

# GUIDANCE NOTES: PROJECT PLANS

*Guidance for Restoration Groups*



**INLAND  
WATERWAYS**  
ASSOCIATION



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# GUIDANCE NOTES: PROJECT PLANS

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## INTRODUCTION

The Construction (Design and Management) Regulations 2015 (CDM 2015) cover the management of health, safety and welfare when carrying out construction projects. Restoration projects are construction work and are included under these regulations.

Under CDM 2015, before setting up a construction site, the restoration group (Principal Contractor) must draw up a construction phase plan, which we call the Project Plan. The plan must set out the arrangements for securing health and safety during the period construction work takes place and include site rules and any specific measures.

For large projects the Health and Safety Executive (HSE) needs to be notified using the F10 notification. The criteria for notifying the HSE is; where construction work on a construction site is likely to last more than 30 days and have more than 20 workers working at the same time at any point on the project or exceed 500 person days of construction work.

**RESTORATION SECTOR:** Waterway restoration is the undertaking of highly ambitious projects using volunteers. The right planning ensures health, safety and welfare management is taken into account, allowing the work to be properly scheduled using the right tools, plant materials and equipment.



The Project Plan aligns the vision of the restoration group and provides a clear focus and objective for the restoration.

The Project Plan allows the restoration group to demonstrate their expertise to stakeholders and take on a leadership role in addition to managing the health and safety of their volunteers.

## WHAT IS A PROJECT PLAN?

A Project Plan is the written record of what you want to do, who you want to do it and how you want to do it safely. It defines the project deliverables and the milestones in achieving these goals. It identifies hazards on the site and how these will be controlled.

The Project Plan consists of three parts;

- the site specific Project Plan,
- method statements,
- risk assessments.

The Project Plan also includes an emergency plan and details of local hospitals.

Project Plans allow restoration groups to realistically attribute budgets and timescales and to oversee the overall quality of each phase. Most importantly, they help manage the risk to those involved in working on the site or overseeing the project and allow the inevitable changes on site to be managed.





## HOW TO PUT A PROJECT PLAN TOGETHER

Preparing a Project Plan can be daunting, but it need not be a large document. The size of the document should reflect the size and complexity of the project. A large project may need a number of contributors, so it is important to define and delegate the roles and responsibilities. It is important to nominate one person to oversee the Project Plan and ensure consistency across the whole.

**1** It is essential to carry out a site visit with other stakeholders and contributors. Following on from this, some form of desk study may be required and any other pre-works surveys identified. Permissions from landowners, local authorities or national bodies may be required.

**2** Start by defining the scope of the works; the site location and description, the set-up of the site including where the welfare facilities are located, how the site is accessed, any traffic management on the site, the tasks that are to be undertaken and the outcome of the project. Also include timescales for the project.

**3** Identify roles and responsibilities of key personnel on the site. This is where the roles in CDM 2015 need to be outlined and if the HSE needs to be notified about the project using a F10 notification. The F10 notification is an on-line form that is completed and submitted to the HSE.

**4** Establish an emergency plan and provide details of the nearest hospitals and other medical facilities. Detail how accidents and incidents are reported and acted upon.

**5** Next consider the site and any hazards that you can identify. Include in this utilities apparatus (electric, gas, water for example), ground conditions, environmental factors. The risk assessment that will be prepared will detail how the hazards will be controlled.

**6** Consider the plant, materials and tools that will be required for the work and consider how these will be sourced, stored and used throughout the project. Include any assessments for hazardous materials under Control of Substances Hazardous to Health (COSHH).



**7** Site rules need to be established. These will include what personal protective equipment (PPE) is required, any parking restrictions, driver authorisations and competency of volunteers.

**8** Finally carry out a peer review of the document and arrange for the document to be signed off.

Remember the Project Plan is a live document and needs to be communicated to your volunteers. It should be kept on site and any changes on site should be considered and the relevant part of the document updated. Part of the CDM 2015 is the need to consult volunteers on matters of health and safety. These discussions can form part of the Project Plan review and be included in later versions of the document.





## PREPARING A RISK ASSESSMENT

A risk assessment is about identifying sensible measures to control the risks in your work place. It is required by law. There are five stages to a risk assessment;

### 1. IDENTIFY THE HAZARDS

Think about the activities, processes or substances that could injure your volunteers or harm their health.

### 2. DECIDE WHO MIGHT BE HARMED AND HOW

For each hazard you need to be clear who might be harmed, eg. volunteers or members of the public.

### 3. EVALUATE THE RISKS AND DECIDE ON CONTROLS TO REDUCE THE RISK

How likely is the hazard to cause harm and what would the severity be? What can be done to reduce the risk? You do not need to eliminate the hazard.

### 4. RECORD YOUR SIGNIFICANT FINDINGS

Make a record of the hazards, how people may be harmed and what you have in place to control the risks. Any record should be simple and focused and communicated to everyone involved in the task.

### 5. REVIEW YOUR ASSESSMENT AND UPDATE IF NECESSARY

Review if there have been any significant changes or improvements. Consult your volunteers. Learn from any accidents or near misses.



## DEFINITIONS

**Hazard:** Anything that may cause harm, such as chemicals, electricity, working at height or near water, uneven ground, plant and tools.

**Risk:** The chance, high or low, that somebody could be harmed by these and other hazards, together with an indication of how serious the harm could be.





## PREPARING A METHOD STATEMENT (TASK PLAN)

A method statement is an in depth look at the tasks involved, breaking them down into individual elements. It is a detailed step-by-step methodology and details the plant, tools and materials to be used for the job. It includes the specification for the materials and how they should be used.

The method statement should be produced and read in conjunction with the risk assessment and will make reference to any COSHH assessments. If specialist plant, tools or equipment are required the method statement may include other specialist documentation, such as a lift plan when using a crane or other lifting equipment.

If the task is high risk, such as working at height on a scaffold, it will include a permit to work system.

The method statement will detail what PPE is required to carry out the task.



## **Q&A COMMON PROBLEMS AND DIFFICULTIES WITH PROJECT PLANS**

### **IT'S JUST A SMALL PROJECT, SURELY IT DOESN'T NEED A BIG PLAN?**

The Project Plan should reflect the size of the project. However even a small project needs a Project Plan to demonstrate that planning has been undertaken.

### **THERE ARE STILL TOO MANY UNKNOWNNS WITH MY PROJECT, SURELY THERE'S NO POINT IN STARTING TO WRITE THE PROJECT PLAN YET?**

The Project Plan should be started and all the current information included. The Project Plan is a live document and can be developed as the project grows and more information becomes available.

### **IT'S ALL GOING TO CHANGE ANYWAY, SO WHAT'S THE POINT?**

The Project Plan is the starting point and will develop with the project. Change is inevitable but having a plan in place allows the changes to be recorded.

### **WHAT IF SOMEONE CHALLENGES MY PROJECT PLAN AND I HAVE GOT SOMETHING WRONG?**

Construction projects are complex and there can be more than one way to carry something out. Discuss any queries and explain your thinking, it may be that someone else has seen something that you have missed or seen a different way to carry it out. It can be a good thing and shows that somebody has read what you have written!

### **IS IT REALLY WORTH DOING, NO-ONE WILL EVER READ IT?**

The Project Plan needs to be communicated to those carrying out the work because it is in their interest to carry out the work safely.

### **I DON'T HAVE TIME TO DO A PROJECT PLAN, I JUST WANT TO GET ON AND DO THE JOB!**

You have a responsibility of care to your volunteers. A written plan will demonstrate that you have considered the hazards and identified measures to control these to allow the work to be carried out safely.

### **I HAVE A LOT OF VOLUNTEERS WHO JUST WANT TO WORK. THEY ARE NOT INTERESTED IN A PROJECT PLAN, HOW CAN I CONVINCE THEM TO USE IT?**

Not everyone will want to read the whole Project Plan, but incorporate the appropriate task plans into your daily briefing and toolbox talks. This way, the Project Plan can be delivered in easily digestible chunks. It is everyone's responsibility to ensure the Project Plan is completed. We all have a vested interest in running a successful restoration project.

### **WHAT'S OUT THERE TO HELP ME WRITE A PROJECT PLAN?**

IWA's Restoration Hub has a number of templates and examples of Project Plans, risk assessments and method statements, and COSHH assessments, (see next page).







## FURTHER READING

IWA's 'How to write a Project Plan' video and more information is available at:  
[www.waterways.org.uk/project\\_planning](http://www.waterways.org.uk/project_planning)