Construction Management

Managing your building project responsibly

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QUICK SUMMARY

- CDM Regulations 2015 govern construction health and safety
- Five duty holders: client, principal designer, principal contractor, and others
- Construction phase plan required before work starts
- Welfare facilities must be in place from day one
- Principal designer maintains the health and safety file

Managing Your Building Project

The main set of regulations for managing the health and safety of construction projects is the Construction (Design and Management) (CDM) Regulations 2015. These regulations apply to all work surrounding building and construction, including new builds, renovations, extensions, repair, maintenance and demolition.

There are five duty holders – or people with responsibility – under the CDM regulations. These are: the client, the principal designer, the principal contractor, any secondary designer, and any secondary contractor. The regulation also contains a guide for construction workers who do not have the same level of responsibility.

The inception, design and planning stage of a construction project is just as important as the actual construction work itself. For that reason it is advised that you appoint designers and contractors as soon as possible to help prepare the project, even with planning for simple tasks like routine maintenance.

Pre-construction phase

he pre-construction phase in which preparatory work is carried out is vital in protecting the welfare of those working on your project or those who will be affected by it. Use a client brief to explain your project to designers and contractors and inform them of your requirements. This will help you properly plan, resource and manage your project.

Construction phase

While construction work is ongoing you should look to do the following things:

Enforce the construction phase plan

Under the CDM regulations the principal contractor is responsible for producing a plan of how health and safety will be managed on site while construction is ongoing. This is known as a construction phase plan.As the client you should check that a construction phase plan has been prepared and meets the necessary requirements. If the plan is project-specific and takes into account the information that you provided pre-construction, the plan will be sufficient.

Check welfare facilities

Those working on the site must have appropriate welfare facilities made available to them from the very start of the construction stage. You can check that they are in place by asking for confirmation from the principal contractor or by carrying out a visit to the site yourself.

Health and safety file

Throughout the project, the principal designer will be responsible for the site's health and safety file. You can obtain this from the designer at the project. Where the principal designer's role has been fulfilled before the project has ended, the responsibility for the file will fall to the principal contractor.