takes on the client duties, as well as their own as contractor. However, this should involve them doing no more than they will normally do to comply with health and safety law.

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- Where a domestic project involves more than one contractor, the principal contractor normally takes on the client duties and the contractor will work to the principal contractor as the 'client'. If the domestic client does not appoint a principal contractor, the role of the principal contractor must be carried out by the contractor as principal contractor and the client duties must be carried out by the contractor in control of the construction phase and the client duties must be carried out by the contractor as principal contractor. Alternatively, the domestic client can ask the principal designer to take on the client duties (although this must be confirmed in a written agreement) and the contractor must work to them as the 'client').

17.4. Method

Planning, Managing and Monitoring Work

- Planning
 - ~ Section 7 of this policy and procedures document sets out the responsibilities and requirements for carrying out risk assessment. There is a requirement to undertake site-specific risk assessments prior to carrying out a survey or other work and it is the Project Manager's responsibility to undertake this task.
 - ~ The site-specific risk assessments contain introductory information including a description of the activity/task, date of assessment, date range of activity, nearest hospitals, person in charge of activity, person with first aid training, and others involved. The main part of the risk assessment has four columns:
 - Hazard or hazardous events (both physical and health hazards).
 - Who is at risk.
 - Typical uncontrolled outcome.
 - Control measures.
 - ~ Staff receive training on risk assessment as part of their induction which includes definitions of risk and hazard. For all activities, EcoNorth ensures that all staff are suitably trained and experienced for the roles identified. A range of mandatory and task specific training requirements are utilised to support a suitably trained workforce including:
 - First aid at work (mandatory).
 - CSCS (mandatory for operational staff).
 - Asbestos awareness (mandatory for operational staff).
 - Driver awareness (mandatory).
 - Health and safety at work including manual handling training (mandatory).
 - Water safety training.
 - Confined spaces training.
 - Tree climbing and aerial rescue.
 - Personal Survival techniques (offshore operations only).

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- ~ Upon completion of each site-specific risk assessment, the project manager (PM) sends the draft RA for authorisation to their line manager. No site visit is permitted unless the RA has been authorised.
- ~ Upon authorisation, the RA is then distributed by the PM to all EcoNorth staff who are participating in the activity on the site with a request to read the RA and formally acknowledge that they have read and understood the RA. Where relevant, EcoNorth's RAs and method statements are issued to the principal contractor and other contractors as required so that our work can be co-ordinated with the work of others.
- ~ Should the use of subcontractors employed by EcoNorth be used on a specific site, all subcontractors are emailed the RA by either the Project Manager or Survey Organiser and, again, subcontractors are asked to formally acknowledge that they have read and understood the RA. All subcontractors are provided with a safety briefing at the start of the survey in advance of works taking place which sets out the requirements of the risk assessment. No subcontractor is permitted on site without receipt of this acceptance.
- ~ All risk assessments are shared with the principal contractor when requested.
- ~ Where specific tasks require additional risk assessments and method statements, these are drafted in collaboration with clients/subcontractors/principal contractor and agreed jointly before being circulated.
- Managing and Monitoring
 - ~ We have achieved, and continue to hold, ISO 45001 certification.
 - ~ We monitor our RAs through our weekly team meetings. Any new risks are flagged and incorporated as appropriate into future risk assessments.
 - ~ Work is managed through regular client / principal contractor meetings and communications in line with project deliverables. Through regular meetings, we ensure work is on track and flag any health and safety issues on a regular basis.
 - ~ All EcoNorth staff undertake a personal risk assessment, to cover any and all risks which they may personally face in working for EcoNorth, or our clients, and this is updated every year.
 - ~ All accident, near miss and cause for concern incidents must be reported and logged.
 - ~ Our Senior Managers carry out periodic site inspections to review the H&S performance of staff.
 - ~ Findings are recorded and fed back to staff at team meetings to drive improvement.

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- ~ All staff are encouraged to take an active role in maintaining safety on site and report unsafe conditions or aspects of work which could be improved.

Communicating Health and Safety Information

- Health and safety information is communicated to EcoNorth staff in this policy; through the induction process; in the preparation and sharing of risk assessments for specific work or projects; during every weekly team meeting and on an ad hoc basis if new information is received (this is circulated to all staff by email). In addition, each team member undergoes a personal risk assessment on an annual basis to assess their competence to undertake their work duties and identify any areas of training required to enable them to undertake their work in a safe manner.
- Staff are made aware of training courses run by the company, in addition to mandatory training such as fire warden, risk assessments and the online health and safety programme covering health and safety at work and on site.
- On site, health and safety information is communicated in site inductions which are given to EcoNorth by clients or principal contractors. If EcoNorth hires subcontractors, they also attend site inductions handled by clients/principal contractors. If subcontractors are on developments with no formal process for site inductions, this is provided by EcoNorth and sets out the nature of conditions on site hazards, site rules and control measures along with minimum PPE requirements.
- Subcontractors and staff are required to inform EcoNorth when they arrive on site and depart from site in line with project specific sign in and out procedures, and to give regular updates on their progress during site works and on the project as a whole.
- Staff and subcontractors work to agreed risk assessments and method statements.

Health and Safety Site Inductions

- As noted above. Where required, EcoNorth staff ensure they receive site induction from principal contractors OR on pre-construction sites EcoNorth provides briefings developed for relevant pre-construction operations.
- EcoNorth staff undertake a health and safety course with Registry of Land-Based Operatives (ROLO) and gain Construction Skills Certification Scheme cards, undergoing separate construction site-focused health and safety training and assessment.

Preventing Access by Unauthorised Persons to Site

- EcoNorth does not operate sites which are registered as construction sites to HSE. We are contracted to work on sites by our clients / their principal contractor and the latter has the responsibility to prevent access by unauthorised persons – EcoNorth abides by policies applicable to specific work sites in terms of preventing unauthorised access (eg shutting gates, ensuring facilities are locked).

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- When carrying out ecological assessments on sites that are not yet being developed, we have protocols to deal with any confrontation with unauthorised persons, including any threats of harassment. For example, we may be surveying bats in woodlands, or grassland areas. In this case we will ensure the police are aware we are undertaking a survey, secure permission from the client/landowner to access the area on a particular day or time and ensure that all staff and any subcontractors have read the risk assessment on dealing with confrontations.
- At our office, we ensure that the building is secured every evening and that any hazardous materials are stored in the locked COSHH cupboard, as well as any tools being locked away.

Provide Adequate Welfare Facilities

- EcoNorth does not operate sites. We are contracted to work on sites by our clients / their principal contractor and the latter has the responsibility to provide adequate welfare facilities. If EcoNorth staff or subcontractors feel that the facilities are not sufficient and they do not feel comfortable, they are advised to stop work and leave site until proper arrangements are in place with the client/principal contractor.
- Risk assessments prepared by EcoNorth are required to identify the location of available welfare when operating for short periods on pre-construction sites. Typically this requires EcoNorth to identify publicly available facilities. Where the duration / location of works requires it, EcoNorth considers hiring welfare.
- We ensure that staff and subcontractors have read the risk assessment, which includes reference to wearing the right clothing for the weather, carrying the right kit and knowing how to use it, and taking food and drink to ensure their own welfare.

Managing Asbestos

- EcoNorth does not operate sites. We are contracted to work on sites by our clients / their principal contractor and the latter has the responsibility to manage asbestos.
- However, EcoNorth requires clients/principal contractors to provide an asbestos report, prior to any work we undertake on any construction site where there is the potential for asbestos to be present. EcoNorth staff are instructed not to carry out work if the asbestos report is not provided and to leave site if they come across asbestos, or suspected asbestos.
- EcoNorth staff undertake an Asbestos Awareness certificated course, so they are competent to recognise asbestos and understand the risks.

Managing Fire Risks

- Whilst EcoNorth does not operate sites and are contracted to work on sites by our clients / their principal contractor and the latter has the responsibility to manage asbestos, we manage fire risks through our risk assessment process, described above.

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- All EcoNorth staff receive fire warden training and are trained to handle very small, basic fires through the use of fire extinguishers. Subcontractors are required to read and adhere to risk assessments where there is a risk of fire.
- EcoNorth staff and subcontractors are instructed to leave site if they are not comfortable with the approaches in place to manage fire risks, or health and safety generally.
- During surveys, such as bat risk assessments which are often undertaken in buildings and enclosed spaces, staff must ensure that they are aware of fire exits as soon as they enter the building. This is built into the risk assessment process.

18. Out of Control Behaviour

18.1. Out of Control Behaviour (OCB) Definition

Any person whose behaviour goes beyond that of the 'reasonable person' and as a result may put themselves or another person at risk. This may be because of dishonest or aggressive behaviour or purely through innocent stupidity or inability, possibly due to drugs or alcohol.

18.2. EcoNorth Policy

- EcoNorth will seek to provide an environment where people are safe from harm; in order to do this, we carry out suitable risk assessments, based upon reasonable behaviour.
- EcoNorth will ensure that all staff and volunteers are suitably trained to deal with OCB that they may be expected to encounter.

18.3. Requirement

EcoNorth Line Managers will ensure that:

- All staff and volunteers are aware of their likely level of contact with OCB and EcoNorth's baseline requirement for dealing with OCB; this will be recorded on competency forms together with required and achieved training where applicable.
- All risk assessments for sites, activities, groups and individual competencies will include OCB.

18.4. Method

- All incidents involving OCB are recorded as causes for concern and will be reviewed to see if action is required; this will be recorded.
- Training will be reviewed and updated for staff, volunteers and groups during annual appraisal, due to a change in activity or as the result of an incident.

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- Situations that are identified that pose an unacceptable risk will be acted upon immediately.

19. Vehicles and Driving

19.1. Vehicles and Driving Definition

- Any road going machine supplied by EcoNorth for the use of any member of staff or volunteers, or owned, rented or leased by a member of staff or volunteer and used while on EcoNorth business.
- Only vehicles registered for use on the public highway are covered by this policy.
- Driving, as defined by this policy, is any journey undertaken by car / minibus / van / motorcycle or any other vehicle licensed for road or off road use which a member of staff is suitably licenced and insured to operate.
- Driving, in the context of this policy, does not include staff members' normal journey to work.

19.2. EcoNorth Policy

- EcoNorth will administer all vehicles for which it is responsible. Any member of staff or volunteer using any EcoNorth vehicle will ensure that they conform to all EcoNorth requirements.
- Where EcoNorth requires staff or volunteers to use their own vehicles all aspects of that use will conform to Road Traffic Law and they will have their own insurance for business use.
- EcoNorth will take measures to minimise the extent of driving required by considering their means of accessing works locations.
- EcoNorth will ensure that all members of staff complete 'Driver Awareness Training', where relevant.
- EcoNorth will maintain records of driving licences and insurances for all staff undertaking journeys for work purposes.

19.3. Requirement

- All EcoNorth staff and volunteers will be issued with the vehicles guidelines and/or receive appropriate training before they can use any of EcoNorth vehicles.
- EcoNorth will assure itself of the competency and legality any staff or volunteers using EcoNorth vehicles before they permit their use.

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- Any staff or trainees required to use their own vehicle while on EcoNorth business must be fully licensed, insured and competent to do so.

19.4. Method

- The Vehicles RP will maintain a register of competent vehicle users and training competencies.
- All staff or volunteers using EcoNorth vehicles are required to inform the Vehicles RP if there is any change in their circumstances that might affect their legal situation or level of competency when driving.
- All staff or volunteers using their own vehicles are expected to conform to all relevant road traffic legislation.
- EcoNorth will take measure to minimise the extent of driving required by considering their means of accessing works locations.
- EcoNorth will arrange 'Driver Awareness Training' for all members of staff, where relevant.
- EcoNorth will maintain an up to date 'generic risk assessment' for driving required by work which will include specific parameters on levels of rest between work shifts / vehicle inspections.
- Journey specific risk assessments will be completed as part of project or site risk assessments.

20. Infectious Diseases

20.1. Infectious Diseases Definition

Infectious diseases, also known as communicable diseases or transmissible diseases, are illnesses that result from the infection, presence and growth of pathogenic (capable of causing disease) biologic agents in an individual human or other animal host. These diseases can be viral such as Covid-19, bacterial, fungal, or parasitic - each is different in how they spread and how they affect the body. Examples are SARS, influenza, tuberculosis (TB), Hepatitis.

The Covid-19 pandemic is an ongoing infectious disease caused by severe acute respiratory syndrome coronavirus 2 (SARS-CoV-2), first identified in December 2019. The key symptoms are a new and persistent cough, fever, tiredness, shortness of breath and loss or change of smell or taste. Less common symptoms include a sore throat, runny nose, headache, aches and pains, diarrhoea, skin rash, feeling or being sick, discolouration of fingers or toes, and red or irritated eyes. Most people infected with the Covid-19 virus will experience mild to moderate respiratory illness and recover without requiring special treatment. However, older people, and those with underlying medical problems like cardiovascular disease, diabetes, chronic respiratory disease and cancer, are more likely to develop serious illness.

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20.2. EcoNorth Policy

EcoNorth aims to:

- Protect employees, clients, suppliers and visitors from the risk of infection from infectious diseases.
- Provide employees, clients, suppliers and visitors with an infectious disease secure work environment.

20.3. Requirements

- Any EcoNorth employee showing signs of an infectious disease must self-isolate in accordance with government guidelines.
- Office and site specific risk assessments must be reviewed and updated where necessary.
- Personal risk assessments must be reviewed and updated where necessary.
- EcoNorth must help employees to work from home where government guidelines require this wherever possible.
- EcoNorth must implement additional cleaning, handwashing and hygiene procedures where relevant.
- Employees will be encouraged to take regular lateral flow tests prior to attending the office or site work or before travelling out of the area, in line with prevailing conditions at the time.

20.4. Method

- EcoNorth employees must be aware of the symptoms of infectious diseases and the actions to take if they become infected, in line with the latest government guidance. If an employee records a positive lateral flow test (whether symptomatic or not), has symptoms of an infectious disease or has been in contact with someone who has tested positive or is symptomatic, they must inform their Line Manager immediately and stay out of the workplace until they have fully recovered or the necessary quarantine period has elapsed. If an employee becomes ill at work, they must leave immediately and advise their Line Manager they have done so; the Line Manager will ensure the rest of the team are advised that the employee has gone home and all necessary precautions should be taken. Any area where an ill or potentially ill employee or visitor has been in the workplace must be fully sanitised.
- The office risk assessment and site-specific risk assessments for live projects must be reviewed and updated to include infectious disease safety measures to mitigate identified risks of infection.

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- Employees' personal risk assessments must be reviewed and updated where necessary.
- EcoNorth must help employees to work from home wherever possible, particularly those with identified health risks, taking into account the impact on their mental and physical wellbeing. DSE assessments for home working must be conducted.
- In the event of an infectious disease related outbreak, employees must aim to maintain 2m social distancing and, where this is not possible, they must manage the transmission risk. To minimise an excess of people in the office at any one time, all staff will indicate on the workload planner their intended work location (site, home or office based) where there is no 'work from home' government guidance in place. Start and finish times and lunch breaks must be staggered. Workstations must be moved apart where necessary. Effective communication within the team regarding their movements is essential to ensure social distancing can be maintained. Team meetings will be conducted via Microsoft Teams rather than face to face.
- In the event of an emergency situation occurring such as fire or injury, it may not be possible or safe to observe social distancing. However, once the emergency is over, those people involved should wash or sanitise their hands.
- Employees may car share the company vehicles or their own vehicles, except during an outbreak of an infectious disease. All parties will be strongly encouraged to take a lateral flow test earlier that day and only car share/attend work if they have received a negative result. The vehicle must be washed down and disinfected after each use and supplies of protective disposable blue gloves, hand sanitiser, anti-bacterial wipes and face masks will be provided in the vehicle. This guidance may be subject to periodic change depending on risk level.
- In the event of an infectious disease related outbreak, EcoNorth must implement additional cleaning, handwashing and hygiene procedures. The cleaning programme will be reviewed and updated as necessary. Equipment which is shared between various employees must be disinfected between each use. Signage will be placed in key areas to encourage employees to hand wash correctly and regularly. Supplies of hand sanitiser, anti-bacterial wipes and disposable blue gloves will be made available in key areas of the premises and for taking to site as required. Additional supplies of personal protective equipment will be held to ensure supplies do not run out.
- Employees will be encouraged to take regular lateral flow tests prior to attending the office or site work or before travelling out of the area, in line with prevailing conditions at the time. Anyone who receives a positive lateral flow test must inform their Line Manager and self-isolate immediately, in line with government guidelines. During an outbreak of an infectious disease, this may become mandatory.

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21. Smoking

21.1. Smoking Definition

Smoking is one of the biggest causes of death and illness in the UK. Every year around 78,000 people in the UK die from smoking, with many more living with debilitating smoking-related illnesses. Smoking increases a person's risk of developing more than 50 serious health conditions, some of which may be fatal and others may cause irreversible long-term damage to health.

Second hand smoke comes from the tip of a lit cigarette and the smoke that the smoker breathes out. Breathing in second hand smoke, also known as passive smoking, increases the risk of suffering the same health conditions as smokers.

21.2. EcoNorth Policy

EcoNorth aims to:

- Protect employees, clients, suppliers and visitors from the risks from smoking.
- Provide employees, clients, suppliers and visitors with a smoke-free work environment.

21.3. Requirements

- EcoNorth has a duty to ensure compliance with the Health Act 2006. All of EcoNorth's premises are therefore smoke-free. To allow employees to smoke at EcoNorth's premises would be against the law and inconsistent with EcoNorth's duty to ensure the health, safety and welfare of its employees.

21.4. Method

- Employees must not smoke (or vape) in any of EcoNorth's premises, vehicles or whilst on any customer's property. To smoke (or vape) on EcoNorth's premises will be a criminal offence. Employees are asked not to smoke whilst displaying EcoNorth's logo.

22. Vaccinations

22.1. Definitions

Vaccination is the act of introducing a vaccine into the body to produce protection from a specific disease.

A vaccine is a preparation that is used to stimulate the body's immune response against a disease or diseases. Vaccines are usually administered through needle injections, but some can be administered by mouth or sprayed into the nose.

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Immunisation is the process by which a person becomes protected against a disease through vaccination.

22.2. EcoNorth Policy

EcoNorth aims to:

- Protect employees from the risks of rabies during work involving the handling of bats. Some bats in the UK carry rabies viruses called European Bat Lyssaviruses (EBLV). The rabies virus is transmitted via a bite or scratch from an infected animal, or from its saliva coming into contact with a person's mucous membranes (eyes, mouth or nose).
- Protect employees from the risks of tetanus. Tetanus is a serious but rare condition caused by bacteria getting into a wound. Tetanus bacteria can survive for a long time outside the body and are commonly found in soil and the manure of animals such as horses and cows. If the bacteria enter the body through a wound they can quickly multiply and release a toxin that affects the nerves, causing symptoms such as muscle stiffness and spasms.
- Provide employees, clients, suppliers and visitors with a Covid-19 secure work environment.

22.3. Requirements

- EcoNorth has a duty to ensure compliance with the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended) and the Conservation of Habitats and Species (Amendment) (EU Exit) Regulations 2019 (The Habitat Regulations) which require all relevant employees to be fully vaccinated against rabies before handling bats.
- EcoNorth encourages employees to be vaccinated against tetanus as a preventative measure, due to the regular outdoors work conducted by most of the team.
- Please refer to section 20 above regarding Infectious Diseases.

22.4. Method

- Employees are prohibited from handling bats before being fully vaccinated against rabies. These vaccinations are paid for in full by the company.
- Employees are encouraged to be vaccinated against tetanus and Covid-19.
- A log of rabies, tetanus and Covid-19 vaccinations is maintained by the PA/Administrator. The log is reviewed periodically. Access to the log is restricted, in line with current data protection laws.

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John Thompson
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