

# Toolbox Talk

## Working at Height



It is a common misconception that you actually need to **climb** something for it to be considered as 'working at height'.

It is very easy to overlook this potentially fatal risk in the context of canal restoration.

Two main hazards to working at height:

- Falling from height and potentially causing harm to yourself.
- Releasing an object from height potentially causing harm to others.

Duties of site control (Camp Leader, Working Party Organiser, Local Site Co-ordinator):

- All work at height is properly planned and organised.
- The risks from work at height are assessed and appropriate work equipment used.
- The equipment for working at height is properly inspected and maintained Those involved in work at height are competent and supervised.

### Potential falls from height:

- Working at the top of an empty lock chamber.
- Working around openings, such as paddle chambers.
- Working on top of a bridge.
- Working alongside an open excavation such as bywash trench.
- Anything involving ladders, scaffold, trestles or 'hop-ups'.
- Climbing trees to assist with the felling of them.
- Standing in the skip of a dumper.



### How to work more safely:

First Considerations; can the risk be eliminated?

Questions to ask:

- When people are working in the lock chamber do people need to be working above them?
- Would a different piece of equipment eliminate the need to work at height?
- Could the lock chamber be filled before people start hauling things out?

Two solutions:

- A simple fence erected a safe distance away from the top of the lock chamber.
- Scaffold system and working platforms; guard rails must always be provided as well as toe-boards sufficient enough to stop people and materials falling.

**REMEMBER** if you are still unsure head to the Youtube and watch the Health and Safety <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Kwh8wGWLMrs>