



Health and Safety Policy

Approved by SMT	Insert date here
Approved by Committee/Board	Board – 28 th February 2024
Effective date	28 th February 2024
Review date	28 th February 2025
Policy developed by	Health and Safety Business Manager
Consultations	N/A
Associated procedure	Lone Worker Policy, Working at Height Policy, Guidance and Risk Assessment Policy, Accident, Incident and Near miss Reporting Policy, Driver Handbook, Manual Handling Policy

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Introduction

1. Purpose

- 1.1 Connexus regards the management of health and safety as an integral part of its business and as a management priority. It is our policy that all activities and work will be carried out in a safe manner, and we will ensure the health, safety and welfare of our workforce and others who may be affected by our activities.
- 1.2 We recognise our duty of care in complying with the Health and Safety at Work Act 1974 as amended, the Management of Health and Safety Regulations 1999 and all other allied relevant legislation as appropriate. We acknowledge that poor health and safety management could result in Connexus being found guilty of corporate manslaughter as a result of serious management failures resulting in a gross breach of a duty of care in line with the Corporate Manslaughter and Corporate Homicide Act 2007.
- 1.3 Scope: The policy applies to the whole of the Group. This means Connexus Homes Limited, (ultimate parent) and all of its subsidiaries.

2. Problem to Solve

- 2.1 Connexus will: -
 - Provide and maintain an environment that is safe and without risk to work colleagues, tenants, visitors, and contractors.
 - Provide adequate resources to maintain Health and Safety Standards.
 - Provide adequate well maintained welfare facilities at work and provide a healthy working environment.
 - Provide work colleagues with such information, equipment (including PPE), instruction training which is relevant and supervision as is necessary to secure their Health and Safety at work and that of others who may be affected by their actions.
 - Provide and maintain systems of work that are safe and without risk to Health and Safety.
 - Conduct activities to ensure that third parties are not exposed to risk to Health and Safety arising from colleague's activities or instructions.
 - Carry out risk assessments and review them on a regular frequency to maintain agreed standards of Health and Safety.
 - Provide associated policies for relevant topics where required.

- Ensure that all machinery, plant, and equipment are maintained in a safe condition.
- Ensure there is a safe system of work in place for any hazardous materials.
- Ensure accidents/incidents are investigated thoroughly to identify route and underlying causes and where possible ensure measures are implemented to reduce or eliminate re-occurrence.
- Ensure that the Health and Safety representatives reflect all areas of the business and are utilised to consult with all colleagues and actively promote participation on all key areas of health and safety.

2.2 Connexus will support continuous improvement, to achieve this we will: -

- Maintain an effective health and safety management system.
- Systematically review and refine our policies, procedures, and arrangements.
- Set minimum standards and performance indicators for health and safety.
- Measure our performance and benchmark it with similar organisations.
- Publish regular reports on our findings.
- Use the information positively to improve performance.

3. Measurement

- 3.1 Review at regular intervals and when there are significant changes within health and safety legislation, guidance related policies and procedures, changes in key personnel, management restructure, recommendations through a safety audit or a request from a third party.
- 3.2 Present any changes to SMT, EMT and Board for approval.
- 3.3 Communicate and consult with all colleagues and contractors by bringing this policy to their attention via the induction process, training and display around the workplaces and ensuring all amendments are also communicated.
- 3.4 Review at regular intervals and when there are significant changes within health and safety legislation, guidance related policies and procedures, changes in key personnel, management restructure, recommendations through a safety audit or a request from a third party.

4. Other Responsibilities

The Board

- 4.1 The Board of Connexus has overall responsibility for the health and safety and welfare of the workforce and anyone else who could be affected by the business/ activities of the companies in the Group e.g., customers, contractors, stakeholders, and the public in general.
- 4.2 This responsibility includes:

- Providing active leadership and direction for health and safety.
- Securing adequate resources for health and safety management.
- Overseeing health and safety performance.

Chief Executive

4.3 The Chief Executive is responsible for ensuring:

- Effective arrangements and structures are in place to manage health and safety.
- Effective health and safety policies are developed and implemented consistently across Connexus Homes Group.
- A regular planned programme of audits and inspections is implemented to monitor health and safety performance.
- Positive action is taken to improve health and safety performance where problems are identified.
- Adequate resources (people and budgets) are made available for managing health and safety.
- Making sure health and safety is given equal priority with other management functions and is included in business planning.
- Support is given to continuous improvements by demonstrating a proactive positive attitude to health and safety matters.
- The promotion of workplace participation in health and safety by supporting consultative arrangements.

Directors and Senior Managers

4.4 Directors and Senior Managers are responsible for the health, safety and welfare within their teams and will ensure that health and safety is recognised as an integral part of the overall management culture.

4.5 They will encourage the development of a positive attitude to health and safety among employees by visibly demonstrating their own commitment to achieving a high standard of health and safety performance.

4.6 Directors and Senior Managers are to: -

- Be aware of their health and safety responsibilities and duties as Directors, Managers, and employees.
- Ensure all their employees follow health and safety arrangements and procedures.
- Ensure that all their employees have suitable and sufficient training to carry out their work tasks efficiently and safely.
- Monitor and report via their directorate meetings any health and safety issues within their area.
- Ensure, that when considering any changes to their area of operation, that health and safety arrangements are considered during the process, including the planning stage.
- Be aware that health, safety, and welfare duties may be delegated to their line managers, however, the legal accountability remains with the Director. Employees with delegated duties will have a level of responsibility and will be required to implement any directed health and safety arrangements.

4.7 In addition, Senior Managers: -

- Have a responsibility for the management and monitoring of the Health and Safety Policy for its effectiveness for the area they Lead or manage.
- They will liaise and ensure full cooperation not only with, but also between managers and supervisors to ensure that they are in compliance with their responsibilities, company policies and procedures.
- Will ensure full co-operation with appointed Safety Representatives and other personnel appointed in matters of health and safety whilst maintaining and encouraging a positive attitude towards health and safety and adopt and maintain the health and safety culture within the organisation.

Managers (Including Supervisors and Team Leaders)

4.8 Connexus believes that health and safety is a basic management function. All managers are responsible for: -

- Promoting a positive and proactive approach to health and safety.
- Communicating their personal commitment to health and safety by setting a good example.
- Implementing and communicating health and safety policies, standards, and procedures.
- Making sure that risk assessments for the work activities they control are carried out in consultation with their team members.
- Devising, implementing, and reviewing safe working procedures for all activities under their control.
- Monitoring health and safety performance by carrying out regular workplace inspections, spot checks and safety audits.
- Identifying their team members' health and safety training needs through risk assessment and task monitoring.
- Encouraging their team members to participate actively in health and safety.
- Making sure all work-related accidents, incidents and ill health are reported, investigated and any necessary remedial action taken.
- Deliver toolbox talks, health and safety topics and lessons learnt at team meetings.
- Risk assessments and safe methods of work are in place, reviewed and updated regularly and at least annually.
- Inducting colleagues including ensuring they are aware of policies, training, and lone working.
- Ensure their colleagues attend any training they have been booked onto.

Health and Safety Manager

4.9 The role of the Health and Safety Team is primarily to assist in the preparation, introduction of monitoring, reviewing, and auditing of the Health and Safety Policy and arrangements throughout the organisation.

4.10 The Management of Health and Safety at work Regulations 1999 require employers to seek health and safety advice from a "Competent Person". The Health and Safety Team is the "Competent Person" for Connexus. However, this does not absolve the Board, Chief Executive, Directors, Managers or employees from their health and safety responsibilities and duties.

- 4.11 In the event that a consultant is to be used, they will be issued with a formal agreed 'Service Level Arrangement' (SLA) for the duration or specific assignment.
- 4.12 The Health and Safety Team will ensure that the Colleagues are supported in delivering the requirements set out in the Health and Safety Policy including: -
- Being the "Competent Person" for Connexus.
 - Ensure that Connexus Health and Safety Policies are in line with legislative requirements and updated when necessary.
 - Advising on all health and safety and welfare matters.
 - Managing the reporting of any company RIDDORS.
 - Co-ordinate with fire evacuations where relevant.
 - Carry out visits where necessary on sites.
 - Oversee the usage and monitoring of the lone worker system.
 - The preparation and review of health and safety policies and procedures.
 - Undertaking investigations into incidents as necessary, with line managers, and arrange a common procedure for the reporting and investigation of accidents.
 - Advising on health and safety training and where appropriate other training which has an impact on health and safety procedures.
 - Maintain a system of consulting with all colleagues on health and safety matters, including the review of policies and procedures etc.
 - Reporting monthly to the business on accidents, incidents and near misses.
 - Attend departmental team meetings when specifically requested to provide expert guidance.
 - Deliver First Aid training.
 - Liaise with the Health and Safety Executive and other external bodies, with a direct interest in the health and safety of Connexus employees.

Colleagues

- 4.13 Every colleague is responsible for familiarising themselves with this policy and procedures that are associated with it.
- 4.14 Colleagues are to: -
- Take reasonable care of their own Health and Safety and that of others who may be affected by their acts or omissions at work.
 - Co-operate with others to fulfil our statutory duties.
 - Not misuse, wilfully damage, or interfere with tools or equipment provided in the interest of Health and Safety.
 - Comply with any toolbox talks or instructions regarding health and safety relayed to them.
 - Comply with the annual MOT, vehicle insurance and driver checking procedure.
 - Work safely and take reasonable care of themselves, colleagues, service users, tenants and the general public or any person who may be affected by our work activities.
 - Follow our safety procedures and instructions.
 - Report immediately all accident and incidents, including near misses to their line manager and the Health and Safety Team.
 - Advise their line manager of any, or potential hazards or failure of any Health and Safety procedure or system.

- Wear protective clothing were provided for use at work.
- Ensure attendance and participate in any training courses arranged for them.
- Actively participate during proactive initiatives.
- Where vehicles are provided follow the company driver handbook for vehicle safety.
- Use only tools, equipment, and plant they are trained to use and that which is appropriate to the task.

Contractors and Consultants

4.15 All contractors and consultants are responsible for familiarising themselves with this Policy and its associated procedures before carrying out any work for Connexus. A copy of Connexus Health and Safety Policy should be made available to all Contractors prior to them commencing works and they should confirm their acceptance with the requirements of 4.17.

4.16 The duties of contractors working for or on behalf of Connexus are: -

- Adhere to all applicable safety legislation, including where applicable, adherence to the requirements of the Construction, Design, Management (CDM) Regulations 2015.
- Provide when requested risk assessments and method statements for the work being undertaken.
- Provide Connexus with current employers' and public liability insurance certificates.
- Ensure that all employees working on the contract are trained, competent and where required certified or licenced to undertake the work the organisation have been contracted to do.
- Ensure all employees work safely and take reasonable care of themselves and others.
- Report and investigate any incidents including near misses that occur whilst working for Connexus.

5. Arrangements

Risk Assessment

5.1 Risk assessments of all identified hazards related to work are undertaken by our colleagues to eliminate these risks wherever possible. Where we cannot achieve this, we will implement suitable and sufficient control measures, based on these assessments, to reduce and manage, as far as is reasonably practicable, the risks to our colleagues and others.

5.2 Our risk assessments will be reviewed periodically, and new work activities risk assessed. We will list specific activities undertaken by our colleagues that are likely to carry significant risk. We will consider the risk from each of these activities and assess whether the control measures are adequate or whether further action is necessary.

5.3 The results of all significant and completed risk assessments will be made known to our colleagues and made available for their reference. Risk assessments are reviewed annually and updated as required. They are also reviewed whenever

circumstances have changed and following the investigation of any accidents or incidents that may occur.

Display Screen Equipment (DSE)

- 5.4 Connexus will provide standard equipment for colleagues who are users of display screen equipment, and all colleagues will complete an online assessment Questionnaire. Where these assessments identify issues, we will work with individual colleagues to resolve them or seek further advice. Eyesight tests and corrective spectacles for DSE work will be provided, if necessary, further information around this can be found on the Westfield Health website.

Lone Working

- 5.5 We employ colleagues who may, as part of their duties, must work alone for all or part of the working day. We will identify the risks to which these employees are exposed with the aim of eliminating these risks wherever reasonably practicable and reducing lone working activities to a minimum.
- 5.6 Where lone working does take place, we have identified and implemented systems (SoloProtect) to ensure that safe working and communication exists between the lone worker and their managers. Colleagues will be notified of our arrangements and the process put in place for the management of lone working activities. Colleagues with solo protect devices are encouraged to notify their managers of any concerns in this area so that we can review and improve our systems to make work operations safer.

Manual Handling

- 5.7 From time to time some colleagues must manually handle loads, in such cases we will assess the risks to their health from this type of work. Where possible we will eliminate the need for manual handling, by providing mechanical handling equipment or by introducing alternative measures. Where we are unable to do this, we will provide work related training, either online or face to face and will instruct employees not to attempt to lift items beyond their capabilities, in line with the task risk assessments.

Work at Height

- 5.8 We will ensure we protect the health, safety and welfare of our colleagues and others against the risks involved in working at height. Wherever possible we will avoid working at height. When it cannot be avoided, we will consider the risk to our employees ensuring that we train and instruct them to adequately plan, organise and carry out the work in a safe manner.

Young Persons

- 5.9 When we employ young people (under 18 years old) we will ensure a risk assessment is undertaken to ensure their health and safety at work. Young people are closely supervised whilst at work. Where children under sixteen take part in work experience programmes we will prepare a specific job description and risk assessment in agreement with the local Education Authority.

New and Expectant Mothers

- 5.10 Should any of our colleagues become a new or expectant mother we will take steps to ensure their continued health and safety at work. We will use a checklist to assess and guide the measures we need to consider and undertake 'one to one' discussion and seek formal agreement, wherever possible, with the expectant or new mother to reduce their exposure to work related hazards.

First Aid / Fire Wardens

- 5.11 We will provide suitable first aid / fire warden arrangements for our colleagues whilst in the workplace and visitors who may be affected by our activities. We will assess the reasonable level of first aid / fire warden provision required for Connexus and will make the appropriate arrangements.

Accident Reporting and Investigation

- 5.12 Colleagues will report all personal injury accidents and near miss incidents that happen in the course of their work.
- 5.13 All accidents are recorded and investigated through our online accident management system, and where possible additional control measures or a safer system of work are implemented. We understand our duties to report incidents under statutory regulations within the appropriate timescales and in line with our policy.

Training

- 5.14 We will ensure that all colleagues are given induction training, which tells them how to recognise hazards and risks and what they need to do to eliminate, reduce and avoid identified risks. We will also provide any additional training that may become necessary for their role. All training will be recorded on our inhouse LMP (Learning Management Platform).

Equipment

- 5.15 All equipment used on behalf of Connexus will be maintained in good condition, serviced to manufacturer's schedules and will be safe to use. Colleagues will be provided with suitable and sufficient information and training to enable them to use work equipment safely.
- 5.16 Colleagues provided with equipment will have the responsibility for ensuring that equipment used by them is maintained in good order. Any equipment defects or problems will be reported to their manager. It is Connexus policy that defective equipment will be withdrawn from use until repaired or replaced.

Hazardous Substances

- 5.17 Connexus assess all the chemicals and substances that we use. Where there are potential risks, we implement suitable control measures and provide clear instruction and information to the colleagues.

Personal Protective Equipment (PPE)

- 5.18 We will identify tasks and work to be undertaken by colleagues that will require the use of personal protective equipment (PPE). Where identified we will provide appropriate PPE, with storage facilities and replacements free of charge.
- 5.19 We will provide instructions and training for colleagues in the use of any PPE identified, as necessary. Colleagues are responsible for the day-to-day care of the PPE issued to them and will report any defects or damage and any request for replacements to their managers.

Contractors

- 5.20 All Contractors employed by Connexus will be expected comply with our health and safety procedures and to have their own arrangements for safe and healthy working.
- 5.21 Before a contractor is employed, we will ensure that they provide copies of their health and safety policy, insurances, risk assessments and training. We will assess their ability to work safely and without risk to our colleagues and visitors.
- 5.22 We recognise that as a client for construction work (including building maintenance, refurbishment, and demolition) we have specific responsibilities under the Construction (Design and Management) Regulations. We will ensure arrangements are in place to comply with our legal responsibilities by ensuring that a competent person takes responsibility for managing each specific CDM project.

Stress

- 5.23 We recognise that we have a duty to take action to reduce and where reasonably practicable to eliminate ill health which is caused by work related stress. Work-related stress will be managed through colleague and manager one to one sessions and managers will also support, monitor, and assess individuals. Colleagues and managers have access to support through Westfield Health and other external partners who will be able to provide the necessary support.

Driving

- 5.24 We will ensure that all colleagues who use a vehicle for work purposes either a vehicle supplied by Connexus, or their own vehicle provide their driving licence details. Also, colleagues will be asked to supply their vehicle insurance details if they are using their own vehicle as part of their role for Connexus.

Health Surveillance

- 5.25 In order to ensure that the risks to the health of our colleagues from work activities is controlled, Connexus will implement health surveillance to allow early identification of work-related ill health where appropriate, assist employees to return to, and remain in work following injury or ill health, collect and analyse and make available essential information as needed.

Monitoring

- 5.26 To ensure that health and safety performance continually improves, active and reactive monitoring of the controls of hazards (including asbestos) will be conducted through audits and inspections. This will include the following: statutory testing of equipment, evaluating data relating to accidents and near misses through reactive monitoring.

Premises management arrangements

- 5.27 We will ensure that our premises provide a safe place of work. We will maintain the means of access and egress, the fabric of the building, ensure good housekeeping and provide suitable welfare arrangements that include adequate hot and cold water, drinking water, sanitary conveniences, hand washing facilities, facilities for eating and food preparation and heat, light, and ventilation. The workplace is regularly cleaned, maintained, adequately lit, and ventilated.

Electricity

- 5.28 We will ensure that the fixed electrical systems used in our premises have been inspected, tested and certificated by a competent electrical contractor. Colleagues are instructed to make a visual safety check of portable electrical equipment each time that it is used and report defects for repair or replacement.

Gas

- 5.29 We will ensure gas appliances and supply pipes are subject to an annual safety check by a Gas Safe registered engineer. The main isolating controls will be clearly marked and accessible so that the supply can be quickly isolated in an emergency.

Asbestos

- 5.30 We have surveyed all areas of our premises under our control to establish the location and condition of asbestos containing materials. An asbestos management plan has been developed to manage the risk of exposure to asbestos. Where colleagues may be exposed to asbestos containing materials asbestos awareness training is carried out and refreshed. We check regularly to ensure the condition of any asbestos remaining in the premises is managed and all Contractors engaged to work on or in our properties are informed of its presence.

Legionella

- 5.31 We ensure that we comply with our duty to protect the health of our colleagues and others affected by our activities from the risk of infection by Legionella from our hot water and cooling systems. We assess the risk of infection and eliminate that risk or implement suitable control measures. We will ensure risk assessments are undertaken and these will be reviewed annually.

Waste

5.32 We will ensure we have suitable arrangements in place for the collection and disposal of waste.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'Kate Smith', with a long horizontal stroke extending to the right.

Kate Smith
Chief Executive

1st February 2024