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WORKED EXAMPLE: RISK ASSESSMENT AND METHOD STATEMENT

Laying a block paved patio in a lived-in garden

Hollins & Reed Landscapes Ltd · 12 to 16 October 2026 · In charge: Dan Hollins

Worked example. Change it to fit your job before you use it.

Job details

Company	Hollins & Reed Landscapes Ltd
Site and work area	27 Orchard Close, Wilmslow: rear garden
Planned dates	12 to 16 October 2026
Customer	Mr and Mrs Barker
In charge on site	Dan Hollins
Team	Two landscapers: Dan Hollins leads, first aider and cuts the blocks; Priya Shah is his deputy and runs the compactor.
Work	Laying a block paved patio in a lived-in garden
Prepared by	Dan Hollins
Signature	
Date	

Work and boundaries

Lay paving. Areas: Rear garden patio, about 20 m²

Working arrangement

- Access: the floor or ground.
- Paving system: Laid on sand, with sand joints.
- Dust control when cutting: Water on the blade.
- Other people will use parts of the area at times.
- Mr and Mrs Barker are at home through the job. The garden is closed to them and their dog while we work, and they use the front door. Build-up for this patio: 150 mm sub-base, 30 mm sand and 60 mm blocks, dug to 250 mm to leave a little to trim, with a fall of 1 in 40 away from the house and the finished level 150 mm below the damp proof course. The gas, electricity and water plans and Dan's locator sweep show nothing under the patio. The garden light cable runs along the east fence, 2 m clear of the dig, and is marked. No overhead line crosses the garden or the drive.

The blocks and sand are dropped on the front drive, and everything comes through the side gate by barrow on boards. Spoil goes to a skip on the drive and leaves with a waste transfer note.

Emergency arrangements

Priya Shah rings 999 and gives 27 Orchard Close, Wilmslow; Dan Hollins does if Priya is the one hurt. Dan is the first aider and the kit is in the van on the drive. Whichever of us is not hurt stays with the casualty. Mr or Mrs Barker waits on the front drive and brings the crew through the side gate, kept unlocked and clear. Struck cable: keep clear, keep everyone out, ring 105. Struck gas pipe or a smell of gas: stop the engines, no flames or smoking, get everyone out of the garden, and get Mr and Mrs Barker out of the house if it is near the house. Ring 0800 111 999, and 999 if anyone is hurt or there is a fire.

Planned method

1. **Set up the work area**
   Confirm the work area and scope before starting. Keep other people outside the active work area. Keep entrances and escape routes clear.

2. **Keep people clear of the work**
   Agree how people get past or around the work while it is going on. Put barriers or signs where a route crosses the work. Do not leave open work unattended.

3. **Find buried services before digging**
   Get the service plans, scan and mark the ground before breaking it. Do not dig until an unsafe or unknown service has been dealt with.

4. **Check the paving delivery**
   Inspect units for damage and confirm this job's product before installation. Hold damaged or unsuitable units out of the work.

5. **Check the weather before you start**
   Stop handling materials and equipment when the wind is strong enough to catch them. Stop in heavy rain, ice or lightning.

6. **Carry the blocks, sand and stone safely**
   Plan the route, clear it, and get help with anything long or heavy. Store materials close to the work so nobody carries further than they need to.

7. **Keep the cutter and compactor away from people**
   Set a clear exclusion area before starting the disc cutter or plate compactor. Stop the machine when anyone enters the area.

8. **Look after the fuel**
   Keep petrol and oil in their own labelled cans, away from drains and hot exhausts. Refuel with the engine off and cool, and keep a spill kit with you.

9 Keep people off open paving

Separate the work from people using the route. Keep unfinished edges and materials controlled until the surface is safe.

10 Set the paving build-up

Base the paving design on the ground conditions and expected loads. Do not guess the base, bedding or falls.

11 Separate and remove the paving waste

Keep broken units, offcuts, spoil and packaging apart as you go. Keep cutting slurry, cement and sand out of gullies and drains; remove the waste before people return.

12 Dig out to the depth of the build-up

Dig to the depth of the sub-base, sand and blocks together, and keep the finished level at least 150 mm below the damp proof course. Dig with an insulated spade or shovel near any marked service, working alongside it and never spiking the ground. Stop if you find a pipe, cable, marker tape or old footing the check did not show.

13 Set the edge restraint first

Set the edging before any sub-base goes in, with a firm vertical face down past the sand. Wear waterproof gloves with wet concrete and wash any off your skin straight away.

14 Limit noise and vibration

Wear ear defenders on the compactor and when cutting. Note how long each person's hands are on each tool while it runs. Take the tool's vibration figure from the maker or HSE's table and check it fits how you use it. Points per hour times hours on the trigger, added up for the day, gives the exposure: 100 points is the action value, 400 is the limit. HSE's vibration calculator does the sum. Over 100, cut it with lower-vibration kit or less time, and never pass 400. Write the result down. Sharing the work does not replace this. Keep the tools maintained.

15 Lay and compact the sub-base

Spread the sub-base in layers of no more than 75 mm and compact each one with the plate compactor before the next. Build the falls into the sub-base, not the sand. Wear ear defenders on the compactor and keep a note of each person's time on the handle for the vibration assessment.

16 Screed the sand laying course

Spread the sand to an even depth, compact it, then screed it, 30 mm when compacted. Lay out only what you will cover in this working period, and leave no more than 1 m uncovered at the end of the day. Do not use the sand to level up. Cover any exposed sand overnight and in bad weather.

17 Lay the blocks from the laid surface

Draw blocks from at least three packs and lay the whole blocks first, working off the laid surface. Leave cut blocks to the edges and obstacles, and cut none smaller than a quarter of a block. Kneel on knee pads or a kneeling board, and stand up and change task through the day.

18 Control the dust when cutting

Split blocks with a block splitter where you can, and keep saw cuts to the ones it cannot do.

Saw cuts: water or H or M Class extraction, plus an APF 20 mask (FFP3), fit tested and clean-shaven.

19 **Wet cutting**
This job is wet cutting: keep water on and collect the slurry.

20 **Use the disc cutter safely**
Check the disc is the right type and speed for the tool and the material. Keep the guard on and both hands on the tool. Wear impact-rated eye protection.

21 **Fill the joints and compact the blocks**
Fit the rubber or neoprene sole plate to the compactor. Brush dry jointing sand into every joint before the final compaction. Run the plate compactor over the blocks, then top up the joints.

22 **Clear and hand back the area**
Remove tools, waste and unused materials. Check the area is clean and ready to use. Tell the customer or whoever runs the site when the work is complete.

Risk assessment

Hazard	Who might be harmed and how	Controls in place
People entering the work area or tripping over materials Step 1	Workers, occupants and visitors	Mark or barrier the active work area. Store tools and materials away from access routes.
People using the building or passing by walking into the work or over what it leaves Step 2	Occupants, visitors, members of the public and workers	Keep the barriers and signs up while the work is active. Give people a clear way round where their normal route is blocked.
A spade, fork or machine hits a live cable, gas pipe or water main Step 3	Landscapers, workers nearby and the public	Use the agreed detector and safe digging method. Stop, keep clear and report anything unexpected.
A damaged unit fails during handling or leaves an unsafe finished surface Step 4	Landscapers and people using the area	Check the actual product instructions. Do not substitute a different laying method.
Wind catches the materials and equipment and blows them onto people nearby Step 5	The team and people nearby	Check the forecast before you start and agree when the wind stops the work. Tie down or take in loose materials before you leave.

Hazard	Who might be harmed and how	Controls in place
Back and shoulder injury from carrying heavy or long items Step 6	Everyone handling materials	Barrow on boards and keep loads small. Lay direct from the pack, not strung out.
A machine, thrown object or moving part injures a worker, child, pet or passer-by Step 7	Operators, workers, residents, pets and passers-by	Use guards and the operator instructions. Keep people out until the machine has stopped.
Petrol spilled near a hot engine catches fire Step 8	The person refuelling and people nearby	Never keep fuel in an unmarked bottle. Soak a spill up straight away and keep it out of drains.
Someone trips on an open edge or disturbs unfinished paving Step 9	Landscapers, residents and visitors	Provide an agreed alternative route. Check the area before removing the separation.
Paving moves or cannot carry the expected use Step 10	Landscapers, residents and visitors	Use the agreed design. Stop if the ground, loads or drainage design is not settled.
Broken units, spoil or bags cause trips, and slurry or cement blocks drains Step 11	Landscapers, residents, visitors and waste carriers	Keep spoil and rubble apart from packaging and from anything contaminated. Cover gullies near the cutting and mixing area and leave no waste where it can wash into a drain.
A strike on a service nobody found, a trip into the dig, or strain from moving spoil Step 12	Landscapers, residents and visitors	Barrow spoil on boards and keep loads small. Mark the edge of the dig and leave it closed off at the end of each day.
Wet concrete burns the skin, or an edging unit traps fingers Step 13	Landscapers	Keep wet concrete off skin and out of boots. Lower each unit into place, do not drop it.
Hearing damage and hand-arm vibration from power tools Step 14	The person on the compactor or cutter	Use sharp blades and discs, which cut faster with less vibration. Warn people nearby before you start cutting.

Hazard	Who might be harmed and how	Controls in place
Noise and hand-arm vibration from the plate compactor, or the plate runs onto a foot Step 15	The person on the compactor	Walk behind the handle with feet clear of the plate. Stop the engine before moving it across the garden.
Wet or disturbed sand lets the blocks settle unevenly and leaves a trip edge Step 16	Landscapers and people using the area	Keep off the screeded sand. Work from the blocks already laid.
Knee and back strain from long spells kneeling and bending Step 17	Landscapers	Keep the packs close to the laying edge. Share the laying and barrowing so nobody kneels all day.
Silica dust from power cutting damages the lungs Step 18	The person cutting and anyone downwind	Cut in one place, downwind of the house and well away from anyone else. Keep people out until the cutting has stopped and the slurry is cleared. Collect any slurry while it is wet. Clear any dry dust with an H or M Class vacuum, not a brush.
Silica dust if the water stops, and slipping on slurry Step 19	The person cutting and anyone nearby	Stop cutting if the water stops.
A disc bursts or the tool kicks back and cuts the user Step 20	The person cutting	Only someone trained to change discs fits them. Stop and swap any cracked or worn disc.
Blocks move, or the plate runs onto a foot on the finished surface Step 21	Landscapers and people using the area	Keep people off until the joints are full. Wear ear defenders on the compactor.
Debris, tools or unfinished work left in the area Step 22	Workers, occupants and visitors	Remove waste by the agreed route. Record and protect any unfinished work.