

Holywell-cum-Needingworth Parish Council

PORTABLE APPLIANCE INSPECTION AND TEST POLICY

1. Introduction

The Health and Safety at Work etc. Act 1974 and Electricity at Work Regulations 1989 require all electrical equipment, plant and machinery to be maintained in a safe condition without risk to the safety of operators and others, e.g. visitors or members of the public.

This policy provides details on how the parish council will ensure that electrical apparatus remains safe through periodic inspection and testing.

Portable electrical appliances are defined as electrical appliances which can easily be connected to and removed from an electrical supply. Within the parish council this will include electrical office equipment (e.g. computer screens, processing units, printers, trailing sockets, photocopiers, shredders, charger units, etc.) Millfields equipment (e.g. kettles, cleaners, microwaves, etc.) or basically anything with a plug for connection to a mains supply.

2. Aims

The aim of this policy is to ensure that items of portable electrical equipment remain safe without risk of fire or electric shock. It aims to ensure a regular regime of inspection, testing, maintenance, repair and record keeping is enforced.

3. Application

This section applies to all premises, all portable electrical apparatus therein, and all employees of Holywell-cum-Needingworth Parish Council.

4. Legal and other references

Health and Safety at Work etc. Act 1974

Electricity at Work Regulations 1989

And associated codes of practice/standards and guidance notes.

5. Policy details

In order to ensure that portable electrical equipment remains intrinsically safe, Inspections and tests will be carried out as part of a Portable Appliance Testing Program.

These tests will be carried out at appropriate periods by a competent person taking account of risk assessment and guidance produced by regulatory authorities (HSE).

Due to the low risk of the equipment in use within the Parish Council it has not been deemed necessary to have any equipment tested by a fully qualified electrician but a PAT replacement program will be initiated.

In addition to the periodic visual inspections that will be carried out locally by employees, the council will carry out checks on accordance with the attached schedule. (Appendix 1)

6. Duties and responsibilities

1.1 The Parish Council is responsible for:

- ensuring that regular visual inspections of portable electrical apparatus are carried out by staff under their control
- ensuring that any faulty electrical apparatus is removed from use pending its repair or replacement.

1.2 Employees

All employees generally are responsible for:

- Visually inspecting portable electrical appliances for damage or signs of damage (frayed or damaged cables, burn marks on cables or plugs, coloured wiring visible or loose, etc.)
- Reporting any damaged equipment to the Clerk immediately
- Removing any damaged equipment from use until it has been repaired and declared safe to use by a competent person (qualified electrician).

7. Maintenance and repair of portable electrical apparatus

Any item which cannot be readily repaired will be taken out of service pending its repair. Where it cannot be economically repaired it will be discarded and a replacement provided.

All staff will visually inspect portable electrical apparatus before and after use and/or at regular intervals.

Adopted at meeting of Holywell-cum-Needlingworth Parish Council held on 2nd June 2009.

Last Reviewed 6th January 2026

Signed.....

Miss J Bowd

Parish Clerk

Appendix 1

Offices and other low-risk environments only – suggested initial intervals:

Equipment/Environment	User Checks	Formal Visual Inspection	Combined Inspection Testing or replacement
Battery operated: (less than 20 volts)	No	No	No
Extra low voltage: (less than 50 volts AC) e.g. telephone equipment, low voltage desk lights	No	No	No
Information technology: e.g. desktop computers, VDU screens	No	Yes, 2-4 years	No if double insulated – otherwise up to 5 years
Photocopiers, fax machines: NOT hand-held. Rarely moved.	No	Yes, 2-4 years	No if double insulated – otherwise up to 5 years
Double insulated equipment: NOT hand-held. Moved occasionally, e.g. fans, table lamps, slide projectors.	No	Yes, 2-4 years	No
Double insulated equipment: HAND-HELD e.g. some floor cleaners	Yes	Yes, 6 months – 1 year	No
Earthed equipment (Class 1): e.g. electric kettles, some floor cleaners.	Yes	Yes, 6 months – 1 year	Yes, 1-2 years
Cables (leads) and plugs connected to the above. Extension leads (mains voltage).	Yes	Yes, 6 months – 4 years depending on type of equipments it is connected to.	Yes, 1-5 years depending on the type of equipment it is connected to.