



**Somerset**  
Council

# **HS41 Water Assets Policy.**

<b>Organisation</b>	Somerset Council
<b>Title</b>	Water Assets Policy
<b>Author</b>	Jo Coles
<b>Owner</b>	The Corporate Health & Safety Unit
<b>Protective Marking</b>	Official – Unclassified
<b>Primary legislation</b>	<a href="#"><u>Health and Safety at Work etc Act 1974</u></a> <a href="#"><u>Management of Health and Safety Regulations 1999</u></a>

## Policy on a page

The Council is responsible for several water assets. For the purpose, of this policy, a water asset is defined as “*an area of water that is able to be accessed by the public and used in a variety of different leisure activities*”. The Council, when assessing risk of its water assets, will take all ‘reasonably practicable steps’ to protect people from danger.

These water assets are of varied size and shape and therefore their use is varied. The Council recognises the importance of water from an environmental perspective, and for recreation and leisure activities. The uses can be broadly fitted into the following categories:

- a) Those maintained entirely by a third party on a Council owned or operated site
- b) Assets owned and operated by the Council
- c) Those used for leisure activity, and of which are managed and maintained by the Council.

The Council will provide appropriate arrangements for the effective management of risk with water assets owned and operated by the Council. These arrangements will ensure that, ‘so far as is reasonably practical’, all water assets & all water related infrastructures which the Council is responsible for, are maintained in a safe condition for the benefit of users and the safety of employees. For this policy to be effective, it is essential that all persons involved in the management and development of these assets take responsibility for their role.

This document and associated guidance will be available to: **All Elected Members, Somerset Council Staff, 3<sup>rd</sup> Party Contractors** (on request), **Secondees and Volunteers**.

### Key Message

The Council will ensure that through its management of these areas, and supervision of staff, that workplace risks arising from open water activities and the management of water related assets are eliminated, or where this is not possible be reduced to a level as low as reasonably practicable, through the implementation of risk controls adopted using a hierarchy of control approach.

**This “policy on a page” is a summary of the detailed policy and guidance documents, please ensure you read, understand, and comply with the arrangements stated.**

# Responsibilities

<a href="#">Somerset Council</a>	<a href="#">Directors and Delegated Senior Managers</a>
<a href="#">Service Managers and those with direct line manager responsibilities</a>	<a href="#">Those in control of Water Assets</a>
<a href="#">Employees</a>	<a href="#">Corporate Health and Safety Unit (CHSU)</a>

## Somerset Council will ensure:

- Compliance with this policy and any associated documents relating to it.
- The effective and efficient management of its water assets by the provision of adequate and appropriate resources to ensure so far as is reasonably practicable that employees, members, volunteers, contractors, and the general public are protected from the risk of harm.

## Directors and Delegated Senior Managers will:

- Ensure that relevant managers & staff under their control are trained as appropriate in the requirements of this policy, its related procedures, and safe systems of work.
- Ensure that relevant staff to whom this policy applies are aware of their responsibilities and how to discharge them with regard to health & safety.

## Service Managers and those with direct line-manager responsibilities will:

- Ensure that risk assessments are carried out for all work activities undertaken in or around water which cannot be avoided.
- Ensure that only appropriately trained staff work around water assets.
- Draw to the attention of employees, their duties with respect to this policy.
- Make sure employees are aware of what action they are required to take to protect their own and others personal safety.
- Ensure emergency, PPE (personal Protective Equipment) and safety equipment are kept in good working condition regularly serviced and maintained.
- Ensure persons are provided with sufficient knowledge and training and are deemed competent to implement the requirements of this policy and emergency procedures.
- Monitor the effectiveness of and level of compliance with the policy and emergency procedures through regular inspections, auditing, and checks on adherence to relevant procedures and processes that support this policy.

## **Those in control of Water Assets (Property Services, Coastal & Environmental Protection, Land Drainage, Port Officers & Harbour Masters) - will:**

- Ensure Risk Assessments for the management of water assets under their control are undertaken and are fit for their intended purpose.
- Asset registers are kept up to date.
- Ensure all assets are listed which may include but is not limited to- waterways, SUDs (sustainable urban drainage), ponds, parcels of land, culverts, beaches, docks.
- Follow Port & Marine Safety Code, SIP 020 (Guidance on water safety & use of buoyancy equipment in ports)
- Audit & Maintain Safety Signage
- Carry out routine checks on safety equipment such as life buoys and ladders used for escape purposes. Replace as required.
- Main/Service Pumping stations, flood relief schemes, flood barrier/loggers, platforms and sluice gates that fall under the Council's area of responsibility.

## **Employees will:**

- Act in accordance with the policy, procedures, safe systems of work or instruction given to them.
- Co-operate with any training requirements and use equipment supplied properly.
- Report any unsafe acts, misuse of, or missing equipment i.e., life buoys.

## **The Corporate Health and Safety Team will:**

- Offer advice to managers regarding this policy.
- Maintain & communicate this policy.
- Review this policy at intervals not exceeding 3 years.
- Provide assistance in seeking relevant training.

# Governance Arrangements

## Policy Compliance

If any employee is found to have breached this policy, they may be subject to Somerset Council's disciplinary procedure.

## Policy Governance

The following table identifies who within Somerset Council is Accountable, Responsible, Informed or Consulted with regards to this policy. The following definitions apply:

- **Responsible** – the person(s) responsible for developing and publishing the policy
- **Accountable** – the person who has ultimate accountability and authority for the policy
- **Consulted** – the person(s) or groups to be consulted prior to final policy implementation
- **Informed** – the person(s) or groups to be informed after policy implementation.

<b>Responsible</b>	Corporate Health & Safety Unit
<b>Accountable</b>	Chief Executive
<b>Consulted</b>	LGR JNF Union Group, LGR H&S Sub-Workstream, Health, Safety and Wellbeing Steering Group (HSWSG)
<b>Informed</b>	All members, employees, contractors (on request), volunteers & 3rd parties (on request)

## Review and Revision

This policy will be reviewed as it is deemed appropriate, for instance when there is a change in statutory requirements and/or HSE guidance is revised, but no less frequently than every 36 months. Policy review will be undertaken by rolling programme established by the CHSU and agreed by the Health, Safety, and Wellbeing Steering Group.

## Version History

Revision Date	Author	Version	Description of Revision
	Jo Coles	V1.0	New policy - draft

## Document Notification

Approval	Name	Date
Corporate H&S Advisor		
Service Director of Workforce and chair of HSWSG		
HR Committee		