

Report regarding occupied town council buildings for Full Council

Since starting in October 2022, I have spent a lot of time ensuring all compliance matters are in order with regards to satisfying health and safety requirements across the services we provide.

One of the more urgent matters that I have needed to address is obtaining independent Fire Risk Assessments for all our staff occupied sites (Summerland Road Offices, 2 x Depots at Brunel Way, Cemetery Lock up, Community Building) These risk assessments have recently been undertaken and thankfully they are generally satisfactory with only relatively minor rectifications required across some sites.

We also need to ensure our electrical consumer units and associated circuits have been independently checked and signed off by a trained professional. I have spoken to a local electrician who is able to undertake these works and provide us with the relevant certification. The charge is £50 a consumer unit then £20 per circuit which appears to be the going rate with other enquiries I have made. These checks are an important part of compliance management and also ensure the safety of all users of the facilities. The areas that require the electrical checks are not just those listed above (Summerland Road Offices, 2 x Depots at Brunel Way, Cemetery Lock up, Community Building) but also our public conveniences that we own (Summerland, Blenheim, Quay west, Irnham) and the pavilion at King George Playing Field. Irrespective of how regularly these areas are visited, if it has a consumer unit, it will need testing and certifying. Providing the electrics are considered 'safe' they are usually certified for up to 5 years. Most of the consumer unit testing across these sites are currently due.

We also, need to obtain asbestos risk assessments for all these areas. Areas such as the community centre that has recently been built will not require an asbestos risk assessment, but the other areas will. The duty to manage asbestos is contained in regulation 4 of the Control of Asbestos Regulations 2012 and an asbestos risk assessment is a very important part of it. As you can imagine, certified companies who can provide this service is limited but as always, I will look for the best in terms of both value and service.

Obtaining all these are important for us as a professional organisation and at times these sorts of things can be easily overlooked. However, having these would align us with the expected industry standard. Some of the above checks/assessments are either non-existent, expiring or expired, so it is very important to get these in place as soon as possible.

Ben Parker

Operations Manager

June 2023