

Swaffham Town Council**SHARPS POLICY**

This policy should be read in conjunction with: Swaffham Town Council's Health & Safety Policy.

Scope

This policy covers the procedure for dealing with any sharps found in grounds/buildings owned or managed by Swaffham Town Council.

Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to minimise any risk from the handling, removal and safe disposal of, sharps.

Definition

For the purpose of this policy, sharps are: needles, syringes, razors, blades, sharp-edged instruments, broken glassware or any other item which may be contaminated by blood or body fluids and which may cause laceration or puncture wounds.

SHARPS are potentially dangerous because:

- they may cause lacerating/penetrating injuries
- there is a risk that injuries caused by sharps which are contaminated with blood or other body fluids may transmit blood-borne infection e.g. HIV, Hepatitis B and Hepatitis C.

Discovery of Sharp(s)

Upon discovery of any sharp a member of staff should:

- Ensure that the area around the sharp is not accessible to others. This could be achieved by
 - a) locking doors to the room,
 - b) asking another person to stand guard with the object,
 - c) place another object so that it prevents access to the sharp (i.e. place a bucket over it).
- Collect the approved sharps collection tool (forceps etc. and protective latex gloves and take them to the site of the sharp.
- Pick up the sharp using a collection tool/gloved hand and place it directly into a sharps box without passing it from hand to hand.
- Check the surrounding area for any other sharps and dispose of them in a similar manner.
- Take the sharps box back to its' original location and dispose into Sharps bin at rear of Public Toilets.
- Any sharps found, once disposed off correctly, must be reported to the office and entered in the log file.

Discovery by a Third Party

- If a sharp is discovered by a service user, visitor or passer-by they should be asked if they have been injured by the sharp or if they have touched it.
- If they have touched it, their hands should be washed normally with soap and water or with the alcohol hand rub.
- If there has been an injury, the sharps injury protocol (below) should be followed.

Maintaining the sharps bin

The sharps bin should be kept in a place which prevents injury to staff, service users, volunteers and visitors, but is easy to reach when required (currently at the rear of the Public Toilets).

If the sharps bin is $\frac{3}{4}$ full:

- The bin should be closed fully to seal it.
- Full sharps bins are emptied by a contractor for Breckland Council, who should be notified if full.
- A new sharp bin if required will be provided by a contractor for Breckland Council.

Sharps Injury Protocol

Following injury from a sharp, the following procedure must be followed:

- Ensure that the sharp is disposed of in a safe manner to prevent further injury. If the injury is caused by a needle, take the needle and syringe with you if you need to visit a hospital.
- Encourage bleeding by squeezing site of wound, **DO NOT** suck.
- Wash the wound under running water for at least 5 minutes. Do not scrub.
- Irrigate contaminated mucous membranes with water.
- Cover the wound with a dressing.
- Inform the Town Clerk / Deputy Clerk or Line Manager immediately.
- Advice will be sought immediately about what to do next/what treatment may be necessary from accident and emergency at the Queen Elizabeth Hospital
- Ensure an accident/incident form is completed by the Town Clerk / Deputy Clerk or Line Manager, located in the general office of the Town Hall.

This policy will be reviewed annually.