
Agenda Item:	Health and Safety Report
Meeting Date:	Monday 13 July 2026
Contact Officer:	Compliance and Environment Officer

The purpose of this report is to update Councillors on Health and Safety across the services and facilities provided by the Council.

Background

It is the policy of Witney Town Council to comply with our obligations under the Health and Safety at Work Act 1974 (as amended), the Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999 (as amended) and other supporting legislation concerning Health and Safety. At all times we endeavour to provide and maintain a healthy and safe working environment for our employees, and to protect the health and safety of all visitors; including contractors, temporary workers, and members of the public, who might be affected by our operations.

Current Situation

In accordance with the approved Witney Town Council Health and Safety Policy Statement, Members are reminded that they have a collective responsibility for the Health & Safety of the organisation.

Departmental managers remain accountable for compliance within their areas of responsibility which is overseen by the Compliance and Environment officer.

The key objectives are to ensure that the Council operates in a lawful manner in respect of health and safety compliance with its service delivery and functions, identifying and advising management and Council of possible risks and finding solutions to mitigate such risks.

The Council's health and safety consultants, Opus Safety Ltd provide additional specialist support to the Council.

Oxfordshire Fire & Rescue Service carried out a Fire Safety Audit of the Corn Exchange premises on 22 May 2026. Council officers met with the Fire Safety Inspector during the inspection. The audit was constructive, and the Inspector provided advice on opportunities to further strengthen fire safety management arrangements. The Fire Safety Inspector subsequently confirmed that the Council has demonstrated an adequate standard of fire safety management and compliance within the premises.

Electrical installation condition reports have recently been undertaken on The Buttercross and Windrush Cemetery Depot.

Legionella water risk assessments have been undertaken at Burwell Hall, Corn Exchange, West Witney Depot and the Leys Splash Park. Recommendations contained within the reports have been reviewed and the necessary associated control measures will be implemented.

A review of COSHH products used by the Council has been undertaken and information updated.

The RoSPA inspection of the Leys Skate Park has now been undertaken. The inspection was rescheduled from March due to Courtside requiring the area to be fenced off whilst undertaking adjacent building work. The report is being reviewed with the necessary maintenance findings actioned.

Compliance Table

Compliance Inspection, Testing and Servicing Status	Corn Exchange	Town Hall	Admin Office	Burwell Hall	Stanley Court Temp Works Depot
Fire Risk Assessment	Completed	Completed	Completed	Completed	Completed
Fire Alarm Testing	Completed	Completed	Completed	Completed	N/A
Fire Extinguishers	Completed	Completed	Completed	Completed	Completed
Steel fire exit staircase	Completed	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Emergency Lighting	Scheduled	Scheduled	Scheduled	Scheduled	Completed
Security	Completed	Completed	Completed	Completed	N/A
Lift	Completed	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Gas Safety	Completed	N/A	N/A	Completed	N/A
Electrical Periodic Inspection	Completed	Completed	Scheduled	Completed	Landlord
PAT Testing	Completed	Completed	Completed	Completed	Completed
Legionella Risk Assessment	Completed	Completed	Completed	Completed	Landlord
Asbestos	Completed	Completed	Completed	Review	Report provided with Lease.
Air Handling Unit	Scheduled	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Air conditioning	N/A	N/A	N/A	Scheduled	N/A

Stanley Court temporary Works Depot has now been vacated by the Operations Team in line with the lease agreement for the building. The new Operations Depot at West Witney Sports

Ground will be added to the compliance schedule following the full occupation by the Operations Team.

The Terrorism (Protection of Premises) Act 2025: Martyn's Law

The Terrorism (Protection of Premises) Act 2025, commonly known as Martyn's Law, received Royal Assent in April 2025. The Act aims to improve organisational preparedness and protective security across the UK, requiring that those responsible for certain premises and events take steps to prepare for potential terrorist attacks and help keep people safe in the event of an attack. In addition, certain larger premises and events are required to consider their vulnerability to acts of terrorism, and, where appropriate, take steps to reduce those vulnerabilities.

The Government intends for there to be an implementation period of at least 24 months following Royal Assent (3 April 2025) before the requirements for those in scope, come into force. The Home Office has published statutory guidance intended to assist those responsible for premises and events in scope to understand the requirements set out in the legislation. Whilst those that fall within scope of the Act may wish to begin considering the requirements, there is no requirement to comply with them until the legislation comes into force. A brief summary of the requirements of the Act has been provided by the Home Office and is attached as Appendix 1. A QR code is provided on the briefing paper for more information.

Requirements of the Act - The Act will ensure the public are better protected from terrorism by requiring certain public premises and events to be prepared and ready to keep people safe in the event of an attack. In addition, certain larger premises will be required to consider and, where appropriate, take steps to reduce their vulnerability to acts of terrorism. The Act establishes a tiered approach for premises, with those responsible for premises in scope required to fulfil different requirements according to the number of individuals it is reasonable to expect may be present at the premises at the same time:

- The 'standard tier' comprises of smaller premises where 200 – 799 individuals may be present. The requirements for this tier are centred on simple, low-cost activities designed to ensure those working at these premises are better able to reduce harm and save lives in the event of an attack. There is no requirement to put in place physical security measures in the standard tier.
- The 'enhanced tier' refers to larger premises where 800 or more individuals may be present. In addition to the requirements in the standard tier, these larger premises have further requirements placed upon them. This includes having in place, so far as is reasonably practicable, appropriate public protection measures to reduce their vulnerability to acts of terrorism and the risk of physical harm if one were to occur.

Events that are in scope of the Act as qualifying events are subject to the same requirements as enhanced tier premises.

Persons responsible for standard tier premises will be required to:

- Notify the regulator, the Security Industry Authority (SIA), of their premises.
- Have in place, so far as reasonably practicable, appropriate public protection procedures that could be reasonably expected to reduce the risk of physical harm being caused to individuals if an attack were to occur there or nearby.

Persons responsible for enhanced tier premises and qualifying events will be required to:

- Notify the SIA that they are responsible for the premises or event
- Have in place, so far as reasonably practicable, appropriate public protection procedures that could be expected to reduce the risk of physical harm being caused to individuals if an attack were to occur there or nearby have in place, so far as reasonably practicable, appropriate measures that could reasonably be expected to reduce both the vulnerability of the premises or event to an act of terrorism occurring, and the risk of physical harm being caused to individuals if an attack were to occur there or nearby
- Document the public protection procedures and measures in place, or proposed to be put in place, and provide this document to the Security Industry Authority.

For all premises and events, the responsible person must consider what is 'reasonably practicable' when ensuring that appropriate public protection procedures and/or measures are in place. Reasonably practicable means proportionate. In considering what is reasonably practicable, the responsible person should weigh what can be done to achieve the objectives of procedures and/or measures, balanced against the cost, time and difficulty of implementation.

Ultimately, what is appropriate and reasonably practicable will be a consideration at each of the individual premises in scope, as each will be unique. The particular procedures in place at one location may not be appropriate and reasonably practicable at another.

Statutory Guidance - The Act requires the production of two separate pieces of statutory guidance: Home Office section 27 guidance for the public to understand how they might meet the requirements of the legislation; and SIA section 12 operational guidance which will set out how the SIA will exercise its functions as the regulator.

The section 27 guidance is now available to assist those responsible for premises and events in scope to understand the requirements set out in the legislation.

Wider Context of the Act - The legislation builds upon the Protect and Prepare strands of the Government's wider counter terrorism strategy, CONTEST, the aim of which is to reduce the risk from terrorism to the UK. In 2021, the publication of the Manchester Arena Inquiry Volume 1 report produced several recommendations, including the introduction of legislative requirements to improve the safety and security of public venues.

The Government is conscious of the need to ensure the Act strikes the right balance between public protection and avoiding undue burdens on premises and events. The provisions in the Act have been developed following engagement with expert security partners, businesses, local authorities and the Martyn's Law campaign team. This includes two public consultations and pre-legislative scrutiny of the draft Bill. The feedback received from this scrutiny has been reflected in the legislation.

What does this mean for the Council?

Training: Officers have been preparing for the introduction of the Act by attending webinars from Protect UK, The Protect Alliance (UK) and the National Counter Terrorism Security Office. ACT (Action Counters Terrorism) Awareness 2026 eLearning has been undertaken by the

Compliance & Environment Officer and the Venue & Events Officer. It is planned for the Venue & Events Co-Ordinator and the Café/Bar Manager to also undertake this training.

Council Public Buildings:

The Corn Exchange and Burwell Hall do not have the capacity to be within scope of the Act.

External Events:

External events held on Council land may fall within scope of the Act where they meet the relevant capacity threshold and are enclosed, for example by fencing. This may include both ticketed and free events, depending on their capacity, layout and access arrangements.

Witney Music Festival is expected to fall within scope, and festival organisers will need to continue working closely with the Council before the Act comes into force in 2027. The organisers currently provide event management and security plans, together with associated risk assessments, for the event.

Any event held on Council land, or organised by the Council, will need to be assessed against the Act's scope criteria.

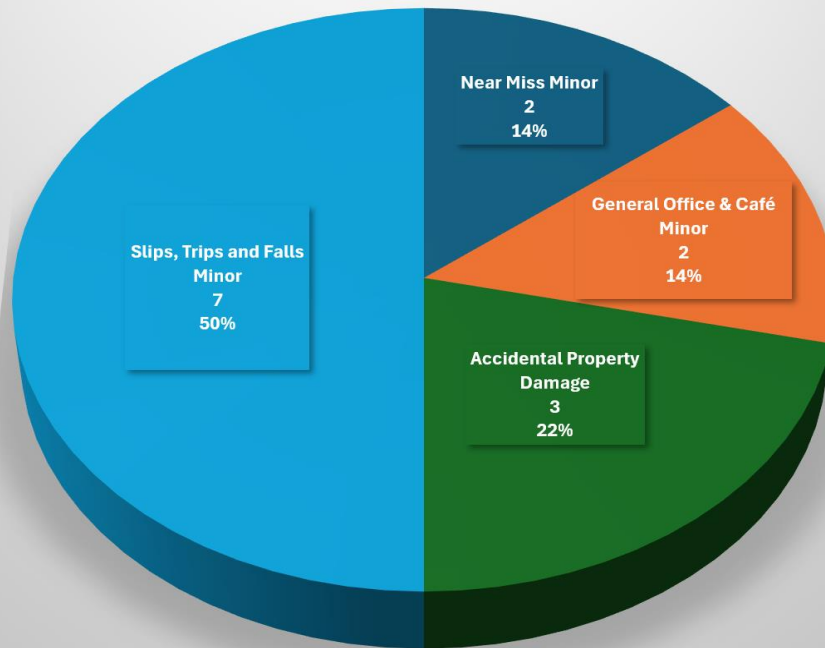
Next Steps:

- Continue to monitor new central Government and SIA guidance as it is published.
- Review and update event plans to include evacuation and dispersal arrangements.
- Consider evacuation, lockdown procedures and designated safe spaces for all Council occupied buildings.
- Agree communication plans for each relevant Council event.
- Identify staff awareness and training requirements for recognising and responding to potential threats.

Health and Safety incidents

- RIDDOR (Reporting of Injuries, Diseases and Dangerous Occurrences Regulations)
 - No reportable incidents since the last meeting.
- Accidents/Incident
 - There have been two reported accidents/incidents since the last meeting relating to members of the public using the Council's facilities.
 - Slips, trips and falls - Minor.
 - an attendee of the Tea Dance.
 - an adult exercising at Burwell Recreation Ground.
 - Three reported accidental property damage incidents have occurred since the last meeting. Two occurred whilst grass cutting and one occurred within the Depot. Damage has been repaired in all incidents.
- Near Miss
 - No reported near misses since the last meeting.

Accidents/Incidents over last 12 Months



Corporate Strategy

The Council's Strategic Plan 2025–29 sets out the Council's long-term priorities and direction, supporting its mission to 'make Witney a great place to live, work and visit.' This report contributes to the delivery of the following strategic pillar of the plan:

1. A Forward Looking Town Council

Impact Assessments

The Town Council has a duty to consider the effects of its decisions, functions and activities on equality, biodiversity, and crime & disorder. Consideration should also be given to effects on the environment, given the Council's Climate Emergency declaration in 2019.

- a) Ensuring equality in health and safety measures so that all individuals, regardless of their background, job role, or personal circumstances, have equal access to a safe and healthy environment.
- b) Biodiversity plays a crucial role in health and safety measures, influencing public health, workplace safety, and overall environmental well-being.

- c) Crime and disorder pose risks to health and safety in workplaces, public spaces, and healthcare settings. Issues such as violence, theft, and vandalism can compromise safety measures.
- d) The Environment & Climate Emergency is a critical issue that directly impacts health and safety measures in workplaces and communities. It is important to integrate environmental and climate considerations into the council's health and safety policies to protect workers, reduce environmental hazards, and build resilience against climate-related risks.

Risk

In decision making Councillors should give consideration to any risks to the Council and any action it can take to limit or negate its liability.

All accidents and incidents are properly documented and investigated with measures put in place in order to prevent reoccurrences.

Social Value

Social value is the positive change the Council creates in the local community within which it operates.

There are the broader benefits that the Council generates for employees and the public embedding a safer, healthier, and more productive workforce.

Financial implications

The Council makes budgetary provision in order to carry out its obligations in relation to its statutory compliance checks using external contractors to certify the work accordingly.

Recommendations

Members are invited to note the report.