

## **Risk Assessment**

**Location:** Conference Aston, Aston University, Birmingham B4 7ET

**Purpose:** Sight Loss Council Conference 2021

**Event date:** 8<sup>th</sup> – 10<sup>th</sup> October

**Assessment carried out by:** Sally Mitchell, Compliance Manager  
TPT/Paul Vassilliou, Facilities Manager TPT

**Date of initial assessment:** 26/08/2021 and further discussion

**Review:** Ongoing leading up to the conference start

The Sight Loss Council Conference is taking place from the evening of Friday 8<sup>th</sup> October to finish at lunch time on Sunday 13<sup>th</sup> October. It will include SLC volunteers, TPT staff and other volunteers as sighted guides.

<b>What are the hazards?</b>
Travelling to and from the venue
<b>Who might be harmed and how?</b>
Blind and partially sighted (bps) delegates/ staff are the main concern. We recognise that many of our bps volunteers have experience of travelling but need to ensure everyone is considered in an unfamiliar environment. Individuals may get lost or experience difficulty getting to and from the venue. They could experience difficulty navigating to the main entrance.
<b>What are you already doing to control the risks?</b>
Delegates will travel in groups; they will take taxis from the main station to the venue. TPT staff will travel with some groups depending

on location. Each Engagement manager is responsible for their own SLC's arrangements and will liaise with them
What further action do you need to take to control the risks?
Delegates will all have been sent a pack with full details of the venue and arrangements. Managers will have full details and contacts of their volunteers and the volunteers already have full details of who to contact in an emergency (their engagement manager).
Who needs to carry out the action?
Conference Lead / Engagement managers
When is the action needed by?
w/c: 4/10/2021
Action Completed? YES/NO Many actions already taken
<b>What are the hazards?</b>
Navigating around the venue during the conference
Who might be harmed and how?
All delegates – blind and partially sighted (bps), staff and volunteers, guest speakers. Could experience difficulty finding the rooms for each session, getting to and from the spending area with their guide dogs, getting to their rooms in free time and getting to the restaurant
What are you already doing to control the risks?
All those attending will receive a delegate pack with conference programme and FAQ. They have the opportunity to check details and ask as many other questions as needed. Each delegate can check information with their Engagement manager.  Sighted guides have been appointed for those who have requested them and have received /are receiving induction training through our online training platform and discussions with organisers.

Members of the TPT will be available throughout the conference to assist in navigation and to answer any concerns or queries  
Conference staff have been fully briefed regarding the arrangements and needs of the delegates

What further action do you need to take to control the risks?

Double check with all delegates and others that they are happy with the information provided.  
Continue to liaise with the conference centre staff to ensure their questions and concerns are responded to promptly. (The conference centre has previously hosted events for blind and partially sighted people)  
Discuss signage in large print and taping off corners of furniture that may be an obstacle.

Who needs to carry out the action?

Conference lead, Engagement managers supported by other staff involved. E.g., Facilities manager  
Facilities manager to discuss with conference lead and liaise with conference centre

When is the action needed by?

Documents and training must be sent out / completed prior to the conference. All other tasks are for during the conference itself.

Action Completed? YES/NO Many tasks have been completed.

**What are the hazards?**

Obstacles / trip hazards within conference centre during event

Who might be harmed and how?

Mainly a concern for blind and partially sighted delegates, staff, and guests

Particular attention to be paid to glass walls / panelling around the venue, previous discussions during the site visit suggested the glass panelling into the main room could be removed to create a larger and more accessible entrance. Trips and falls or walking into glass panelling or large pieces of furniture.

What are you already doing to control the risks?

Sighted guides have been appointed and trained, TPT staff will be on hand for assistance throughout the conference.

What further action do you need to take to control the risks?

The conference staff are aware of our needs and will be reminded during the week prior to the conference. A copy of this risk assessment will be shared with them.

Check glass panelling has been removed as discussed.

Guide dog owners will be reminded to ensure that their dogs are not left unattended at any time. Assistance will be provided as required.

Who needs to carry out the action?

Conference lead and Engagement Managers and Facilities Manager

When is the action needed by?

By the date of the conference and throughout.

Action Completed? YES/NO. Many actions have already been taken

**What are the hazards?**

Fire/emergency alarm during the event

Who might be harmed and how?

All conference attendees. Particular attention to be given to blind and partially sighted staff and volunteers.

Distress, concern and possible falls, problems in navigating an exit form the premises.

What are you already doing to control the risks?

Attendees have been provided with contact details of their lead person during the conference – in most cases the Engagement manager for each SLC. Plans for this situation have been discussed and conference attendees will be informed of the arrangements at on Friday evening and at the start of the conference on Saturday morning. Sighted guides have been appointed and trained and will be available along with TPT staff and other volunteers. Conference staff will also be in attendance to lead groups out of the building to the muster point.

What further action do you need to take to control the risks?

Review and finalising of procedures with conference staff in the week prior to the conference.

All sighted guides and other volunteers and staff to be briefed at the start of the conference on what to do in the event of an emergency. Conference lead and Facilities manager will have a list of rooms and people to ensure everyone is accounted for should an emergency happen out of conference hours.

Hi Vis jackets to be worn by key TPT staff - tbc

Who needs to carry out the action?

Conference Lead with the Facilities manager

When is the action needed by?

Most of the action will take place w/c: 04/10/21. Briefings will take place on day 1

Action Completed? YES/NO. Taking place w/c: 4/10/21

**What are the hazards?**

More of a concern than a hazard – caring for the needs of the guide dogs during the conference

Who might be harmed and how?
Guide dog owners may be concerned for their dog and the arrangements in a different environment. They may also be concerned that they will miss some of the conference content needing to attend to their dog's needs.
What are you already doing to control the risks?
A spending area for guide dogs has been allocated by the conference centre. Information is available in the FAQs in the delegate's pack. Sighted guides/staff/other volunteers will assist with spending as needed.
What further action do you need to take to control the risks?
Discussions with individual guide owners to find out the best way to handle this process. E.G: would the guide dog go with someone else to spend or would this not work? Also, to find out if there are any situations that the individual guide dogs may become anxious and need extra support. What should this be? Encourage guide dog spending during break times. Gloves and sanitiser provided for spending purposes.
Who needs to carry out the action?
Managers and Facilities manager with the guide dog owners.
When is the action needed by?
Discussions to be had prior to the conference w/c: 04/10/21
Action Completed? YES/NO.
<b>What are the hazards?</b>
Again, more of a concern than a hazard. Are there any delegates / staff/volunteers who have a fear / concern about dogs? Has this question been asked?

Who might be harmed and how?
Not harmed, but possibly distressed and fearful
What are you already doing to control the risks?
Currently nothing
What further action do you need to take to control the risks?
Discussions to be had sensitively
Who needs to carry out the action?
Managers / conference lead
When is the action needed by?
Prior to the conference w/c: 04/10/21
Action Completed? YES/NO
<b>What are the hazards?</b>
Lack of Covid 19 testing due to inability to take the lateral flow test
Who might be harmed and how?
All attendees, becoming unwell with Covid 19
What are you already doing to control the risks?
All attendees have been asked to take a lateral flow test prior to attending the conference. FAQs in the delegate pack informing delegates that assistance will be given to take the test when they arrive at the conference centre if they have not been able to do this. The FAQs also details the process if anyone becomes unwell with Covid 19 symptoms. All staff have ordered test packs and will bring them with them.
What further action do you need to take to control the risks?
Ensure enough staff / other volunteers are available to assist with testing as delegates arrive. This will be on the Friday afternoon and

the Saturday morning at varying times. Conference lead / Facilities manager must be aware of who needs assistance.

Who needs to carry out the action?

Conference lead / Facilities manager

When is the action needed by?

As people arrive Friday / Saturday

Action Completed? YES/NO. Some actions have been taken

**What are the hazards?**

Delegates / attendees becoming unwell (not Covid 19 symptoms)

Who might be harmed and how?

All attendees

What are you already doing to control the risks?

Ensure all know to inform their manager if they do feel unwell. This has been covered in the FAQs in the delegate pack

What further action do you need to take to control the risks?

Ensure all managers are aware of their own teams

Who needs to carry out the action?

Conference lead and Engagement Managers and Facilities Manager

When is the action needed by?

By the date of the conference and throughout.

Action Completed? YES/NO. Many actions have already been taken

**What are the hazards?**

Concerning behaviour, could be particularly during free time and / or due to the consumption of alcohol, but not necessarily. (SLC attendees or the other guests)

Who might be harmed and how?



Anyone at the conference or at the centre in general. Other guests may be present in the shared areas.

This could cause concern for those attending the SLC conference or other guests at the centre / centre staff.

To explain this concern .... If other guests are at the centre, they may not be aware or familiar with blind or partially sighted people or being around guide dogs.

What are you already doing to control the risks?

Nothing at the date this review was completed.

What further action do you need to take to control the risks?

Discussion between managers to establish what action to take in the event of a concern. The centre staff will need to be made aware of any problems. Ask the centre if other guests are going to be there and have this discussion.

Who needs to carry out the action?

Conference lead and Engagement Managers and Facilities Manager

When is the action needed by?

By the date of the conference and throughout.

Action Completed? YES/**NO**.

**What are the hazards?**

Safeguarding / Wellbeing concerns during the conference

Who might be harmed and how?

Any of the attendees

What are you already doing to control the risks?

Safeguarding lead appointed for the conference and informed to all managers. Emma Hughes, Director of Services

What further action do you need to take to control the risks?

Ensure several scenarios are discussed with the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) at TPT prior to the conference to ensure the conference lead is up to date and equipped with information needed to deal with any concerns.

Discuss with the conference centre who the DSL is for the centre and what happens in the event of a concern.

Who needs to carry out the action?

Discussion to be held with centre – Conference lead / Facilities manager

When is the action needed by?

Prior to the conference w/c 04/10/2021

Action Completed? YES/**NO**.