Hive Bradford

Health & Safety – Working at Height procedures

Last adopted: April 2026	Review: 1 year	Review due: April 2027

General arrangements and procedures

Working at Height

All staff, volunteers and service users should follow HSE guidelines for working at height, available at: hse.gov.uk/work-at-height/, from which these procedures are adapted.

To reduce the risk of working at height injuries, Hive will:

- avoid, as far as is reasonably practicable, the need for working at height
- organise storage to ensure that heavier and more frequently accessed items do not require working at height, and only lighter and less frequently accessed items are stored at height
- assess the risk of injury from working at height that can't be avoided, through risk assessing all activities
- reduce the risk of injury from working at height so far as is reasonably practicable, including through the use of collective protection (eg. guardrails, tower scaffolding, scissor lifts)
- ensure that appropriate working at height guidance is available to all individuals working at height
- provide any necessary personal protection equipment for working at height
- provide appropriate training in working at height where necessary, through inductions for staff, volunteers and service users.

Any working at height risk assessments, guidelines, notices and safety information will be reviewed at least annually.

All staff, volunteers and service users must:

- follow appropriate processes for working at height laid down for their safety
- always use a suitable ladder or stepladder when working at height, even if only briefly, and not stand on furniture or other items not designed as work platforms
- make proper use of equipment provided for their safety
- cooperate with Hive on all health and safety matters
- inform Hive if they identify working at height activities not being appropriately managed
- take care to ensure that their activities do not put others at risk.

Safe use of ladders

Any working from height should be risk assessed, and where the associated risks justify it, equipment offering a higher level of fall protection (eg. a scaffolding tower or scissor lift) should be used.

Where the activity is assessed as being low risk and of short duration (typically less than 30 minutes), or it is not possible to use other equipment because of the available space, a ladder should be used.

Ladders should only be used where they can be used safely (ie. level and stable). Where practicable they should also be secured.

Anybody using a ladder must be competent, or working under the supervision of a competent person. Competence can be demonstrated through a combination of training, practical and theoretical knowledge, and experience.

Checking a ladder is safe (pre-use)

The manufacturer's user instructions should be available for any ladder being used.

Users must carry out a pre-use check before using a ladder, or after something has changed (eg. a ladder has been dropped, or moved from a dirty to a clean area). The check should include:

- **stiles**: make sure they are not bent or damaged
- **feet**: all present, not worn or damaged, and clean
- **rungs, steps or treads, platform** (stepladder): clean, not bent or worn or missing or loose
- **locking mechanism** (if present): working properly, fully engaged, and not bent or worn or damaged

If any of the these defects are present, the ladder must not be used.

A ladder safety checklist will be displayed next to any ladder storage area.

Using a ladder

Hive only has stepladders, and not leaning / telescopic / combination ladders.

When using a stepladder:

- ensure that the ladders is on a firm, level surface, with all four feet in contact with the ground, and that any locking devices are engaged
- where possible, position the ladder to face the activity (as opposed to side on), and avoid activities which impose a side loading on the ladder unless the ladder is secured
- ensure that the ladder will not be struck by passers-by, doors or vehicles, using a cordon, barriers or signage where necessary
- only carry light materials or tools
- avoid leaning or and do not overreach
- do not stand on the top platform or two steps below it unless there is a suitable handhold
- maintain three points of contact with the ladder (eg. two feet and a hand, or two feet and the body)
- do not climb from the ladder onto another surface.