

***Your Safety***  
***at***  
***Wight Woodturners***



***A Member's Guide***

## **A message from our Chairman**

*To all members*

*This member's guide to Health & Safety has been produced to ensure that the Club is run responsibly and that we have measures in place to protect the health and safety of all our members and guests.*

*By producing this booklet for your guidance our Club meets its statutory obligations. For it to become a meaningful tool, it requires all members to read this booklet thoroughly and instil all the recommendations into your work ethic.*

*Great efforts have been made to ensure that everything in this booklet reflects measures and practices that our craft demands, by following the contents within, your journey into the world of Health and Safety will be pleasant and rewarding.*

*Mike Graves*

### **WIGHT WOODTURNERS**

For the latest information for the Club's Policies on:-

- ◆ Insurance
- ◆ Health and Safety
- ◆ Data Protection
- ◆ Safeguarding

Please refer to the Wight Woodturners website

Under the **Club Information** tab

then **Club Policies**

[www.wightwoodturners.club](http://www.wightwoodturners.club)

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Wight Woodturners 2019

## **I. Introduction**

As the Wight Woodturners Club continues to grow in size and embarks on new activities your Committee is ever mindful of its responsibility for the safety of its members during Club activities. Woodturning is an inherently dangerous pursuit and while many members are well experienced we also welcome complete novices to our Club. Beginners, for their own safety, may need to be made aware of the potential dangers involved in wood turning.

The Committee endeavour to provide safe equipment which may be used by members in a safe environment. Safe and best practice guidance may be offered by the Committee, and by our most experienced members, on machine use and turning techniques. However, it is the duty of all of us when attending Club events to act responsibly while using club machinery and tools. It is not only your personal safety when turning or using the grinder but the safety of all other club members who may be watching. If you are unsure about a machine or a technique, don't hesitate to ask – there's always plenty of advice at hand.

The Club has a Craft Insurance Policy which, amongst other things, provides for Third Party and Public Liability risks. However, this type of insurance places a number of conditions on the Club which all members have to adhere to. Basically it's an insurance against "unexpected events". If the Committee can foresee a potentially unsafe situation they must take reasonable measures to eliminate or reduce the risks. The Club is not a legal entity; therefore in the event of a problem it is individual members who will be held responsible

The Committee have a number of measures in place to reduce risks to members at club events. These, together with sound advice and a safety conscious approach by all should ensure we have "uneventful" meetings.

We are very mindful of not spoiling your enjoyment of the Club with a barrage of rules but we do ask for your co-operation at all times in making it a safe Club.

## **2. The Club's Health & Safety Obligations and Paperwork**

These days, H&S in the Club will inevitably involve the Committee in some degree of paperwork. For most of the time this will be transparent to members but from time to time we may need to bring to your attention certain matters and we ask that you respect any requests that we may make for the safe running of the Club.

We have three documents, a Club H&S Policy, an H&S Procedures document and sets of Risk Assessment documents. These will be briefly explained.

These documents can be viewed in the Risk Assessment folder usually to be found at the "sign-in" table on club evenings. These can also be viewed or downloaded from our Club Website.

### **Wight Woodturners H&S Policy**

This document can be seen on the Notice Board at the sign-in table on Club evenings. It may be amended from time to time.

The Policy simply defines the Club's responsibility to provide safe equipment in a safe environment for members to use. It states that the Club should undertake Risk Assessments to identify and to minimize hazards to members and outlines the responsibility of members in respect of Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) and appropriate attire when using machinery.

### **Health & Safety Procedures Document**

This is a reference document for Committee use. It sets the ground rules for all relevant aspects of H&S that should be attended to. It also contains procedures for carrying out Risk Assessments and PAT testing of electrical equipment. It includes guidance sections with best practice for safe working with woodturning lathes and associated equipment. This guidance may also be of interest to members working alone in their home workshop.

## **Risk Assessments (RA)**

These are carried out for each type of activity or event that the club undertakes. For each event the potential safety hazards are identified and measures or controls defined to minimize or eliminate the identified risks. These are entered on the RA form alongside the name of a person responsible for ensuring the controls are implemented. At any time should you be approached by a “responsible person” do please comply with their requests so that we can work within the conditions of our Club insurance. The assessments for most of our activities may be viewed in the Risk Assessment Folder usually kept at the sign-in table.

Much of the contents of our safety paperwork are in essence just “good common sense” written down in an orderly manner. However, as some of this wisdom is the result of experience it is necessary to start with the first principles for the benefit of those who are new to woodturning. This may appear simplistic to some, but it is necessary.

### 3. Safety at the Scout Hall Meetings

Most of our regular meetings are at the 1<sup>st</sup> Newport Scouts Hall in Woodbine Close. This building, used by the Scouts and let to many organizations, is virtually a “Public Building” and as such will comply with all relevant safety and fire regulations. However, during meetings there are a number of safety aspects members must comply with.

#### General Safety

- The entire Scout building and compound is a No Smoking area.
- On arriving at a meeting members should sign the Attendance Register which will be used for a roll call in the event of a fire evacuation.
- Following evacuation members should assemble in the carpark for a roll call.
- Fire Exits from the building are clearly marked and located on the south side through the double doors, a door at the back of the stage and external access door in the outer hall.
- Fire extinguisher locations and types are given in a diagram on the Club notice board at the sign-in table.  
Use only the correct extinguisher for the type of fire.
- Our Club Insurance prohibits the use of naked flame in any of our Club activities within the building.
- The Kitchen Hatch is constructed to form a fire break for the kitchen. Exercise care when opening and closing this hatch door as it can be awkward. When closed ENSURE the safety chain is in place.
- You will note the hall has a polished hardwood floor. When we make shavings on this polished floor it is extremely slippery underfoot - so please be careful! Rubber matting will always be provided under and around the lathes to minimize this risk, as well as providing protection for the floor.
- Any liquid spillages on the floor should be wiped up to prevent slipping as well as minimizing damage to the floor.

First aid boxes are located at the Club sign-in table and on the wall in the outer hall adjacent to the QM store door.

## **Safety when Manual Handling**

Much of our equipment is heavy or awkward to lift and should you be helping to move this please be aware of your own capabilities. Think about lifting safely by:-

- Where possible, by breaking heavy items into smaller parts
- Getting assistance from other members
- Thinking first and planning the lift from beginning to end
- Being aware of safe lifting posture

A helpful guide is the HSE booklet “Manual Handling at Work” a copy of which can be found in the Risk Assessment folder.

## **Safety when using Club Electrical Equipment**

All our electrical equipment is PAT tested on a regular basis for safe use. The event Risk Assessment will ensure that mains leads are visually checked before each use. All electrical equipment in use must be operated via a local RCD plugged directly into the mains wall socket. These may protect against shock should an equipment or cable develop an earth leakage fault.

Any piece of electrical equipment brought in by a member for use during a Club activity **must** have a current PAT certificate and be visually checked before use.

Should any Club member borrow a piece of Club equipment for their own use all risks lie with that member i.e. are not covered by Club insurance.

## **4. Safety at Public Events**

For Shows, Fayres external exhibitions and demonstrations the Club will usually have to comply with the requirements of the event organizers Risk Assessment. In addition the Club will generate its own RA for each event to control our own specific hazards. Should you be helping at any Club event please assist the “responsible people” identified on the RA to ensure a safe event for both Club members and the general public. The Club Risk Assessment will be available at public events.

## **5. Turning Safely at Club Events**

The following applies to both turning at our monthly Club meetings and at public events. This guidance falls into the category of “Safe and Good Practice”. It is guidance because it is too specialized and detailed for specific mandatory regulations. Turning safely is then the responsibility of the turner involved. The following guidance is of course equally applicable to your home workshop as well as to Club turning. But first there are three general considerations which Club members should bear in mind.

### **Fitness to Turn**

Wood turning requires quick and accurate responses, so members using lathes and machinery at Club activities should ensure that they are both physically and mentally able, are not tired, under the influence of drugs or alcohol nor preoccupied mentally. It is essential that members should also have adequate vision for the task in hand.

Members using Club lathes and machinery should be aware that their actions are being watched by other members who may include beginners and guests. Your audience may well learn your techniques, but be aware, they may also pick up your bad habits!

### **Safe Working Clothing**

Members operating lathes at club activities should ensure that they are appropriately dressed for turning activities. Please be aware of the following:-

- Loose clothing and jewellery should be made safe e.g. cuffs, ties, scarves, shirt tails, necklaces and dangly bangles
- Long hair should be tied back
- Footwear should offer adequate protection from dropped sharp tools

## The Working Area

- Ensure the work area is suitable with sufficient space to work safely, adequate lighting, and non-slip matting. Electrical cables should be covered or made obvious. Make sure you can reach the electrical supply to switch off in an emergency.
- The Club dry powder fire extinguisher will normally be placed in the vicinity of the working area. Make note of its location.
- As work proceeds, shavings can present a slipping hazard on a polished floor - remove as appropriate.
- The Club First Aid Kit is normally located at the sign-in table, together with the Accident Record book, should any member require it.
- Never leave the work area with the lathe running.

Now we come to the detailed safe practice of turning. There are many sources of good advice and the contents of the following pages are drawn from many organizations. Whilst this advice is extensive it cannot cover all situations and when turning at home you are advised to take any additional measures necessitated by your circumstances, equipment, or work piece and to take full account of dust hazards. The Club is not responsible for incidents outside of Club events even if a Club member or members are involved.

If you watch YouTube wood turning videos please be aware that you may see many poor, if not dangerous, practices on some of the videos. So please be discerning. Videos hosted by the AWGB or the AAW should be OK.

## The Lathe

- Make sure you are familiar with the machine before you use it.
- You are advised to wear safety goggles or safety glasses with side protection or a full face shield.
- Make certain that any belt guards or covers etc. are in place and firmly secured. Check that all clamping devices (locks), such as on the tailstock and tool rest are tight.
- Always check the speed of the lathe before switching it on.  
Is the speed appropriate for the diameter you are turning?
- Stand out of the “firing zone” when switching on.
- When running a lathe in reverse, the chuck or faceplate can unscrew. ONLY run your lathe in reverse if you use a spindle locking screw or device.
- Remove chuck keys and adjusting spanners unless you are actually using them. Form a habit of checking for these and any spindle locking devices before switching the lathe on.
- Position the tool-rest close enough to the workpiece to provide adequate tool support.
- Keep your fingers away from the rotating wood and don't hang your fingers over the top of the tool-rest.
- Turn the lathe "off" before adjusting the tool rest. If you drop the workpiece, a tool, or a chuck key etc. switch the lathe off before bending down or reaching over to pick it up.
- Always remove the tool rest before sanding or polishing operations.
- When sanding, do not wrap the abrasive around your fingers. Ensure your fingers always trail the direction of rotation.
- Never leave the lathe running unattended. Turn power off when not in use. Don't leave the lathe until it comes to a complete stop.

## The Workpiece

- Exercise caution when using wood with cracks, splits, bark, knots, irregular shapes or protuberances. Beware of bark inclusions reducing the strength of a piece.
- Rotate the workpiece by hand to ensure it clears the tool rest and bed before turning the lathe "on". Ensure the workpiece is firmly mounted. Tighten chuck jaws periodically when turning, particularly with green wood, or if you have left wood in the chuck for a period e.g. overnight.
- When turning between centres, ensure the work is secure with sufficient tailstock pressure.
- Always set the lathe to a lower speed before turning a new item and keep the speed lower until the workpiece is balanced. This helps avoid the possibility of an unbalanced piece jumping out of the lathe and striking the operator/onlookers or excessive wobbling of the lathe.
- Never stand in line with the workpiece when you switch-on the lathe. Once running, check for undue vibrations before proceeding. If the lathe is shaking or vibrating, lower the speed. If the workpiece vibrates always stop the machine to check the reason.
- Use slower speeds for larger diameter or rough pieces and increased speed for smaller diameters and pieces that are balanced.
- When turning pieces of wood with glue joints, ensure the joint is secure and use a lower lathe speed as a precaution.
- Hold turning tools securely on the tool rest, and hold the tool in a controlled but comfortable manner before allowing it to touch the work.
- When finishing or polishing on the lathe do not use woven rag, always use non-woven safety scrim which will rip if snagged on the rotating workpiece.
- When turning at Club meetings and Public Events please keep sanding to a minimum as there are no dust extraction facilities.
- At meetings, avoid wood that may produce toxic dust.  
(Refer HSE document on Toxic Woods in the Risk Assessment folder)

## The Tools

- Keep tools sharp and clean for better and safer performance.
- Don't force a blunt tool – extra pressure may cause the tool to slip or over shoot.
- Don't use a tool for a purpose not intended.
- Do not be tempted to use modified tools, such as converted files etc.
- Do not place tools on the bench/table with the sharp end sticking out.
- If you drop a sharp tool, do not try to catch it. It is far safer to let it hit the ground.
- Wear eye protection when sharpening on a bench grinder and ensure the grinder shields are fitted.
- If you are unsure about any aspect of the operation of your tools / equipment or about safety measures, consult a professional or experienced Club member.

## 6. Personal Protective Equipment (PPE)

The clue is in the title “personal”. Your health and safety is your responsibility. When turning you are strongly advised to wear eye protection; ideally a full face shield or at least safety glasses with side protection.

At our meetings we prefer to keep sanding to a minimum. If you have any concerns about wood or grindstone dust you are advised to wear a dust mask or a respirator. Because of hygiene concerns you should supply your own dust masks.

When applying spirit finishes you are you are advised to wear thin synthetic gloves to minimize permanent skin damage. Normal woven or leather protective gloves should not be worn when turning as these may snag on the rotating work piece.

Strong fully-enclosed footwear is advised to provide protection when you drop a sharp tool.

## **7 A Postscript**

Thank you for reading this booklet. PLEASE don't be put off by all these rules, regulations and safe practice advice. Much of this is just common sense and if you practice good habits it soon becomes second nature and you don't think about it! This leaves you free to enjoy your exploration into all the wonders of wood turning and the all the fascinating pieces you can create from a once living tree.

Turn Safely!



**Wight Woodturners 2019**