

STATEMENT OF DEBBIE FINLAY

1. I am an independent Health, Food and Safety Consultant. I operate a consultancy service offering advice and assistance to a wide range of businesses but primarily to those operating drink and food led venues.
2. My background is in catering. During my career I have worked both in private hotels and large factories and as an advisor to local authorities. For many years I worked as a lecturer for City & Guilds in catering. During that time I taught accredited courses to those working in the catering industry. I am therefore very well qualified to advise on all food, health and safety aspects.
3. Prior to starting my own consultancy firm in 2005 I was employed by Stockton Borough Council as a food safety advisor and health and safety advisor. I held that position for over 4 years and when I left that post continued to advise them as an independent consultant for SFBB.
4. Other clients I act for include the Vaulkhard family (operators of large bars in Newcastle), the Sambuca Group (who operate restaurants and bars), Bluedene Ltd (operators of sports bars country wide) and the Spensley (operators of bars and late night venues in Teeside).
5. I have worked for Easteye Limited, which makes up part of the Ladhar Group, for 8 years. I am contracted by them to address all of the health, food and safety aspects for each of their businesses and business premises and to ensure that they are compliant with all legislation relating to these areas. In respect of the Ladhar Group venues I deal with 20 licensed venues and 8 coffee shops.

D. Finlay
4/9/0


6. Part of my brief for the Ladhar Group is to devise bespoke documentation for each venue. This creates the systems by which the food, health and safety legislation is met. Once the systems are in place I am instructed to ensure that they are complied with and kept updated. I do this by regular monitoring of each venue – meeting with managers and checking that the documentation is up to date and completed correctly.

7. At the beginning of my instruction I carry out a full risk assessment with the manager(s) of each venue to ensure that the manager(s) is/are fully aware of the issues that need to be addressed. This is a very hands on approach. From that meeting we together draft the risk assessment documents. We assess both the areas and the tasks to be carried out by all staff and these documents make up the main risk assessment.

8. Once the risk assessment is implemented I continue to monitor and review the premises with the manager. How often this takes place depends on the venue and the type of business. With regard to Inside Out, Beaumont Street, Darlington we carry out monthly meetings. I meet the manager, Dean Vasey, on site and we go through all the documentation. This includes many checks and generally takes at least an hour but can take much longer if any issues need to be addressed.

9. Before I leave the meeting I need to be satisfied that all documentation is up to date, is being implemented properly and is still relevant to the venue.

10. Risk assessments are fluid documents. The risks can change from time to time and it is important to keep reviewing the documents to ensure that all risks are considered. This is considered at each monthly meeting on site with Dean. If new risks have arisen or the risks have changed we amend the documents accordingly. However, if a matter arises


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which has urgent consequences Dean will contact me and set up an emergency meeting so that the risk can be assessed without delay.

11. After each meeting we record what has been done and this documentation is then signed off and retained for reference. If any action points are raised this is referred to Barry Ladhar to be actioned. I have always been impressed how the Ladhar Group react quickly and are always willing to take advice on action points. They have a maintenance manager who I am able to contact to carry out urgent works and he always responds quickly to requests.
12. An example of how this system works is that in Spring of this year reports were made of accidents sustained at Inside Out through glass injuries. Once I was aware of the reports I met with the manager to discuss the issues. We then met with the glass collectors at the venue and talked through how incidents could occur due to glass. We then discussed how we could prevent these going forward.
13. As a direct result of those meetings we have now introduced diaries for glass collectors so that we can show how regularly the areas are monitored and the staff has a clear indication of what their job entails and the dangers they are looking for. This has been extremely helpful to both management and the glass collectors and has resulted in a quick response to any glass being cleared to prevent injuries in the future.
14. We have also posted notices around the premises asking customers to keep their shoes on inside. Female customers do tend to remove their shoes to dance and both the glass collectors and other staff have been instructed to remind customers to keep their footwear on at all times.


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15. I work with many managers and I have always found Dean Vasey to be extremely efficient with regard to ensuring his risk assessments and checks are up to date. On my monthly visits I always find the paperwork in order. Dean will always call me if he has any queries on a matter so that we can discuss how best to risk assess issues and ensure overall health and safety. He doesn't wait for me to attend a meeting but is proactive in contacting me and working with me as a team to ensure the safety of both staff and customers at Inside Out
16. A large part of the implementation of health and safety systems is ensuring that all staff at the premises are fully trained.
17. Again, for the Ladhar Group I have developed bespoke training documents specific to each of their venues and work with the management in ensuring that all staff carry out the appropriate level of training.
18. Whilst all of the management staff at Inside Out have been trained to a high level it is important to ensure that all junior staff (bar staff and glass collectors) are appropriately trained also.
19. The initial induction of a new employee takes several weeks. Initially they are made aware of their surroundings, the risks and general safety aspects. They then commence the full employment induction process. This is quite a detailed process so in order to ensure that staff understand fully all of the training aspects we break it down into sections. Dean deals with this training over the course of the first 3 to 4 weeks of taking on a new member of staff. There is an induction check list to ensure that all staff have had the training and understand it. There is also an induction level quiz with questions that staff must answer to ensure they have understood the training. This is a helpful tool to support the main training process.

D. Vasey
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20. At the end of the training we provide a training certificate to each member of staff and their training record is fully updated and documented.

21. The training is on-going. Managers hold monthly meetings with staff which are more formal but also have briefing meetings at the start of each shift. Any issues that are raised can be addressed and anything that impacts on health and safety or general training is fed back to me by the manager. We will then work on finding solutions or improving the systems.

22. I have provided a number of documents to be submitted by Easteye Limited as part of their evidence in the review of the premises licence at Inside Out. These show the risk assessments and training and gives an indication of the level of checks and systems in place at this venue. The health and safety aspects are taken very seriously.

23. I am confident that all of the risk assessments and training for in Inside Out is up to date.

Signed Debbie Finlay
(Debbie Finlay)

Dated 11/9/17

Debbie Finlay
11/9/17