

# Risk Assessment for Beacon Lighting 2025

## Preparation.

The basket is made of cast iron and bolted to a solid oak tree stump. It was erected in 2018 and should be solid for decades and hopefully the next 100 years at least. It needs to be checked regularly and at least before any use for any signs of rot to the post or corrosion to the basket. The pole also needs to be checked for any signs of leaning, which is possible with movement of the surrounding clay soil. In the event that any problem is found the beacon should not be lit until the problem has been resolved. In the event of severe problems the beacon should be removed.

The basket has been inspected from ground level and appears sound. The supporting pole shows no signs of rot and is upright. The inspection was carried out by Cllr. Sallows on 7<sup>th</sup> March 2025.

A closer inspection will be made when the basket is loaded with wood a day or two before the lighting.

## Loading the Basket

The basket will be loaded with dry wood, ranging from kindling at the base to larger logs around 20cm diameter to form a stack within the beacon basket.

A diesel soaked rag will be used as a fuse to light the beacon using a torch held at arms length, so that the rag will be approximately 3m from ground level at the time of lighting. Note the fuse will be tied off about 4m above ground level on the day of lighting to avoid anyone gaining access before the ceremony in the evening. Two secondary fuses will be placed at the time of loading that hang about 1m below the basket and well out of reach from anyone at ground level. These will only be used if the primary fuse fails.

The basket will be loaded using a high lift Manitou vehicle provided by Bell and Sons. Only people experienced with working at height will be on the high lift platform to load the wood. The vehicle driver will be fully qualified in the use of the vehicle.

As the location is away from public access at the far corner of the sports field, the area will not be cordoned for the loading, but a watch person will be present at all times to ensure nobody approaches the working area.

| Risk                                          | Mitigation                                                                                                                                                                                                                        |
|-----------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Basket is unsafe for use.                     | Close inspection from working platform at time of loading. <b>Work to stop if any sign of damage or wear.</b>                                                                                                                     |
| Danger of falling wood during basket loading. | Watch. person to ensure nobody approaches under the basket during loading. Anyone approaching advised to stay back. <b>In the event that anyone approaches within 10m of the beacon, work to stop until they have moved away.</b> |
| Lifting heavy items.                          | Those loading the wood to be aware of the risk and instructed in the proper lifting of awkward and potentially heavy material.                                                                                                    |
| Working at height.                            | Those working at height to be experienced in such work and wear appropriate safety equipment.                                                                                                                                     |
| Risk of accident or injury.                   | At least 3 people to be on site at all times and able to contact emergency services if needed.                                                                                                                                    |
| Weather.                                      | Individuals to wear appropriate clothing to protect against normal weather conditions. <b>No activity to be carried out if wind speed is moderate or higher.</b>                                                                  |

## Lighting the Beacon

On the day of lighting, a diesel soaked rag will be pulled up to the beacon using a string placed when the beacon was loaded. This will involve working off a ladder against the beacon pole to reach the string and attach the rag.. The person on the ladder will be experienced in ladder work and the ladder will be footed by a responsible adult. The ladder will be removed once the rag is attached.

The beacon will be lit by a person instructed in all of the potential risks. They will light the beacon with a torch held at arms length to ignite the rag fuse. In the event that the beacon fails to light a ladder will be used to reach higher up the pole to light the secondary fuses placed at the time the beacon was loaded. Again, the person on the ladder will be experienced in ladder work and the ladder will be footed by a responsible adult. The ladder will be removed as soon as the secondary fuses are lit and before the main beacon catches light.

Two fire extinguishers will be on hand in case of any accidents during the lighting process, or while the beacon is burning.

All public will be kept at least 10m from the beacon by a rope barrier and the area around the beacon to be monitored at all times by at least two responsible adults to ensure that nobody approaches and to watch for any material falling from the lit beacon..

| Risk                              | Mitigation                                                                                                                                                                                                                                           |
|-----------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Risk of falling wood from basket. | Visual inspection before lighting starts to ensure beacon wood stack is still safe.                                                                                                                                                                  |
| Risk of falling burning material, | Public to be kept well back (at least 10m) from the beacon. Those monitoring the beacon area to be aware of the risks of falling material. Fire extinguishers to be on hand to extinguish any material that poses a risk to individuals or property. |
| Working from a ladder             | Those working from a ladder to be experienced in such work and the ladder to be footed by a responsible adult..                                                                                                                                      |
| Risk of accident or injury        | At least 3 people to be on site at all times and able to contact emergency services if needed.                                                                                                                                                       |
| Weather                           | Individuals to wear appropriate clothing to protect against normal weather conditions. <b>The beacon not to be lit if wind speed is moderate or higher.</b>                                                                                          |