

## CAMPSITE HEALTH AND SAFETY AUDIT

### SWIMMING POOL

- Is the pool surrounded by a fence in good condition?
- Is there a barrier to stop people entering the pool when closed?
- Are warning signs concerning unaccompanied children displayed?
- Does the footpath or shower at the pool entrance have a non-slip surface?
- Are depth markings clearly visible and legible? Are any sudden changes in depths clearly marked? Are special precautions taken in deep water, e.g. ladders, ledges?
- Are "No Diving" signs displayed if water is less than 1.5 metres?
- Are there clear signs stating whether the pool is supervised or not? And whether attendant trained as a lifeguard or in first aid?
- Is the children's pool located away from deep water or divided from it by a barrier?
- Is the pool surround flat, e.g. tiles smooth and non slip? Are any bridges/ramps non-slip?
- Are any underwater constructions, e.g. steps, fountain spouts clearly visible from the surface?
- Are the pool regulations clearly displayed?
- Is there safety and rescue apparatus readily available?
- Is the water clear enough to identify an object on the bottom.
- Are there clear safety instructions for use of any diving boards/slides? Is use supervised?
- Are steps/rungs evenly spaced and in good repair and both steps and boards non-slip?
- Is there a minimum age/height limit for using boards/slides?
- Is the slide flume smooth with no raised edges, gaps or loose screws?
- Is there a sufficient gap between parallel slides to ensure limbs cannot become trapped?

### CHILDREN'S PLAY AREAS

- Does the play area have a suitable soft surface, e.g. sand, bark, pea shingle, synthetic matting?
- Is the area clean and free from litter/dog excrement?
- Is all play equipment firmly fixed to the ground.
- Are swings in good repair, e.g. ropes, chains, closed loop at top, no split seats?
- Are slides in good repair, e.g. smooth surface, no raised edges, secure steps and handrails?
- Are roundabouts in good repair, e.g. no gaps where fingers, limbs could be trapped?
- Are see-saws stable with secure seats and hand grips? Are all sections of climbing frames secure?
- Is the equipment well-maintained and free from rust?
- Is the surrounding area safe, e.g. no unprotected drops/roads? Is there a surrounding fence/gates?
- Is there sufficient space around moving equipment, e.g. swings, for children to pass by safely?
- Is all equipment other than swings below 2.5 m in height?
- Are there signs recommending parents to supervise their children?

### FIRE PRECAUTIONS

- Does the site have a main fire hydrant?
- Are extinguishers, hoses, fire buckets, blankets available around the site and in main public buildings?
- Is their location clearly visible or well-indicated?
- Are all extinguishers unlocked and easily accessible? If locked is there a sign indicating where the keys are kept?
- Are extinguishers certified for the whole of the coming season?
- Are smoke detectors/fire alarms available in relevant public buildings, e.g. disco, restaurant, kitchen.
- Are main exits from relevant buildings clearly indicated and visible in dim light?
- Are all emergency exits unlocked and unobstructed at all times?
- Is there an agreed fire assembly point?
- Are site staff aware of the fire drill procedure?
- Are the fire notices clearly visible?
- Are undergrowth/hedges regularly cut back?

## **ELECTRICITY**

- Are the campsite electric boxes watertight?
- Are the campsite electric boxes and water points more than 2 metres apart?
- Are electric boxes locked? Who has the keys?
- Are all electric box cables less than 2.5 metres?
- Is all electrical cable installed without crossing paths/roads?

## **LIGHTING**

- Are the sanitation blocks lit at night?
- Are site paths/roads sufficiently lit at night to avoid obstacles/find one's way?
- Are all lights in working order?

## **SPEED LIMITS**

- Are there clear signs indicating the site speed limit? What is it?
- Do site staff try to enforce speed limits.
- Are there speed ramps present? Are they positioned throughout the site?
- Is there a procedure for opening the barrier at night in case of emergency ?

## **SITE ACTIVITIES**

- Are bicycles for hire in safe condition, e.g. brakes, saddles, handlebars?
- Is horse-riding supervised? Are riding hats provided?
- Are water sports supervised? Are pedaloes/canoes etc. in good condition?
- Are life-jackets provided? Is a rescue boat available where applicable?
- Is archery supervised? Is it located in a safe area of the site?

## **GENERAL**

- Are emergency numbers displayed when the site office is closed? Where?
- Except for swimming pools is access to water close to pitches or public areas prevented by fencing?
- Is life saving equipment available near lakes, ponds and rivers?
- Are the gaps between railings on any public balconies, stairways or terraces less than 10 cm?
- Is plate glass clearly visible by use of stickers, etc?
- Are all maintenance equipment, building materials, cleaning products and pool chemicals stored out of clients reach?
- Are the floors in wash blocks and toilet blocks non-slip?
- Is there a well stocked first aid kit available?
- Are gas bottles/cylinders stored in secure compound away from public areas?
- Are any electrical appliances provided in good condition, e.g. washing machines, dryers, irons?

Based on the Campsite Safety Audit prepared by  
**The Association of British Tour Operators to France**

## CAMPSITE ELECTRICAL CONNECTIONS

### Aide-memoire for Site Inspectors

Essentially there are THREE separate issues:

- the sites' supply
- the caravans' wiring, charging and socket system
- the caravanners' appliances

As Site Inspectors we can really only try to address the question of the Site Supply, as we have no knowledge, or meaningful influence, over either the caravans or the appliances. However, Inspectors may be interested to know a little more about some of the problems, and the reasons for these, that are commonly encountered in terms of caravans and appliances.

Firstly the aspect we should be mainly concerned with, namely the Sites' own electrical supply to its pitches etc. The most important consideration must be the use of common sense - *do the electricity boxes/posts or whatever look safe in terms of maintenance, or are they showing serious signs of wear and/or damage? For example, broken sockets, loose wires, wobbly boxes, etc.*

If the units are in reasonably good condition, the next question is are they seriously overloaded in terms of the number of cables leading from them. I have seen boxes designed to provide four outlets (i.e. with four actual sockets) with around a dozen 'vehicles' actually connected to them by dint of using multiple adapters. This is potentially lethal as the adapters often cause the pins to work out from the socket, particularly where long leads are used, and where traffic drives over these leads. Usually, of course, these problems arise as a result of misuse by the campers themselves, but site operators have been known to hand out adapters themselves, and in any case they ought to be checking that their electrical connections are not being misused and/or overloaded in this way.

If you encounter either of the above problems they should be reported to the site operator, (who will hopefully do something about it!) and noted on your inspection form as a safety issue.

I don't want to go too deeply into the question of the actual supply of electricity at sites as it is actually a quite complex issue, which is well dealt with in John Wickersham's Motor Caravan Manual. With John's permission I am attaching a copy of the relevant chapter, along with other extracted information which you may (or may not) find interesting/useful.

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So far as inspecting sites is concerned, we need to know both the **voltage** and the **amperage** available - in the UK voltage will normally be a (nominal) 240V, at a frequency of 50 Hertz, but in the rest of Europe it is normally 220-230V, again at 50 Hertz. This voltage variation is not important, but bear in mind that these are nominal ratings, and *if a supply is being heavily used the voltage can drop to as little as 190V which can play havoc with modern battery charging systems and with equipment such as computers.*

Fluctuations in demand not only cause fluctuations in terms of the Voltage, but also in terms of the frequency which again can lead to problems with equipment (eg computers) which use micro-processors.

With regard to the amperage, without going too far into the physics, and with apologies to those of you who understand the basics of electricity, it may be useful if I go briefly over the principles of electrical supply as they affect the user.

Essentially one can look at electricity in similar terms to the supply of water!

The **Voltage** is essentially the same as the PRESSURE in a water supply, whereas the **Amperage** is the QUANTITY of electricity (or water if you like). It is the product of these two factors which determines the actual POWER AVAILABLE.

Thus a 240 volt supply at 10Amps will produce a maximum power output of  $240 \times 10 = 2400$  Watts, sufficient to run a 2 Kilowatt (2000 Watts) electric fire and a few 60 Watt light bulbs, but NOT enough to operate a 3Kw domestic electric kettle.

One other aspect which we might consider is the question of **inadequate cables**, because the weight (normally the thickness) of the cable from the supply to the caravan can be critical - this is because the RESISTANCE of a thin light cable is much higher than that of a nice thick cable - using the analogy of the water supply it is obvious that a thin narrow water pipe offers much more resistance than a wide one. Given that we have a fixed voltage (i.e. pressure) then the actual amperage (i.e. the quantity of electricity) available will vary according to the thickness (i.e. resistance) of the cable used, and as the power available depends on both the voltage and the amperage. A thin cable will seriously inhibit the potential to run appliances requiring high power such as domestic kettles, irons, electric fires etc, apart from which use of too light a cable is fundamentally dangerous. (In water terms if you try to push too much water at high pressure through a narrow pipe it may burst the pipe. Your thin electric cable may similarly burst, but into flames.)

Much is written about the subject of **Polarity** and particularly about '**reversed polarity**' mainly on continental sites (essentially all we mean by polarity is which way round the socket is wired). Although many of us carry a 'polarity tester' it is no good thinking that this is any use for checking whether a site has correct polarity connections unless you are prepared to check every single electric box on the site! The reason is that on the continent 'polarity' doesn't matter as all their sockets and appliances have "di-pole" switching, so their electricians will merrily wire up their electric boxes with no concern as to which way round the wires go. Only the Brits (mainly with pre-1993 'vans) encounter a problem because these older vans were normally fitted with cheap single-pole switches. The danger then for those Brits is that they can use an appliance, (even if the polarity is reversed it will work), but when it's switched off although it will stop working it will still be live, and potentially lethal. The reason is that the single pole switch has switched off the current on the RETURN (negative) side of the appliance, not on the incoming live side.

## LEGISLATION, REGULATIONS AND STANDARDS IN THE UNITED KINGDOM

### Aide-memoire for Site Inspectors

Just as there are clubs for caravanners there are groupings of site owners. The major two are:

- the British Holiday and Parks Homes Association (BH&HPA)
- the National Caravan Council (NCC).

To help their members in designing and developing their parks the BH&HPA has a very comprehensive Members' Handbook which advises and guides members through all the legislation involved in setting up a site and running it. It deals with all the Technical aspects and gives details of the 'Model Standards' (see below). We should therefore be able to assume that members of the BH&HPA (most site owners are members and the logo is usually prominently displayed at the site entrance) will have developed their site in line with the Model Standards and have all the necessary certificates etc. displayed in reception.



The section below briefly identifies the Legislation, Regulations and Standards to be met in setting up and running a Caravan Site in the UK.

#### CARAVAN SITES & CONTROL OF DEVELOPMENT ACT 1960

The Act necessitates requiring from the Local Authority the following to enable a campsite to be established and operated.

- Planning Consent - Planning Department
- Site License - Environmental Health Department

To assist local authorities in deciding on the site license conditions to impose for caravans, the Department of Environment has issued a number of Circulars and 'Model Standards' that represent the standards normally to be expected as a matter of good practice.

They should be applied by the local authority with due regard to the particular circumstances of each case, including the physical character of the site, any services or facilities that may already be available within convenient reach, and other local conditions. There is scope therefore for site license conditions to be tailored to meet particular situations.

Note: The system of planning and site license control is complicated. The interaction between the two can be confusing and difficult.

#### TOWN & COUNTRY PLANNING ACT 1990

The Act allows certain 'development' in the context of a Caravan Park that covers:

- erection of buildings
- formation of roads
- earth works for the creation of terraces, banks and lakes
- use of land for siting tents and caravans (part of the Order which allows for '28 day tenting' (the dates do not have to be consecutive).

Note: This allows many forms of development to be carried out on caravan parks, such as toilet blocks, caravan bases, roads, services which would otherwise have to go through the Planning Process - however it only applies to work which is required by the site license conditions.

#### HEALTH & SAFETY AT WORK ACT 1974

Note: The duty extends to persons such as customers and in the case of a Caravan Holiday Park (where children may be involved), there is obviously a need for extra care to be taken to see that the duty is complied with.

Play Areas: Sections 3 and 4 of the above Act make it abundantly clear that it is the duty of the playground provider to ensure, so far as is reasonable practical, the health and safety of those who use the facility. It is

emphasised that this should be through the provision of safe, well-maintained equipment and surfaces. Play areas should be properly planned and effectively maintained. The use of the word 'reasonable' is meant to imply that park owners keep abreast of the latest developments regarding equipment/safety improvements. Note: Playgrounds are mainly unsupervised and therefore it is very important to have one or more notices giving information as to what to do in case of an accident. This information should include

- nearest accident and emergency unit.
- nearest telephone
- telephone number of person to whom damage or accident should be reported

Insurance - Parks providing play areas must ensure that they have public liability insurance.

#### ELECTRICITY AT WORK REGULATIONS 1989

Existing Installations:

Steps should be taken to ensure that the total existing electrical installation is covered by a current electrical certificate issued by a registered electrician. In the case of Touring Parks:

- Electrical Distribution up to and including electrical hook-up points - Inspected every 12 months
- Fire Alarm and Emergency Lighting Systems - Inspected every 12 months with quarterly check manuals available and completed.
- Street Lighting - Inspected every 3 years

New Installations:

Parks must ensure the electrical contractor belongs to a professional body such as the National Inspection Council for Electrical Installation Contracting.

Safety certificates must be received covering all work carried out by the contractor

#### SWIMMING POOLS

Current legislation includes sections of a number of Acts, recommendations and advice from national bodies, and accepted codes of practice. The combination of these determines how the pool operator must run his facility. It has, however, been proven in recent court cases that the onus is on the pool operator to prove that prior to an accident having occurred, he took all responsible steps against any dangers. He will also have to satisfy his local Environmental Health Officer that his facility is safe to use.

(Note: New directives from the UK or the European Commission are expected. However guide-lines regarding safety in swimming pools have been set down in the Health and Safety Commission booklet 'Safety in Swimming Pools'. It is essential that park operators have a copy of this publication and can also demonstrate that their operational procedures comply with the recommendations given.

Signs should display: pool rules, emergency action, depth signs, opening/closing times, exit signs.

#### ENVIRONMENTAL CODE FOR HOLIDAY PARKS, CARAVAN AND CAMPING SITES

With increasing pressures placed on the earth's fragile environment, especially in rural areas it is welcoming to see good environmental practice actively promoted by the BH&HPA.

Advice on:

- Sympathetic Park Location, Layout and Landscaping;
- Buildings and External Works;
- Use of Environmentally Friendly Products and Techniques;
- Efficient and Sensitive Management (i.e. encouraging visitors to be environmentally aware particularly in relation to the disposal of litter and waste, also co-operating in pitch rotation and lifting ground sheets)
- Energy and Natural Resource Conservation (i.e. use of water economising devices, timer switches, low voltage bulbs, etc)
- The Use of Biodegradable Materials and Materials Recycling.

If we can identify good practice in this area it would make interesting and useful reading in the site report.

Updated 07<sup>th</sup> May 2019