Manual Handling (Cleaning & Soft FM)

Cleaning involves repeated bending, reaching, lifting, pushing and pulling. Fatigue builds quickly. Slips and poor technique increase strain.

BodySafe principles: good posture, microbreaks, warm-ups and reducing awkward loads.

Primary Risks & Hazards to Spot



- **Heavy or overloaded bin bags**
- **Twisting when moving rubbish or cleaning under furniture**



- **Repeated bending, kneeling or mopping away from the body**
- **Wet-floor slips causing sudden, uncontrolled movement**



- **Overreaching with long-handled tools**
- **Shoulder strain from overhead dusting**

Social Infrastructure & Citizen Services

Where might this happen in our work environment?

SAFE OVER SUMMER



Bin emptying: Lifting heavy rubbish bags into bins or emptying overloaded bins.



Mopping: Repeated movements with consistent wrong tools or posture.



Room cleaning: Not lifting beds or safely moving furniture to clean under.

Where else?

Where do you feel the most strain? What tasks force awkward postures?

What can we check to protect?

1 **Are we ready for the task?**
Warm up before shift. Take micro stretch breaks through the day.

2 **Can we handle the load safely?**
Keep bin loads below 75%. Never push rubbish down with unprotected hands. Square up, keep loads close and avoid twisting when lifting or turning.

3 **Are tools and posture right?**
Set mop at chin height. Use figure-eight strokes within stance width (“dance with the mop”). Adjust furniture before cleaning underneath. Use long-handled tools to avoid overhead strain. Use step tools for high areas.

Which cleaning task needs a redesign or a better tool?

Social Infrastructure & Citizen Services

Your safety comes first

The SI&CS Health, Safety and Wellbeing Team is here to help.

You don’t have to work through a safety concern alone.

Ask for support when:

You’re unsure

We can help you understand a hazard and discuss a safer way to work.

Something happens

We can help with hazard, incident and near-miss reporting and next steps.

You need support

We can work with you and your supervisor or manager to address health, safety and wellbeing concerns.

Do you know who is your HSW Business Partner?

Stop if the work is unsafe

Pause the task and move to a safe place. Speak up if something feels unsafe or you are unsure.

Notify your supervisor or manager

Report hazards, incidents and near misses promptly, even if no one is hurt. Explain what happened, where it is and who may be at risk.

Do not continue unsafe work

Keep the task stopped until the risk is addressed and your supervisor or manager confirms a safe way forward. Ask for help if you are unsure.