

BUXHALL PARISH COUNCIL

PAT TESTING POLICY

Document Control		
Adopted date:	13 March 2023	Minute ref: 130323/45
Next review date:	March 2024	

Introduction

This PAT (Portable Appliance Testing) Policy and Procedural Guidance is an Appendix to the Health & Safety Policy.

Policy

It is a guide to both the legal implications and to the technical requirements.

The Electricity at Work Regulations place a legal responsibility on employers, employees and self-employed persons to comply with the provisions of the regulations and take reasonably practicable steps to ensure that no danger results from the use of such equipment.

This in effect requires the implementation of a systematic and regular programme of maintenance, inspection and testing. The Health & Safety at Work Act 1974 places such an obligation in the following circumstances:

- Where appliances are used by employees
- Where the public may use appliances in establishments such as hospitals, schools, hotels, shops, care homes, village halls
- Where appliances are supplied or hired
- Where appliances are repaired or serviced

The level of inspection and testing required is dependent upon the risk of the appliance becoming faulty, which is in turn dependent upon the type of appliance, the nature of its use and the environment in which it is used. The Institution of Electrical Engineers publishes the "Code of Practice for In-service Inspection and Testing of Electrical Equipment". This guide forms the basis for portable appliance testing in the UK.

Procedure

Buxhall Parish Council will be taking the following actions to ensure all persons are protected as far as reasonably practicable by following this policy/procedure.

All electrical equipment that is portable and moveable on BPC premises or provided for employees use in their work for BPC will be tested annually. The person doing testing work needs to be competent to do it.

Definition of Portable and Moveable Equipment

A portable or moveable electric appliance is any item that can be moved, either connected to or disconnected from an electrical supply. Portable or movable items generally have a cable and plug. Portable and moveable items include the following:

- Electrical equipment that can be easily moved around, such as kettles, vacuum cleaners, floor polishers, portable heaters, fans, desk lamps, radios, PC's and laptops, projectors, small

appliances such as irons, hair dryers and kitchen equipment including food mixers, toasters, etc;

- Larger items that could be moved (but only rarely), eg. Water chillers, fridges, microwaves, photocopiers, electric cookers, desktop computers etc;
- Mobile phone and other battery-operated equipment that is plugged into the mains (but the phones themselves and any other battery-operated equipment would not be included); and extension leads, multi-way adaptors and connections leads;
- Hand-held items that do not have a plug but have been wired in (or fixed) are still considered to be portable appliances, but large electrical items, such as water boilers that are wired in, are not portable appliances as they are not designed to be moved and would come under the scope of fixed installation maintenance.

Ensuring the safety of Portable Electrical Equipment

The following standards reflect current guidance, but the inspection and testing regimes should be reviewed periodically to see whether inspection and/or testing intervals could be decreased or should be increased. Damaged or faulty equipment that is identified by these inspection and testing regimes will be removed from use immediately either repaired by a competent person or disposed of at a recycling centre to prevent further use.

User Checks

With the equipment disconnected, users of equipment should carry out checks before most electrical equipment is used. Individuals should look for:

- Damage to the lead including fraying, cuts or heavy scuffing
- Damage to the plug – to the cover, bent pins
- Tape applied to the lead to join leads together
- Coloured wires visible where the cable joins the plug (the cable is not being gripped where it enters the plug)
- Damage to the outer cover of the equipment itself, including loose parts or screws
- Signs of overheating, such as burn marks or staining on the plug, cable or piece of equipment
- Equipment that has been used or stored in unsuitable conditions, such as wet or dusty environments or where water spills are possible, and
- Cables trapped under furniture

Visual Inspections

All portable equipment should be visually inspected at intervals between six months and three years, depending on the type of equipment.

A visual inspection does not need to be carried out by an electrician, but the person carrying it out needs to know what to look for and, through training, have sufficient knowledge to avoid danger to themselves and others. Factors to be considered include:

- The electrical equipment is being used in accordance with the manufacturer's instructions;
- The equipment is suitable for the job;
- Whether there has been any change in circumstance;
- A user has reported any issues.

Portable Appliance Test (PAT)

The person carrying out PAT testing works needs to be competent to do it. When undertaking combined inspection and testing, a greater level of knowledge and experience is needed, and the person will need:

- The right equipment to do the tests
- The ability to use this equipment properly
- The ability to make visual checks and risk assessments
- The ability to properly understand and report on the test results
- The ability to communicate decommissioning or repair needs of equipment to the user(s) and Grounds Manager
- The ability to maintain the relevant documentation.

PAT testing records are retained by the Council's Clerk.