

Health and Safety Matters

Strutt & Parker Rural Health and Safety Update

Winter readiness – keeping your rural business resilient

Autumn is a sensible point to review the practical arrangements that keep estates, farms and property portfolios safe, accessible and operational throughout the winter.

The focus does not need to be an exhaustive inspection programme. It's about identifying foreseeable seasonal pressures and dealing promptly with issues that could affect people, property, livestock and access.

Before winter arrives

Tree risk management

– review known higher-risk locations, particularly around buildings, access routes, public rights of way and overhead lines. Look out for changes following dry weather or storms and seek competent advice where needed.

Buildings, drainage and boundaries

– ensure roofs, gutters, drains, fencing and stock enclosures are in good order. Make sure that chimneys and flues are in working order and swept.

Services and resilience

– consider arrangements for power loss, heating, pumps, gates, communications and emergency access.

Access and lighting

– consider darker days, wet leaves, mud, ice and the routes used by staff, tenants, visitors and contractors.

Lone workers -

– ensure that you have suitable, proportionate arrangements in place to support your remote and lone workers.

Emergency planning

– is a critical part of managing in a crisis. Consider and plan for extreme weather and its likely effects. Keep key contacts up-to-date, including contractors who can assist with fallen trees, roof damage and other urgent issues.

Vulnerable tenants

– consider how you can ensure their welfare in extreme weather.

After a storm – actions to take



Inspect affected property and access routes from a safe position.



Consider whether floodwater, mud or debris make routes unsafe; arrange clearance, closure or diversion as appropriate and contact the relevant authorities where required.



Prevent access to areas affected by damaged trees or overhead power lines.



Record significant damage and actions taken, including any lessons for future planning.



Check in with vulnerable tenants.

Martyn's Law – does it affect your business?

Martyn's Law (the Terrorism (Protection of Premises) Act 2025) is new legislation designed to improve preparedness for terrorist attacks.

The substantive requirements are expected to be required from April 2027 at the earliest, giving businesses it applies to an implementation period.



The Key Message

The focus is on sensible proportionate preparedness, not necessarily more physical security measures.

Who will it apply to?

Premises and events in the UK where people gather, including (but not limited to):

- Rural visitor attractions and events
- Wedding venues, farm shops and leisure sites
- Public events on estates or open land

The duties are tiered based on capacity, including staff:

- Standard Duty – 200- 799 people
- Enhanced Duty – 800+ people



We have produced a practical guide to help rural businesses understand what Martyn's Law means for them and how to prepare – [Contact us for a copy](#)

The post-harvest pause – a good time to review training and competence

The relatively quieter months after harvest provide a valuable opportunity to reset, review and upskill.

Well-trained and competent people are one of the most effective tools in managing risks at work.

Training checklist

- Review training arrangements, expiring certificates and refresher needs (e.g. chainsaw, telehandler, pesticides, first aid).
- Ensure new staff have the right induction and supervision.
- Check competence – a certificate does not always confirm competence.
- Review lone worker arrangements for shorter daylight hours and bad weather.

Help is available

Recognising the pressures facing rural business, here are some sources for help and advice:

Health and Safety Consultants

Specialists with sector-specific expertise can provide practical realistic advice, not just paperwork.

This includes Strutt & Parker's own Health and Safety Consultancy service, available where needed.

Farm Safety Foundation (yellow wellies)

A charity providing resources, training and campaigns to promote safer working practices in farming.

www.yellowellies.org

National Association of Agricultural Contractors

A trade body running sector-wide safety initiatives relevant to contractors and rural industry.

www.naac.co.uk

HSE Guidance

A wide range of information and guidance covering rural industry, farms and estates, and property.

www.hse.gov.uk

Strutt & Parker Health and Safety Consultancy



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