



Risk assessment – Volunteer/Councillor gardening activities at parish council sites

Name of Assessor	Marion Fox Goddard/James Brown	Date of Assessment	November 24 th 2023							
Work Area task being assessed	Volunteer – gardening at parish council sites. (Refer to Balderton Lake and lakeside risk assessment as well as this one if you are gardening near the lake)									
What are the hazards?	What precautions are already in place?	What are the risks? (Are the risks foreseeable by children?)	Risk Rating			What further actions are necessary? And why?	How will you put this into action?			
			L	C	R		By whom:	By when:	Priority	Done (Date completed)
Slipping on wet grass/mud/trip hazards from stones and rocks	Explain to volunteers about the risks of trips and falls. Include children if present. Close monitoring of volunteers during activity.	Trips, slips and falls	1	3	3	None	Session Leader/ Councillor organiser	Explain risk at start of session/ email risk assessment to councillors prior to activity		

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Litter/broken glass/dog faeces in areas where people may come into contact with the ground	Ensure that areas where planting or weeding is taking place are thoroughly litter picked/checked for dog faeces before work starts, and remove all waste. Ensure that all volunteers wear gloves during activities.	Cuts and grazes, contact with dog waste (Toxocara canis)	2	3	6	Close supervision of volunteers. Thoroughly wash any cuts or abrasions as soon as possible, however minor and basic first aid is applied. Carry antiseptic wipes. Report litter location to the Council if needed.	Session Leader/ Councillor organiser	Remind participants / volunteers at start of session		
Discarded Needles	Ensure that areas where group are working are checked first. If there is any evidence of any discarded material, then leave the area alone and report to ground staff so this can remove safely. Ensure you note the location of the needles.	Cuts and infections	1	5	5	Seek professional medical attention if anyone comes into contact with discarded needle.	Session Leader/ Councillor organiser	Check areas at start of session		
Using tools – garden forks, spades, bulb planters, secateurs, pruning saws, hand tools	Ensure adults using large tools wear appropriate footwear and clothing and handle tools carefully. Ensuring that children only use small hand tools, and are supervised by a parent or carer.	Injuries	1	4	4	Tool talk about the dangers of tools as appropriate to the site task. Close monitoring of volunteers.	Session Leader/ Councillor organiser	Explain risk at start of session. Ongoing awareness during session		

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	<p>Don't leave hand tools lying on the ground - to be stepped on or tripped over causing injury</p> <p>Always use the correct size of equipment for the thickness of the material to be pruned e.g. loppers.</p> <p>Be mindful of other volunteers and members of public while working – work within allocated space.</p>					<p>Never use the wrong tool for the job e.g knife instead of secateurs.</p> <p>Never use cutting tools e.g. knives towards the hand</p> <p>Never use damaged, blunt or broken tools.</p>				
Heavy or awkward to handle items, such as heavy sacks and manual handling - lifting, twisting, bending, pushing and pulling causing - strains and sprains.	Use good lifting practices. Share the load with an appropriate number of people. Take care.	Strains, pulled muscles	1	3	3	Be mindful while lifting and carrying and seeing others lifting and carrying especially during clearing up	Session Leader/ Councillor organiser	Remind participants as appropriate		
Poisonous plants, including poisonous bulbs, and plant irritants	Ensure participants are aware if plants or bulbs being handled are poisonous and that plants have the potential to be e.g. Foxglove, Daffodil bulbs. Ensure participants understand the potential of some plants to be irritants e.g. Euphorbia.	Poisoning or allergic reaction	1	5	5	Remind participants and volunteers to wear gloves, and not to put hands to mouths. Seek medical attention where necessary.	Session Leader/ Councillor organiser	Explain risk at start of session		

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Handling pruning waste or diseased shrubs	Ensure volunteers handle green waste appropriately.	Health	1	3	3	Ensure Parks Service notified of green waste needing clearing	Session Leader/ Councillor organiser	Ongoing awareness		
Children volunteering in sessions	Ensure any children are accompanied by a responsible adult or guardian at all times during the session. Ensure children wear gloves, and use hand tools safely. Ensure children have clean hands before handling food.	Health	2	3	6	Check that any child is being looked after by a responsible adult	Session Leader/ Councillor organiser	Ongoing awareness		
Weather e.g. thunderstorms or very hot weather	Cancel a session if bad weather is forecast. Cease work in bad weather conditions Dress for the conditions. Ask volunteers to wear hats and sun screen in hot sun.	Various health issues	2	3	6	Check on volunteers during the session. Advise volunteers to go home early if anyone starts to look vulnerable. Carry spare sun screen and cold drinking water.	Session Leader/ Councillor organiser	Ongoing awareness		
Food and drink on site	Ensure volunteers wear gloves so that they can safely eat and drink during breaks in the session.	Health	2	3	6	Have hand wet wipes available and antibacterial gel, or remind participants to wash their hands in any nearby facilities.	Session Leader/ Councillor organiser	Remind as necessary		

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Working in public park with tools	Ensure all volunteers are aware of location of tools, especially any sharp tools. Tools left on the ground become trip and injury hazards. Be aware of aggressive or difficult people	Injuries. Tools are lost, or taken by public.	3	2	6	Where possible keep all tools together in a wheelbarrow next to the working site, and ask volunteers to take and return tools to the wheelbarrow.	Session Leader/ Councillor organiser	Remind volunteers while working on site as needed		
Lone working	Always work in a minimum of pairs and ensure a charged mobile phone and signal is present in case of emergency Do not work out of sight of others, and if you do, have a clear means of communication.		1	3	3					

Key

Consequence	
Severity of consequence = Level of potential harm	
1	Negligible
2	Minor injury
3	Injury, illness, time off work
4	Major injury, disabling illness
5	Fatality

Likelihood	
Likelihood = Chance of harm	
1	Very Unlikely
2	Unlikely
3	Fairly Likely
4	Likely
5	Very Likely - Imminent

Risk	
Severity x Likelihood = Risk	
1 - 6	Acceptable
8 - 10	Tolerable if strictly monitored, but try to improve
12 - 25	Unacceptable, further controls are mandatory

		Consequence				
		1 Negligible	2 Minor Injury	3 Injury or Illness	4 Major Injury	5 Fatality
Likelihood	1 Very Unlikely	1	2	3	4	5
	2 Unlikely	2	4	6	8	10
	3 Fairly Likely	3	6	9	12	15
	4 Likely	4	8	12	16	20
	5 Very Likely	5	10	15	20	25

Risk Assessment - Safety Plan	
Session Leader Name: plus mobile phone contact numbers	Second in charge Name: Plus mobile phone number
<p>If a problem arises the Session Leader (.....) will be carrying a fully charged mobile phone to call for emergency services. If there is a problem and the Session Leader is incapacitated then the Second in Charge (.....) who will also be carrying a fully charged mobile phone, will call the emergency services.</p> <p>No children under the age of 18 years will be allowed to join in the gardening session unless they are accompanied by a responsible adult.</p> <p>The site will be check and cleared of any waste before gardening begins, any waste found will be disposed of in rubbish bins as appropriate.</p> <p>The session leader/ Councillor organiser will give each new volunteer talk to introduce the activity and any Health & Safety risks.</p> <p>Also, the session leader/ Councillor organiser will continually monitor all volunteers throughout the gardening activity.</p>	

Session leader/ Councillor organiser to bring:

- Gloves and tools or access to lock up where these are stored
- Charged mobile phone with necessary contact numbers
- Sheet to record number of volunteers
- Drinking water (if very hot)
- Sun screen (if very hot)
- Antiseptic wipes
- Hand wipes
- Flask of hot water for drinks (if necessary)
- High Vis jacket
- Basic First Aid Kit (when possible)

Plant details:

Aconites? , *Colchicum* (autumn crocus) - toxic if eaten, *Narcissus (daffodil)* - harmful if eaten; skin irritant, *Hyacinthoides (bluebell)* - harmful if eaten