

Meeting the Requirements of the CDM Regulations: 10 Tips for Architects

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Introduction

Architects are doing something creative and positive every working day by supporting the building of new homes, schools and hospitals. They are the core of construction and in a position to improve the performance of health and safety on site and for end users even before the construction has begun.

By consideration of health and safety, the whole project team can provide the Client with a project that is focused on design risk management and the health and safety needs of those constructing, maintaining and using the buildings and structures.

The following ten tips have been provided to assist Architects during design development to consider health and safety risks that maybe created and encountered by their designs and to support them in meeting their legal obligations under CDM2007.



[\[Image 1\]](#)

Tip 1- Appointment

On appointment, you are required to make your Client aware of their responsibilities under CDM. You may use a number of resources for this purpose including:-

- [HSE leaflet 'Having Construction Work Done'](#) [1]
- [RIBA 'A Clients Guide to Health and Safety for a Construction Project'](#) [2]
- [APS 'What Client's need to do'](#) [3]
- [Constructing Skills Guidance Booklet 'Industry Guidance for Small, One-off and Infrequent Clients'](#) [4]
- [Constructing Excellence – DVD 'Clients Guide to CDM?'](#) [5]

Remember, where a project is likely to become [notifiable](#) [6], the Design should not proceed past RIBA Stage C without an appointment (by the Client) of a CDM Coordinator.

Note: Clients who have work done on their own home, or the home of a family member that does not relate to their trade, or business, and is not being undertaken as a business venture, have no duties under CDM 2007. However, your own Designer and the appointed Contractor Duties still apply regardless of the Clients' status.

Tip 2 – CDM Designer ‘Competency’ Assessments

Prior to appointment, often after, you may be requested by the Client or CDM Coordinator to demonstrate your ability to meet the ‘Designer’ Duty Holder responsibilities under CDM. This includes the need to ascertain your [competency \[7\]](#) regarding technical abilities and confirm you have allocated enough resources in your price to correctly manage your CDM duties.

If this has become a reoccurring task, consider undertaking a pre-qualification assessment via a HSE recognised provider, such as [SSiP \(Safety Schemes in Procurement\) \[8\]](#). These schemes are recognised by most Clients and CDM Coordinators and will reduce the need to complete full assessments on every commission. They will also reduce the burden on your Client to pay for these assessments and may provide you with a slight commercial advantage.

Tip 3 – Existing Environment – Existing Hazards

During early/ mid concept stage, the Architect should consider hazards and risks associated with the proposed site. This would include those emulating from current site activities, existing services, adjacent site activities and the existing built environment.

This is best undertaken as a project team with a Client representative, fellow design team consultants and the CDM Coordinator. This may be completed during or after a design team meeting.

The [STAGE checklist \[9\]](#) should assist in this activity. Also, the whole Design team should consider recording all significant and unusual risks and hazards identified in a single central Project [Risk Register \[10\]](#) and/ or on design Drawings. This will reduce the level of paperwork for everyone and provide an audit trail for future reference.

Tip 4 – Build ability

Architects are in a position to help build-ability and should consider a number of logistical issues that are associated with the form of their proposed structure. This includes site access arrangements during construction and where the contractor could establish site set up by considering how temporary service connections (water, waste and electrical) can be easily made early in the construction process. The [STAGE checklist \[11\]](#) may support this consideration.

The Architect should also consider the practicality of installing any specified components. This would include how these components will be handled and sequenced. This is most important when designing something that is slightly unusual and may require temporary design by the contractor.

The information produced by [Safety in Design \[12\]](#) and the [HSE \[13\]](#) provides tips on how to focus this consideration.

Remember, Architects **don't** have to specify construction methods, except where the design assumes or requires a particular construction or erection sequence, or where a competent contractor might need such information.



[\[Image 2\]](#)

Tip 5 – Usability

The Architect is required via CDM 2007 to ensure all workplaces meet the requirements of the Workplace (Health, Safety and Welfare) Regulations. This requires you to consider the end user health, safety and welfare requirements in ‘workplaces’ and other fit for purpose issues such as safe access/ egress arrangements.

Some of the regulation requirements overlap with common Building Regulation requirements; however in some instances some may not be obvious or covered. This may include common areas in domestic premises (i.e. tower blocks) where caretakers or cleaners may need to frequently work.

During early detail design a quick review of the RIBA Job Book, the [STAGE checklist \[14\]](#) and discussions with the CDM Co-ordinator may support this consideration.

A free copy of the [Workplace Regulations \[15\]](#) and abridged [Managers guide \[16\]](#) can be downloaded from the HSE website.

Tip 6 – Maintainability

The Architect is in an important position to protect future maintenance workers from harm. This can be as simple as increasing a parapet wall height on a roof, or by providing sufficient space in plant room areas.

To manage this, the Architect should consider undertaking safety design reviews with fellow designers, the CDMC and selected Client representatives, such as Facilities Managers.

The most practical way of undertaking this review is to lay out the developing design drawings in a workshop environment and collectively consider any potential impacts and conflicts in the design. The [STAGE checklist \[17\]](#) may support this review process .



Tip 7 – Only Consider Significant and Unusual Hazards and Provide Proportionate Solutions

Architects are required to consider risks and hazards that may arise as an impact of their designs. However, the level of consideration should be focused on those that are significant and/ or unusual. Therefore, there is no need to consider ‘all hazards’ only the [significant and unusual hazards](#) [18] which a competent contractor or designer could not reasonably foresee (i.e. unusual materials or work sequences).

Once identified, these hazards should be recorded and considered. When considering a forward action to eliminate or reduce the risk, the Architect is allowed to balance solutions against other factors such as aesthetics, programme, cost and effort. So, the amount of effort made to remove, reduce or control the hazard is allowed to be proportionate to the level of risk. Further guidance on [proportionate risk](#) [19] management is available from the HSE.

Tip 8 – Communicating Health and Safety Information

As an output of design reviews, the Architect and the collective design team will have removed and reduced a number of potential hazards. On occasions however, it may not be reasonably practical to remove all hazards. This could be due to inherent hazards outside the Architects control, such as the presence of asbestos or that the effort to remove the hazard is disproportionate to the benefits.

In such instances, the Architect will need to communicate forward any likely significant or unusual hazards so that the contractor and eventual end users can develop suitable arrangements to manage the risk.

This information will ideally need to be communicated throughout design development, but communication is essential at two key stages:

- At **pre construction stage** to the CDMC where information is included in a Preconstruction Information Pack or directly to the contractor if the project is not CDM Notifiable.
- **Prior to building handover** to the CDMC for inclusion within the Health and Safety file that is prepared by the CDMC and then handed to the client. If the project is not Notifiable then this information should be handed directly to the Client.

The Architect should discuss with the CDMC and Client how best to communicate this information so it reaches the intended audience.

Current best practice suggests that the use of pictorial warnings supported with written dialogue within a drawing comment box is a useful process of communicating hazards. This allows for all relevant risk information to collate in one place and ensures all significant and unusual issues are not missed during design changes. This practice also ensures that the intended audience, the contractors and their employees will visually be made aware of these issues. Examples of this best practice can be viewed at the [APS website](#) [20].

Note: You are not required to warn about every risk and hazard in the design, such as obvious ones like working at height. The HSE suggest you only focus on significant and unusual risks.

In relation to the Health and Safety file, Safety in Design have developed a [guidance note \(Para. 20\)](#) [21] which details typical information that should be provided by the Project Architect.

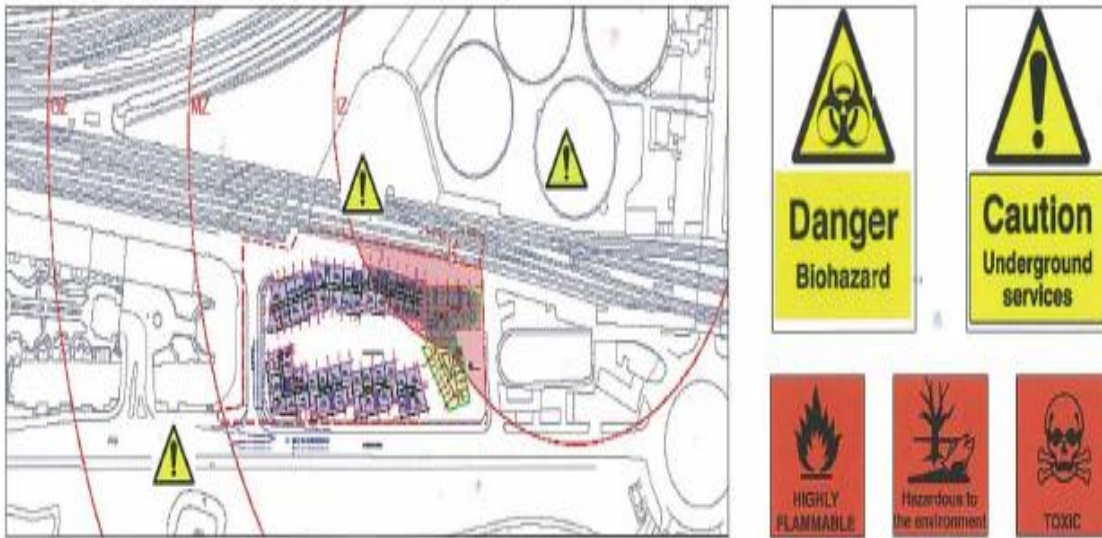


Image 41

Tip 9 – Sources for CDM Design Best Practice

Since the implementation of CDM, a number of organisations and authorities have been established to support implementation. The quality and usefulness of this information varies, however the following resources are considered relevant for Architects and provide information on best practice approaches specifically on design (CDM) safety related best practices.

Web Based Resources

- [Safer Design](#) – Information on STAGE design review and links to best practice [22]
- [The Health and Safety Executive](#) – Information on sector based risks and free risk management tools [23]
- [Safety in Design](#) – Provides Design Safety Guides and Training information [24]
- [Design Best Practice](#) – Provides examples of good design including case studies for CDM [25]
- [The Association for Project Safety](#) – General information and training on CDM practice to support CDM-C's, Designers and other CDM duty holders [26]

Further web based resources specifically for Designers can be found on the [Safer Design website](#) [27].

Key Literature

Since introduction of CDM, over 150 books and guidance notes have been produced. Of these, the following are considered most relevant for practicing Architects

- [CDM2007 - Construction Work Sector Guidance for Designers \(C662\)](#) [28]
- [CDM2007 - Workplace 'in use' Guidance for Designers \(C663\)](#) [29]
- [Health and Safety in Construction Design](#) [30]
- [Design Risk Management + CD ROM: Advice for Designers on the Implications of the Construction \(Design and Management\) Regulations 2007](#) [31]
- [Design Risk Management: Contribution to Health and Safety](#) [32]
- [Constructing Skills – CDM2007 Sector Guidance for Designers \(Free Publication\)](#) [33]
- [Construction Design and Management Regulations 2007 \(Free Publication\)](#) [34]
- [HSE Health and Safety in Construction \(Free Publication\)](#) [35]

Further lists on Design Safety Research and Books can be found on the [Safer Design website](#) [36].

DVD

A Constructing Excellence, RIBA and HSE venture to produce a number of films affirming great design whilst safeguarding people working in construction. The films are aimed at Architects (including trainees) and other construction professionals who have a key role in creating safe, sustainable and buildable designs. The series is accredited by the RIBA and can contribute to your CPD learning programme.

Further information is available at the [SquareCircle website](#) [37].



[Image 5]

Tip 10 – Sources for Advice on CDM and Health and Safety

The average practicing Architect is unlikely to have internal access to a health and safety advisor, however they may have access to a CDM Co-ordinator and also a number of organisations do provide practical advice.

The Health and Safety Executive operate a free service called [Infoline](#) [38] that enables you to discuss aspects of health and safety legislation you maybe unsure of. The service operates a direct telephone (0845 345 0055) and email enquiry services. You are not required to provide any personal details so you can remain anonymous should you wish.

If you wish to commission specific CDM advice, the Association for Project Safety (APS) has a [register of Members](#) [39] and if you wish specific health and safety advice, the Institute of Occupational Safety and Health (IOSH) have a [consultant's database](#) [40]. However, prior to any appointment, you should always check the consultant is conversant with your sector needs. These registers are only indications of general competency and not specific sector competency.

Training

There are many Training providers on the market; however the following three providers have developed courses by designers for designers:-

- The RIBA run a series of accredited CPD sessions and have established a Health and Safety Specialist Group. Details are available on from [RIBA regional websites](#) [41].
- The Association for Project Safety run a series of national and regional events and has a list of accredited trainers providing design risk management and CDMC courses. Details can be found on their [website](#) [42].
- Finally, Safety in Design has developed good accredited courses for designers and details are listed on their [website](#) [43].

Note: For RIBA members, Health and Safety is a [CPD curriculum compulsory subject](#) [44] and you should undertake *at least* 2 hours annual CPD on this subject.

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3. [http://www.associationforprojectsafety.co.uk/productsandservices/productcatalogue/fwsamplepubs/2007%20CDM%20Clients%20Need%20To%20Do%20\(full%20sample%20copy\).pdf](http://www.associationforprojectsafety.co.uk/productsandservices/productcatalogue/fwsamplepubs/2007%20CDM%20Clients%20Need%20To%20Do%20(full%20sample%20copy).pdf)
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18. CDM Regulations ACoP, 125 - *'Designers are required to avoid foreseeable risks 'so far as is reasonably practicable, taking due account of other relevant design considerations'. The greater the risk, the greater the weight that must be given to eliminating or reducing it. Designers are not expected to consider or address risks which cannot be foreseen, and the Regulations do not require zero risk designs because this is simply impossible. However, designers must not produce designs that cannot be constructed, maintained, used or demolished in reasonable safety'.*

CDM Regulations ACoP, 133 - 'Significant risks are not necessarily those that involve the greatest risks, but those, including health risks that are:(a) not likely to be obvious to a

competent contractor or other designers; (b) unusual; or (c) likely to be difficult to manage effectively.

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Images

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