## 1. Purpose

This document sets out the safe system of work for Work at Height that is to be adopted where Derby City Council has control of the danger and is to be used by Derby City Council and its contractors for all work involving Working at Height operations involving the use of Portable Ladders (ladders and step ladders – see form 5 and 6)

## 2. Roles & Responsibilities

All staff are reminded of their resonsibiites and to act in accordance with the Council Health & Safety Policy and within their level of competence.

## 3. Process Detail

**3.1** Ladders should not be an automatic choice when working at height and alternatives should always be considered first e.g. task avoidance if possible and platforms.

The choice of access equipment will be determined by:

* The height to be negotiated.
* The site conditions.
* The duration and extent of work.
* The frequency of required access.

**3.2 Training Requirement**

General

All ladder users are to be suitably trained and competent and should have the appropriate knowledge, experience and practical skills for the type of work being undertaken.

As a minimum requirement ladders users are to be trained to ladder association standards on the following criteria:

* Daily use check.
* Manual handling.
* Securing and footing.
* Ladder stability devices.
* Ground conditions.
* Signage/barriers.
* Common hazards.
* Do’s and don’ts.

**3.3 Maintenance, Inspection and Records**

Ladders should be numbered individually and placed on a register which records:

* Make / type of ladder.
* Duty / weight/class rating.
* Date first put into use.
* Portable Ladder Inspection Form. (WAH 005)
* Step Ladder inspection form (WAH 006)
* Ladders are work equipment subject to the requirements of the Provision and Use of Work Equipment Regulations (PUWER).
* The ladder must be subject to suitable, regular documented management inspections, which take into account the degree of use and type of ladder.
* All ladders must carry a stable ladder tag identifying previous inspection dates and next inspection date.
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* Link to Portable Ladder Inspection Check sheet. (WAH 005)

**3.4 Choosing a Ladder**

The UK has three categories of ladder strength:

* Industrial Duty (Class 1) ladders are designed for a Maximum Static Vertical Load 175kg

(27.5 stones). This will sometimes be referred to as "safe working load".

* Trade Duty (previously Class 2, but now EN131) ladders are designed for a Maximum

Static Vertical Load 150kg (23.5 stones).

* Domestic Duty (Class 3) ladders are designed for a Maximum Static Vertical Load 125kg

(19.5 stones) – **Domestic ladders must not to be used in the workplace!**

Confusion frequently arises from the use of the term "Duty Rating" on some ladders, where Class 1 ladders are designated a Duty Rating 130kg and Class 3 ladders are designated a Duty Rating 95kg. These figures were arrived at by British Standards from a consideration of the frequency and general conditions of use. They are not an accurate guide to the Safe Working Load. The "Maximum Static Vertical Load" is a more useful measure and gives a more accurate guide to relative strengths as indicated above.

The British Standards for UK ladders are:

* BS 2037 - applies to metal ladders (Class 1 and Class 3).
* BS EN131 - applies to metal and timber ladders.
* BS 1129 - applies to timber ladders.
* BS EN131 has been recently adopted as a European-wide standard (ladders manufactured in most of Europe will be known simply as EN131). In the UK it has replaced the old Trade Duty (Class 2) of BS 2037.

**3.5 Risk Assessment**

In order to comply with current legislation every employer and self-employed person must make a suitable and sufficient assessment of any and all hazards in the workplace, and the likelihood of the risk of these hazards causing harm to persons or property.

Common hazards associated with the use of ladders to be considered in a risk assessment are:

* + Falls from ladder when stepping on and off the lower rungs.
  + Falls due to ladder slipping sideways at the upper resting point.
  + Falls due to ladder slipping outwards at the bottom.
  + Falls due to ladder moving because of unsuitable ground conditions.
  + Falls due to ladder placed at incorrect angle.
  + Falls due to failure of ladder.
  + Falls or electric shock due to overhead electrical hazards/ obstructions.
  + Falls due to incorrect PPE.
  + Falls due to environmental conditions.
  + Injury during handling of ladders.
  + Injury to others from falling tools.

The above do not include any “work” specific hazards.

**3.6 Ladder Pre-Use Assessment**

* For a simple task assessment a Ladder Pre-Use Assessment may be valid based on the level of risk. These may be used for simple repeat tasks using ladders but must be reviewed if conditions change, the task changes or every 12 months.
* General conditions for use.
* Ladders are only to be used for short duration inspection and basic maintenance work
* Ladders must always be positioned at a minimum 1:4 ratio.
* Where practicable ladders must be tied off at the top and bottom
* Ladders when in use must always be footed by a second

**IF IN DOUBT CONSULT THE CHST**