



# healthwatch Hertfordshire

Healthwatch Hertfordshire  
Kings Court,  
London Road,  
Stevenage,  
Hertfordshire,  
SG1 2NG

Initial Health and Safety Audit 14/10/2015  
Current Version HSA008 25/05/23

Jo Dorman - **The AP Partnership Ltd** – H&S Advisor  
Natalie Stone - **Healthwatch** – Contact

**Organisational Profile:** Healthwatch Herefordshire is the consumer champion for health and social care services in Hertfordshire.

## **Executive Summary**

As part of the service to Healthwatch Hertfordshire **The AP Partnership Ltd** was instructed to conduct an audit of the safety management system in place and an inspection of the physical working environment found at the premises. The intention of the audit was to ascertain the suitability of the current health and safety arrangements and to advise on improvements that could be made. This Audit was carried out in accordance with current legislation, best practise and HSE guidance.

## **Limitations of the Audit**

In general, the structural features of the premises and those that were hidden from open view, e.g. ceiling voids, service ducts, etc., may not have been subject to detailed inspection during this visit. Healthwatch Hertfordshire have a duty for ensuring that appropriate inspection and maintenance of the structural aspects of the buildings, including the above, is carried out this may be in liaison with other relevant interested parties.

It is important to note that the assessment cannot guarantee to cover every aspect of all likely risks. The comments are based on observations and discussions undertaken with Healthwatch Hertfordshire at the time of the visit. Healthwatch Hertfordshire have the legal responsibility to ensure compliance is maintained regarding the requirements of health and safety legislation.

The business benefits of good management of health and safety are well documented and include reduced rates of employee absenteeism and staff turnover, fewer accidents, lessened threat of legal action, improved reputation amongst stakeholders and a more confident and healthier workforce.

References have been made to the following Regulations to ensure that the Audit report is concise but comprehensive.

1. Health and Safety at Work, etc. Act 1974
2. Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999
3. The Manual Handling Operations Regulations 1992
4. The Provision and Use of Work Equipment Regulations 1998
5. The Workplace (Health, Safety and Welfare) Regulations 1992
6. The Personal Protective Equipment at Work Regulations 1992
7. Control of Substances Hazardous to Health Regulations 2002
8. Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005
9. Electricity at Work Regulations 1989
10. Health Act 2006
11. Smoke-free Premises and Enforcement Regulations 2006
12. Health and Safety (Safety Signs and Signals) Regulations 1996
13. Health and Safety (First-Aid) Regulations 1981
14. Control of Asbestos Regulations 2012

## Priority scores and recommended time scales for action

To assist in the decision-making process recommended time scales for action have been assigned to enable management to differentiate between critical necessities and desirable requirements.

**1 – Urgent = Immediate action required:** Where a situation exists that is likely to involve contravention of legislation that could lead to fatal or major injury (i.e. the term used in RIDDOR), irreversible health effects and could result in the issuing of a Prohibition Notice or legal proceedings by the Enforcing Authority.

**2 – High = Action is required within 4 weeks:** Where a situation exists that is likely to involve contravention of legislation that could lead to serious injury or ill health, the issuing of an Improvement Notice, legal proceedings being instituted or communication from the Enforcing Authority indicating an area of high-risk non-compliance.

**3 – Medium = Action is required within 8 weeks:** Where a situation exists that may cause injury or reversible ill health and may be subject to the issuing of communication from the Enforcing Authority indicating an area of medium risk non-compliance with legislation.

**4 – Low = Action is required within 12 weeks:** Where a situation exists that although enforcement action is unlikely, accidents or property damage is possible. The recommendations are improvements, precautions or policy that will ensure conformance to health and safety legislation.

**5 - Recommendation:** Where a situation exists that may arguably meet legislative requirements but still maintains a risk to the business.


**6 – Satisfactory/Observation:** Where arrangements and procedures are in place, being implemented or have yet to be completed without additional risk to the business.

**Note:** To ensure full compliance with the requirements of current legislation, all identified tasks should be rectified at the earliest opportunity.

## **Company Information**

<b>Health and Safety Contacts: -</b>	Natalie Stone
<b>Based: -</b>	Stevenage
<b>Type of Business: -</b>	Consumer champion for health and social care services
<b>Building</b>	Leased small office inside a managed building
<b>Activities</b>	Office
<b>Coverage: -</b>	Hertfordshire
<b>Employees: -</b>	12 employed
<b>Sub-Contractors: -</b>	0
<b>Vehicles: -</b>	0
<b>Accreditations</b>	None
<b>HSE Prosecutions/Enforcement visits in the last 12 months</b>	None
<b>RIDDOR accidents in the last 12 months</b>	None
<b>Other</b>	Core hours 8:00-18:00 Monday - Friday

## Report Findings and Actions

No	Findings (include Best Practice)	Score	Corrective/Preventative/Improvement Action	Pic No.	Action Status For client or consultant use
1	<p><b><u>Documentation/ Management System</u></b></p> <p>Documents and records are held electronically and managed by Natalie. Documentation can be easily located.</p>	6	Continue with this good practice.		
2	<p><b><u>Occupational Health and Safety Policy</u></b></p> <p>HSPM is stored on the shared drive and is available for all employees. Last reviewed June 2022.</p> <p>The statement section has been signed by Geoff Brown, CEO. June 2022.</p>	6 6	Continue with this good practice. Continue with this good practice.		
3	<p><b><u>Risk Assessments</u></b></p> <p>Office risk assessment is in place.</p> <p>It was stated that risk assessments are carried out before each focus group by Chloe Carson, head of research and engagement.</p> <p>An events risk assessment is in place; however the format is an older version.</p> <p><b>Note:</b> The risk assessment should be reviewed upon any changes that may affect the continued suitability of the control measures as detailed, however, the risk assessments should be formally reviewed at least annually.</p>	6 6 4	Continue with this good practice. Continue with this good practice. <b>The AP Partnership Ltd</b> will review the risk assessment and update the format.		
4	<p><b><u>Safe Operating Procedures (SOPs)</u></b></p> <p>Due to the nature of the business, SOPs are not required.</p>	6	No further action.		

No	Findings (include Best Practice)	Score	Corrective/Preventative/Improvement Action	Pic No.	Action Status For client or consultant use
5	<p><b><u>Emergency Procedures</u></b></p> <p>Based on information provided we were able to confirm that emergency procedures are in place regarding fire safety, evacuation and first aid. The building is a serviced/managed building.</p>	6	Continue with this good practice.		
6	<p><b><u>Audit and Inspections</u></b></p> <p><i>The AP Partnership Ltd</i> undertake an annual audit and site safety inspections.</p> <p>The building is a serviced and managed building.</p>	6	Continue with this good practice.		
7	<p><b><u>Personnel and Communications</u></b></p> <p>The contact stated Health and Safety information is provided to employees and volunteers verbally and on the shared drive.</p> <p>Team meetings are held monthly and health and safety is part of the agenda. Any changes to documentation are flagged in the meetings. Meetings are minuted and the minutes are circulated via email and are also stored on the shared drive.</p> <p>Employers Liability Insurance certificate in place, provider AXA, expires 13/02/2024.</p> <p>It was observed: HSE law poster displayed.</p> <p>Employee handbook is in place, and a copy is displayed in the office.</p> <p>Quarterly one to one meetings are in place.</p>	6 6 6 6 6	Continue with this good practice. Continue with this good practice. Continue with this good practice. Continue with this good practice. Continue with this good practice.		


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8	<p><b><u>Competence, Training and Awareness</u></b></p> <p>It was stated that employee's competencies are checked upon initial employment.</p> <p>The contact stated that new and temporary staff induction procedures are in place.</p> <p>The contact stated that training records are being maintained. Stored in personnel and volunteer files.</p> <p>The contact stated that regular refresher training is carried out and the training issued is tailored to the individuals needs and the requirements of the job. Training needs are identified in one-to-one meetings.</p> <p>One to one meetings are carried out quarterly.</p>	6 6 6 6 6	Continue with this good practice. Continue with this good practice. Continue with this good practice. Continue with this good practice. Continue with this good practice.		
9	<p><b><u>Manual Handling</u></b></p> <p>Manual handling information is included in the induction and risk assessment processes. A manual handling toolbox talk was conducted November 2022 and has been documented.</p>	6	Continue with this good practice.		
10	<p><b><u>Accidents, Incidents and First Aid</u></b></p> <p>Based on information provided by the contact and observations made we were able to confirm that first aid procedures are in place.</p> <p>Adequately stocked first aid kits are in place.</p> <p>It was observed that the accident book is fully compliant with current data protection legislation.</p> <p>It was stated that no RIDDOR events have been reported during the last year.</p> <p>Defib machine located at reception.</p>	6 6 6 6 6	Continue with this good practice. Continue with this good practice. Continue with this good practice. Continue with his good practice. Continue with this good practice.		

No	Findings (include Best Practice)	Score	Corrective/Preventative/Improvement Action	Pic No.	Action Status For client or consultant use
11	<p><b><u>Fire Safety Procedures</u></b></p> <p>The contact stated that the landlord is responsible for maintaining the buildings Fire Risk Assessment.</p> <p>The contact stated that the landlord is responsible for maintaining the buildings fire detection and alarm system.</p> <p>Weekly fire alarm tests are done by building management.</p>	6  6  6	Continue with this good practice.  Continue with this good practice.  Continue with this good practice.		
12	<p><b><u>Control of Substances Hazardous to Health</u></b></p> <p>The contact stated that the landlord provides the cleaning services supplied by an external cleaning company, and as a result, Healthwatch Hertfordshire does not hold any COSHH related products.</p>	6	Continue with this good practice.		
13	<p><b><u>Noise</u></b></p> <p>As confirmed by the contact current business activities do not create any significant noise hazards.</p>	6	Ongoing monitoring.		
14	<p><b><u>Vibration</u></b></p> <p>As confirmed by the contact current business activities do not create any vibration hazards.</p>	6	Ongoing monitoring.		
15	<p><b><u>Display Screen Equipment</u></b></p> <p>Records indicate that DSE self-assessments were conducted 2023. The assessments also covered those staff working from home.</p>	6	<p>Continue with this good practice.</p> <p><b>Note:</b> An assessment should be completed when a new workstation is set up, when a new user starts work, or when a substantial change is made to an existing workstation (or the way it is used) or if there is any other reason to suspect they may no longer be valid - for example, if users report of experiencing discomfort.</p>		



No	Findings (include Best Practice)	Score	Corrective/Preventative/Improvement Action	Pic No.	Action Status For client or consultant use
16	<p><b><u>Personal Protective Equipment</u></b></p> <p>The contact confirmed that current business activities do not require the use of specific PPE.</p>	6	No further action.		
17	<p><b><u>Health Surveillance and Wellbeing Support</u></b></p> <p>The contact stated that current business activities do not require health surveillance.</p> <p>The contact stated that employees can initially discuss any personal wellbeing concerns with a member of the management team.</p> <p>The company have a subscription to Workplace Options. Accounts are given to employees and this can be accessed at any time on a confidential basis. There is access to counselling and advice of an extensive range.</p> <p>Lone working policy is in place.</p>	6 6 6 6	Continue with this good practice. Continue with this good practice. Continue with this good practice. Continue with this good practice.		
18	<p><b><u>Electrical Equipment and Systems</u></b></p> <p>The contact stated that the landlord is responsible for maintaining the buildings fixed electrical systems.</p> <p>No concerns were identified or reported regarding the fixed systems within the client's office.</p>	6 6	Continue with this good practice. Continue with this good practice.		
19	<p><b><u>Portable Appliance Testing</u></b></p> <p>Records seen indicate that PAT was last carried out March 2023 by PH Electrical as is part of a 2 yearly program.</p>	6	Continue with this good practice.		

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20	<b><u>Control of Contractors &amp; Visitors</u></b>				
	Procedures are detailed in the HSPM.	6	Continue with this good practice.		
	Visitors to the office are required to wait in the building common reception where they are collected by a host.	6	Continue with this good practice.		
21	<b><u>Equipment, Machinery, Plant</u></b>				
	The offices have standard equipment such as computers, printers, and photocopiers. Equipment viewed appears well maintained.	6	Continue with this good practice.		
22	<b><u>Working at Height inc. scaffolds, ladders, MEWPS, portable platforms</u></b>				
	It was stated that working at height is not done and no ladders/stepladders are used.	6	Ongoing monitoring.		
23	<b><u>Lifting Equipment</u></b>				
	The current business activities do not require the use of specific lifting equipment.	6	No further action.		
24	<b><u>Local exhaust ventilation (LEV)</u></b>				
	The current business activities do not require the use of LEV.	6	No further action.		
25	<b><u>Racking and Shelving</u></b>				
	No racking or shelving in situ.	6	No further action.		
26	<b><u>Transport and Vehicles</u></b>				
	The contact stated that employees use their own vehicles for company business.	6	Continue with this good practice.		
	It was stated that driving licences are checked annually and volunteers are required to sign to state that they hold current insurance, tax and MOT.	6	Continue with this good practice.		

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27	<b><u>Asbestos Containing Materials (ACM)</u></b> The contact stated that the landlord confirmed that the building is post 2000 and does not contain any Asbestos Containing Materials.	6	No further action.		
28	<b><u>Legionella</u></b> Due to the age of the building, the nature of the business and the type of water systems the risk of legionella is low. The contact stated that the landlord has responsibility for maintain the water systems.	5	Confirm with the landlord that water systems are tested.		
29	<b><u>Buildings, Roads, Paths</u></b> It was observed that the building, roadways, paths and parking areas are well maintained.	6	Continue with this good practice.		
30	<b><u>Safety and Security</u></b> Manned reception monitored intruder detection and CCTV is in place managed by the landlord.	6	Continue with this good practice.		
31	<b><u>Slips Trips, Falls</u></b> No concerns identified or reported during the visit.	6	Continue with this good practice.		
32	<b><u>Workplace Environment</u></b> It was observed: The internal layout of the offices was good for current activities.  It was observed: Temperature levels within the premises were assessed as satisfactory for current business activities.	6  6	Continue with this good practice.  Continue with this good practice.		

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33	<b><u>Workplace Lighting</u></b> It was observed: The accommodation lighting level within the premises was assessed as good for current business activities. Lighting is controlled by the building management,	6	Continue with this good practice.		
34	<b><u>Workplace Cleanliness</u></b> At the time of the visit the overall cleanliness within the premises was good.	6	Continue with this good practice.		
35	<b><u>Signage</u></b> Current signage was assessed as good.	6	Continue with this good practice.		
36	<b><u>Neighbour Communication</u></b> Healthwatch lease/share an office in a managed building. No concerns were identified or reported regarding the respective neighbouring businesses.	6	Continue with this good practice.		
37	<b><u>Welfare Facilities</u></b> Toilet and rest facilities are satisfactory and controlled by the building management.	6	Continue with this good practice.		
38	<b><u>Heating, Ventilation, Air Conditioning</u></b> The contact stated that the landlord is responsible for the provision and maintenance of the heating and ventilation system.	6	No further action.		
39	<b><u>Pressure Systems and Pressurised Gasses</u></b> Current business activities do not require the use of pressure systems of gases.	6	No further action.		
40	<b><u>Waste Management</u></b> Waste management procedures are in place by the building management.	6	Continue with this good practice.		

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41	<p><b>Mental Health and Wellbeing</b></p> <p>It was stated that there is a mental health first aider in the company, certification shows training was completed Nov-2022.</p> <p>An EAP is in place with Health Assured and an app is available for all employees.</p> <p>Mental health and stress policy in place.</p> <p>Quarterly one to one meetings in place.</p>	6	Continue with this good practice.		

Safety Advisor	Advisor Signature	Date	Next visit scheduled for	Acknowledged by Client Contact	Client Contact Signature
Jo Dorman	<i>Jo Dorman</i>	25/05/23			