

**Risk Assessment – Gardening groups**

**General Information**

**Location:** Parks General

**Date of Assessment:** 18/12/25

**Review Date:** 18/12/26

**Assessment Conducted By:** Marta Pascual Argente, Volunteer Coordinator

Activity / Hazard	Persons at Risk	Severity	Likelihood (Before Controls)	Control Measures in Place	Further Actions Required	Likelihood (After Controls)
<b>Wet Weather – Risk of soaked clothing and slippery surfaces</b>	All participants	Low	Medium	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Participants advised in advance to bring waterproof clothing.</li> <li>- Spare wet weather gear available for those without.</li> <li>- Briefing on-site to remind participants of slip hazards, especially on muddy terrain.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Signage to warn of slippery surfaces.</li> </ul>	Low
<b>Cold or Hot Weather – Risk of temperature-related illness</b>	All participants	Medium	Medium	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Pre-event communication advising appropriate clothing: warm layers in cold weather, sun protection in heat.</li> <li>- Hydration encouraged: water bottles recommended in all weathers</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Ensure access to warm drinks in cold weather.</li> <li>- Provide shaded rest areas in hot weather.</li> <li>- Monitor participants for signs of heat exhaustion or hypothermia.</li> </ul>	Low
<b>Contamination / Tetanus or Toxicara from soil / dog's excrements</b>	Those without tetanus boosters	High	Low	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Pre-event reminder for participants to ensure tetanus vaccinations are up to date.</li> <li>- Gloves provided and mandatory when handling soil.</li> <li>- Participants advised to cover cuts and open wounds with plasters.</li> <li>- Handwashing facilities available and use encouraged before eating or drinking.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- On-site signage reinforcing hygiene measures.</li> </ul>	Low
<b>Contamination / Injury from Sharps</b>	All participants	Medium	Low	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Only staff handle sharps; volunteers are prohibited from doing so.</li> <li>- Staff conduct a visual site check before activities begin.</li> <li>- Sharps removal equipment available and carried by staff.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- On-site briefing to remind participants not to touch sharps and to report any found immediately.</li> <li>- Use tools instead of hands when handling leaf piles or rubbish.</li> <li>- Signage to reinforce key safety messages.</li> </ul>	Low
<b>Contamination or Injury from Toxic/Irritant Plants</b>	All participants	Medium	Low	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Gloves provided and mandatory when handling plants.</li> <li>- Pre-event information advising appropriate clothing and glove use.</li> <li>- Warning issued about toxic/irritant plants.</li> <li>- Participants with known allergies advised to avoid handling identified plants.</li> <li>- Care advised near thorny plants and branches.</li> <li>- Handwashing facilities available; hand hygiene encouraged before eating.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- On-site signage reinforcing safety measures.</li> <li>- Verbal briefing before activity on plant-related risks.</li> </ul>	Low
<b>Trip / Slip Hazards</b>	All visitors	Medium	Medium	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Pre-event site inspection to clear hazards.</li> <li>- All exits kept clear.</li> <li>- Tools never left on the ground; long tools propped securely against vertical surfaces with prongs facing inwards.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- On-site briefing to reinforce safe tool storage and site awareness.</li> <li>- Signage highlighting trip hazards if applicable.</li> </ul>	Low
<b>Manual Handling – Back Strain from Bending, Digging, Lifting, or Pushing Wheelbarrows</b>	All participants	Medium	High	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Staff trained in HSE Manual Handling at Work guidance.</li> <li>- Pre-event information advising participants to take breaks &amp; avoid overexertion.</li> <li>- Instruction to lift with bent knees and seek help for heavy loads.</li> <li>- Demonstration of safe lifting techniques at briefing.</li> <li>- Wheelbarrows not to be overfilled, work in groups of threes.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Ongoing supervision and reminders during activities.</li> </ul>	Low

Activity / Hazard	Persons at Risk	Likelihood		Control Measures in Place	Further Actions Required	Likelihood (After Controls)
		Severity (Before Controls)	Controls			
<b>Injury from Tools &amp; Equipment</b>	All participants	High	Medium	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Participants briefed on correct tool use.</li> <li>- Power tool use restricted to staff, except for lawnmowers.</li> <li>- Safe distances maintained when using tools.</li> <li>- Only staff permitted in the tool shed.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Regular inspection of tools for safety.</li> <li>- Staff using power tools to be trained and competent.</li> </ul>	Low
<b>Occurrence of Injury</b>	Injured person	High	Low	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- First aid kits available on site.</li> <li>- Staff trained in first aid.</li> <li>- Mobile phones and landline available for emergencies.</li> <li>- First aiders identified to all participants.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Regular checks of first aid supplies.</li> <li>- Ensure staff first aid training is up to date.</li> </ul>	Low
<b>Unsuitable Footwear – Risk of Injury, Slipping, or Tripping</b>	All participants	Medium	Medium	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Pre-event information advising appropriate footwear (e.g., trainers, walking boots).</li> <li>- Steel-toe capped boots provided where needed.</li> <li>- Participants reminded to be cautious when using tools such as forks.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Enforce steel-toe capped boots for high-risk activities.</li> </ul>	Low
<b>Working at Height</b>	All participants	Medium	Low	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Purchase tripod ladder as more secure.</li> <li>- Only trained staff permitted to use ladders.</li> <li>- Volunteers can use ladders if briefed before hand and working with a trained member of staff.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Regular checks to ensure ladders are in good condition.</li> <li>- Provide refresher training for staff using ladders.</li> </ul>	Low
<b>Lawnmower Use</b>	All participants	High	Low	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Refer to separate lawnmower risk assessment.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Ensure all relevant staff are familiar with lawnmower risk assessment and control measures.</li> </ul>	Low
<b>Anti-Social Behaviour / Confrontation</b>	All participants	High	Medium	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Staff must carry mobile phones at all times.</li> <li>- If confronted by a member of the public, staff and volunteers should not engage or challenge behaviour.</li> <li>- Staff and volunteers to retreat to a safe location if necessary.</li> <li>- Emergency services to be contacted via 999 or 101 depending on severity.</li> <li>- Staff in office available for assistance.</li> <li>- Volunteers to work in pairs if away from main group and within sight of staff.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Provide conflict de-escalation training to staff where appropriate.</li> <li>- Ensure clear reporting procedures are followed.</li> <li>- All incidents to be logged in the BOST online incident record.</li> </ul>	Low
<b>Working with Individuals with Criminal Records</b>	All participants	Low	Low	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- All individuals with a criminal record must declare it at the interview stage.</li> <li>- Final decision made by CEO.</li> <li>- Risk assessment conducted in consultation with probation officers if applicable.</li> <li>- Two references requested and checked before participation.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Maintain confidentiality and compliance with safeguarding policies.</li> </ul>	Low
<b>Storage, Including Hazardous Substances</b>	All participants	Medium	Low	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- No drinking in workshop/storage areas.</li> <li>- All individuals reminded to wash hands before eating, drinking, or smoking.</li> <li>- Regular disposal of unneeded items to maintain clear storage spaces.</li> <li>- Quarterly documented checks on storage safety and hazardous substances.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Ensure proper labelling and storage of hazardous materials.</li> <li>- Conduct annual review of storage practices.</li> </ul>	Low
<b>Weil's Disease (Leptospirosis) and Other Waterborne Illnesses</b>	All participants	Medium	Low	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Participants advised to wash thoroughly after water contact.</li> <li>- Mandatory handwashing before eating, drinking, smoking, or leaving the site if contact with water occurs.</li> <li>- If flu-like symptoms appear after the event, participants should consult a doctor immediately.</li> <li>- Cuts and grazes must be covered with waterproof plasters.</li> <li>- Immediate treatment of cuts with antiseptic.</li> <li>- When working in ponds, waders and pond gloves must be worn.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Regular reminders and training on hygiene and disease prevention.</li> </ul>	Low
<b>Drowning</b>	All participants	High	Low	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Clear communication to all participants about the location of any open water (e.g., ponds, water features).</li> <li>- Water depth typically mid-thigh; participants instructed to step slowly into water and use a stick to gauge depth.</li> <li>- Work in pairs: one person in the water, the other onshore to monitor and alert in case of danger.</li> <li>- Onshore partner must be confident in water safety.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Ensure staff and volunteers receive basic water safety training.</li> <li>- Regular risk assessments of water hazards.</li> </ul>	Low

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<b>Varnish and Woodstain Exposure</b>	All participants	Medium	Low	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Avoid skin and eye contact.</li> <li>- In case of eye contact, rinse immediately with plenty of water &amp; seek medical advice.</li> <li>- Wear suitable gloves and eye protection (goggles).</li> <li>- If swallowed, seek immediate medical advice and do not induce vomiting.</li> <li>- Work in well-ventilated areas only.</li> <li>- Proper disposal of materials at hazardous waste collection points.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Provide training on handling hazardous substances safely.</li> </ul>	Low
<b>Photography – Potential Invasion of Privacy</b>	All participants	Medium	Low	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Participants informed in advance via information sheet that photographs will be taken.</li> <li>- Explicit consent obtained before taking photographs.</li> <li>- Participants advised on the intended use of images for publicity.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Ensure consent forms are signed where required.</li> <li>- Provide opt-out option for individuals who do not wish to be photographed.</li> </ul>	Low
<b>Infectious diseases - risk of transmission</b>	All participants	High	Low	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Group size is limited to 12 volunteers, 1 leader, and 1 assistant per gardening session.</li> <li>- Volunteers or staff must not attend if they feel unwell with an infectious illness such as flu, diarrhoea, or vomiting.</li> <li>- Volunteers or staff should remain at home until fully recovered; wait 48 hours after diarrhoea/vomiting and approximately 5 days after flu symptoms before returning.</li> <li>- Staff ensure hand hygiene is enforced: all participants wash hands or use sanitiser on arrival, after touching surfaces, and before leaving; sanitiser is available on-site at all times.</li> <li>- Each volunteer is allocated individual tools; sharing is avoided where possible. Volunteers may bring their own tools if in good condition. Tools and hands must not be cleaned in water tanks or butts.</li> <li>- If an area becomes crowded, staff will move volunteers to another location or end the session.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Ensure regular communication with volunteers regarding any policy changes.</li> </ul>	Low

### Additional Notes:

This assessment complies with UK Health & Safety legislation, including:

Health and Safety at Work Act 1974

Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999

Control of Substances Hazardous to Health (COSHH) Regulations 2002

Risks will be reviewed dynamically throughout the activity, with additional control measures introduced as needed.

Incident reporting procedures are in place for any accidents or near-misses.

### Volunteer Registration & Risk Acknowledgment

**New and returning volunteers:** Risk assessment will be reviewed with them upon joining.

**Regular volunteers:** Required to update personal details in **Salesforce**, read the risk assessment, and sign the **Volunteer Agreement** in Salesforce.

**Corporate and micro-volunteers:** Required to complete **registration** and read the **Information for Participants** sheet before attending.