



Michael Thomas

Health and Safety Manager

Joined The Parks Trust: 2018

What do you do?

My job is to work with all of my colleagues to keep them safe within their work and to make our parks as safe as they need to be for the public. I also help to make sure our contractors and partners work to appropriate standards of safety. On any one day I may be looking at sites, in meetings, auditing work or dealing with paperwork.

What did you do when you left school?

I studied for a degree in Electrical & Electronic Engineering, and started as a design engineer. Later I studied through my work for specific Health & Safety (NEBOSH) and Environmental Management (IEMA) qualifications.

Why did you want to work for The Parks Trust?

Having lived in Milton Keynes since 1985, the idea of helping to provide the green spaces and other activities that contribute to the city greatly appealed. The challenge of working in such a varied working environment with so many aspects to consider was a big part of why I applied for this job.

Describe your career journey so far.

My career to reach this point has been quite varied. I didn't really set out to work in health and safety! As a graduate in Electrical & Electronic Engineering, I started my career as a design engineer working on radar systems. I have had a number of jobs, mostly associated with engineering. For example I worked worked for The Royal Shakespeare Company (Technical Systems Manager), Fujifilm Imaging (Training Instructor, where I also later took on health & safety management) and ABB Robotics (QHSE Manager). I also earlier worked for Buckinghamshire County Council in the education office. I would say all of my previous roles have involved detailed work, and ensuring that either equipment or people were 'safe' in what they had to do.

What skills or qualities do you need to be successful in your role?

You need to be detailed and methodical. You have to be logical and able to hold a reasoned argument. You have to be able to present to and influence others.

I think that you fundamentally need to want to help improve the working lives of others by enabling them to do whatever they need to do safely & efficiently.

My words of wisdom...

Just because you start your career in one way doesn't mean that's what you will necessarily always do!

Many may think Health & Safety is about stopping things from happening - its not. It's about enabling things but always from a basis of understanding of the risk.

