SUFFOLK AGRICULTURAL ASSOCIATION
FOUNDED 1831

Breaking Ground Policy

Suffolk Agricultural Association






NFU Mutual
RISK MANAGEMENT SERVICES

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What is a ‘Breaking Ground Policy’ document for?

Purpose:

Safety: It ensures that all necessary precautions are taken to avoid accidents and injuries during excavation or construction activities, such as the erection of Marquees and other temporary structures.

- **Personal Safety**: To minimise risk of injury from contact with live cables underground.

Damage Prevention: It helps prevent damage to underground utilities such as gas lines, water pipes, and electrical cables by requiring utility locates before any digging or ground penetration begins.

Compliance: It ensures that all legal and regulatory requirements are met, including contacting relevant authorities, and obtaining necessary permits

Environmental Protection: It minimizes the impact of construction activities on the environment by identifying and protecting sensitive areas.

Cost Savings: By preventing damage and ensuring compliance, it helps avoid costly repairs, fines, and project delays.

Scope: This policy applies to all staff, contractors and exhibitors involved in setting up structures at Trinity Park IP3 8UH.

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Breaking Ground Method Statement

Project/Activity	Breaking ground at Trinity Park
Location	Trinity Park, Ipswich IP3 8UH
Hazards	Electrical cables buried in the ground - Injuries are usually caused by the explosive effects of arcing current, and by any associated fire or flames that may result when a live cable is penetrated by a sharp object such as the point of a tool or tent peg. Such effects can also occur when a cable is crushed severely enough to cause internal contact between the conductors, or between metallic sheathing and one or more conductors. Typically, injuries are severe – potentially fatal – burns to the hands, face and body; electric shock is possible. Incidents may also arise from cables, connections and terminations which have been damaged but left unreported and unrepaired, or which have deteriorated with age. ▪ Water Pipe Damage - Although damage to water pipes is less likely to result in injury, the following may occur. A jet of water from a main can be of sufficient pressure and intensity to injure a person. It may also contain stones or other hard objects ejected from the ground around the pipe. ▪ Leaks of water from underground pipes can affect adjacent services and reduce support for other structures. ▪ Damage to mains pipes can result in flooding, leading to subsequent risks from drowning or the rapid collapse of support to the sides of an excavation; water can enter gas pipes if they are also damaged.
Safety Basics	There are three basic elements to underground service safety. ▪ planning the work. ▪ detecting, identifying and marking underground services. ▪ safe excavation/safe digging practices. **Breaking ground can be a high hazard activity and must not be undertaken by lone workers.**
Communication & Procedure	Step 1) Obtain site plans from the main office. This will identify where the **known** services are within the showground. If you are working within 2m of an underground service and intend to break ground you must then trace and identify the services. Site plans alone are not sufficient so you must also use a cable detection device. Step 2) Speak to SAA staff and the appointed on site electrical contractor covering the event. During the set up for events it may be necessary to add additional buried services within the show ground. These services may not be marked on plans. Step 3) Mark identified underground services on the surface to communicate their location to others.

	Step 4) SAA staff are available at all times via the main office, mobile phone or radio. Communication must be maintained in accordance with local site induction; if you are not sure ask. Step 5) Additionally, your staff must be provided with routine and emergency contact details for any network control authority.
Specific Site contact	Suffolk Agricultural Association Felixstowe Road Ipswich IP3 UH Office Telephone Number 01473 707110 Darren Cobbold 0773 8717999 (Estate) Graham Thurston 0791 8745711 (TPEL)
Authorisation	Breaking ground authorisation must be recorded on the attached permit. Authorisation can be granted by the following SAA Staff: Graham Thurston (TPEL) Paula Slater (Suffolk Show & Contractors) Margie Morris (Contractors & Suffolk Show)
Tools and Equipment	When working within 2m of a known underground service only hand tools can be used. All hand tools used during groundbreaking activities must be insulated. Cable detection devices must be calibrated / tested where applicable. Evidence of calibration must be available on request and carried on site.
Permits	The policy at Trinity Park is that no ground should be broken within 2m of an underground service. To protect staff and contractors' alternative arrangements must be made. If the circuit affected can be turned off (only by qualified and commissioned by the SAA electrical contractors) this should be considered. Where there is no alternative but to break the ground near a known underground service this can only be undertaken with a permit issued by Trinity Park Staff who have been authorised to issue such permits.
P.P.E to be worn	Safety Footwear, Flame retardant overalls, insulated gloves appropriate to the task in hand and any other applicable PPE as identified in any site specific risk assessment must be used/worn.
Other relevant info	Refer to risk assessment, site specific job instructions, permits (as required).

Safe System of Work for Breaking Ground

Planning the Work:

- Site Survey: Conduct a thorough site survey to identify the location of all underground services, including electrical cables, water pipes, and gas lines. Consult with the event organisers who have details of known services.
- Obtain and review utility plans to locate underground services. The most up-to-date plans can be obtained from the office. Temporary installations can be confirmed by R.W Curle Electrical Engineers (for the Suffolk Show). If other suitably qualified electrical contractors are used for other events, then they must be consulted.
- Conduct a site-specific risk assessment to identify potential hazards.
- Develop a method statement outlining the steps and safety measures.
- Before commencing work, ensure adequate precautions are taken to protect yourself and safeguard anyone this includes a site/ task briefing.
- Ensure site security is maintained throughout the operation.
- Make yourself familiar with the work being carried out by other persons on site.
- Comply with (where applicable) site registration procedure and local site / client induction and/or site rules.
- Staff will be provided with a written job instruction detailing the location/s and scope of the work to be undertaken together with the name and contact numbers of the site manager and emergency contact.

Locating and Identifying Buried Services:

- Use detection equipment (e.g., ground-penetrating radar) to locate services. If a power cable cannot be located consult with R.W Curle Electrical Engineers (for the Suffolk Show) to discuss loading to improve detection. If other suitably qualified electrical contractors are used for other events, then they must be consulted.
- Mark the locations of identified services on the ground.

Risk Mitigation

- Verify the locations with hand-digging or vacuum excavation.
- If a service is identified within 2m of the required penetration site identify alternative solutions.
- Provide the alternative solutions to the SAA member of staff issuing the permit.
- Obtain a signed permit before proceeding with any further work.

Note: Please be aware if the risk cannot be suitably controlled you maybe refused a permit. proceeding without a permit may result in you being asked to leave the site.

Safe Work Practices

- Non-Intrusive Methods: Use non-intrusive methods for securing structures whenever possible, such as weighted bases or water barrels.
- Manual Digging: If pegs must be driven into the ground, manually dig small test holes to confirm the absence of underground services before using mechanical equipment.
- Depth Control: Ensure pegs are driven to a controlled depth that avoids contact with underground services.

Safe Excavation:

- Ensure all workers are trained in safe excavation practices.
- Use appropriate personal protective equipment (PPE), such as high-visibility clothing, hard hats, and safety boots.
- Excavate carefully around marked services, using hand tools near identified utilities.
- Maintain a safe distance from identified services to avoid damage.
- Do not enter excavation greater than 900mm in depth without a permit.
- Provide evidence of excavating support plan to SAA member of staff issuing permit.
- Obtain a signed permit before proceeding with any further work.
- Ensure open excavations are fully secured with a complete barrier preventing animal or human access.

Monitoring and Supervision:

- Assign a competent supervisor to oversee the work.
- Breaking groundwork must not be undertaken by lone workers. Supervision is required to meet the requirements of working at height regulations 2005 & Electricity at work regulations 1989.
- Regularly inspect the excavation site for any changes or new hazards.
- Ensure communication among all team members.

Emergency Procedures:

- Have a clear plan for dealing with emergencies, such as water service strikes, or electrical strike.
- Ensure all workers have been provide with train in how to act following a service strike.
- Ensure workers mobile phones have per programmed 999, 112, and the 105 for electrical service strikes.
- Ensure all workers know the What Three Words location of the work.
- Ensure all workers know the emergency procedures and evacuation routes.
- Ensure SAA staff on site are aware of the work, location, duration, and anticipated completion time.

During the work

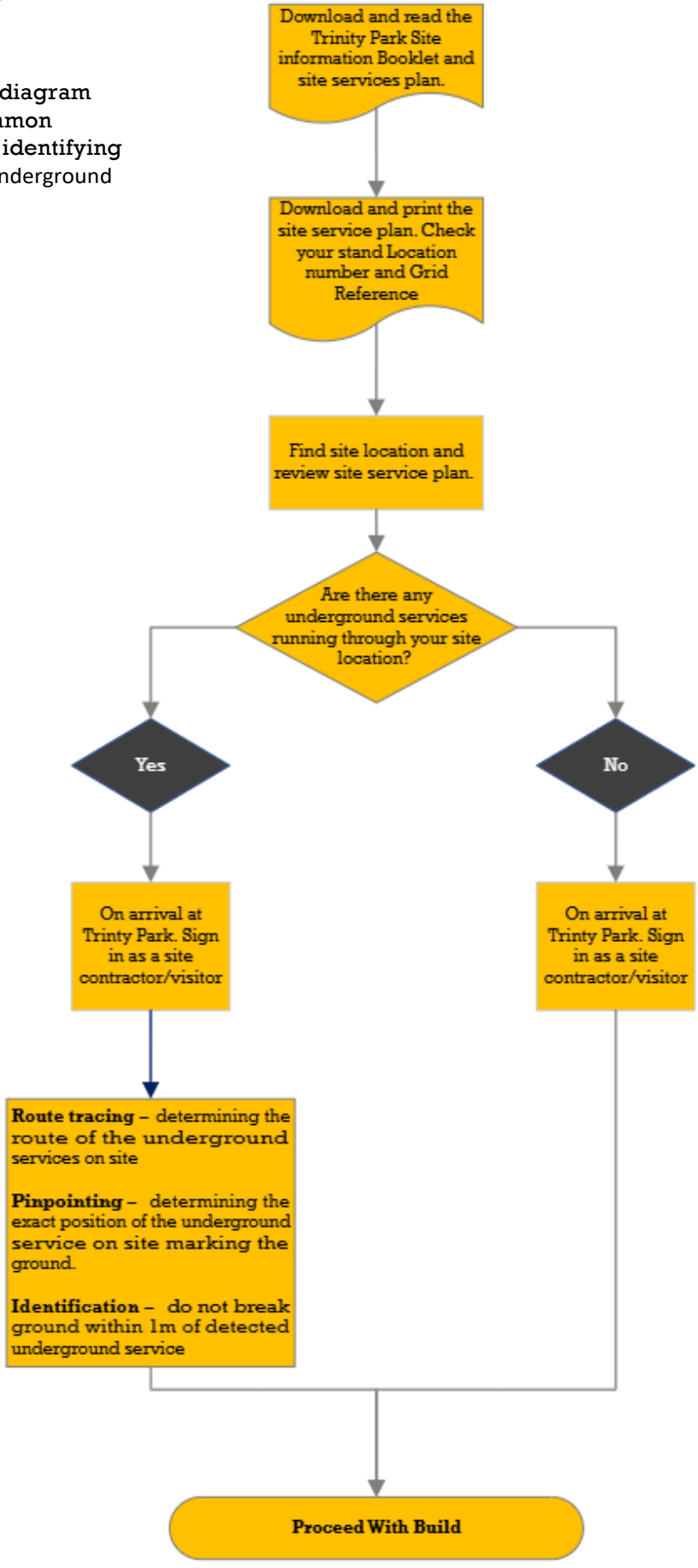
- The work location will be positively identified from information provided, the documentation and/or site drawings will remain on site for the duration of the works. The authorised person is responsible for ensuring that where necessary (due to safety concerns) works are suspended and where applicable the cancellation of safety documentation/permits.
- Staff will be provided or have access to a site service plan and show site service plan detailing the services and underground network.
- Staff must be in possession of or have access to a copy of their company electrical safety rules.
- Staff must be provided with or have access to an up-to-date copy of all operating restrictions on equipment to be operated.

Completion

- Staff will ensure that the site is fully secured and that all tools and equipment are removed.
- All ground broken must be left as found following the event.

Breaking Ground Procedure

The following diagram shows the common procedure for identifying and locating underground services:



Permit- To be completed by the contractor

BREAKING GROUND PERMIT		
Exact Location of Work:		
Site Grid Reference	Stand Number (if applicable)	What3Words location
Nature of the work to be undertaken:		
Work to commence:	Date:	Time:
To be completed by:	Date:	Time:
Scanned by:		
Signature:		Print Name:
Date:	Company:	

Specific Hazards and Precautions:

Physical Controls (e.g. safety devices / lock off procedures / Checks after work complete etc.):

I declare that I understand the identified risks involved in the work, agree to undertake only the work detailed on the permit to work and will ensure continued implementation of the special precautions and control measures listed

Worker Declaration - "I have read, and I understand the permit to work"	Names and signatures of all relevant workers:

Completed by SAA authorised staff

Permit Number (SAA staff):		
Signature of Competent Person: (SAA authorised staff)		Date:
		Time:

Declaration by Contractor

Briefing delivered by:

Briefing topic:

Position:

We (the undersigned) have been made aware of the arrangements for health and safety, as detailed in this document, and will comply with the requirements outlined.

Name (print)	Signature	Date

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