

GENERAL RISK ASSESSMENT – BARNET GREENSPACE VOLUNTEERING

Company name: London Borough of Barnet

Assessment carried out by: Richard Young

Date of next review: 16/01/2026

Date assessment was carried out: 16/01/2025

What are the hazards?	Who might be harmed and how?	What are you already doing to control the risks?	What further action do you need to take to control the risks?	Who needs to carry out the action?	When is the action needed by?	Done
<p>Injury from tools and/or manual handling of loads</p>	<p>Volunteers, site users.</p> <p>Contact with tools while in use, in transit, laid aside or stored may cause a wide range of injuries. These injuries include but are not limited to: lacerations, puncture wounds, blunt impact trauma, infections, and repetitive use injuries.</p> <p>Using incorrect technique to move heavy or awkward loads may result</p>	<p>LBB have issued a training handbook for 'Friends of' groups. This handbook includes details of correct tool use, transport, storage, maintenance, and PPE (Personal Protective Equipment).</p> <p>This handbook is supplemented by annual 'health check' meetings where volunteer leaders are trained in tool safety and maintenance.</p> <p>Minor accidents and near misses recorded in an accident book. Major incidences reported as per RIDDOR (Reporting of Injuries, Diseases and Dangerous Occurrences Regulations).</p>	<p>If a need is identified, the tools training handbook may be supplemented by cascade or video training</p>	<p>LBB</p>	<p>Annually reviewed</p>	

What are the hazards?	Who might be harmed and how?	What are you already doing to control the risks?	What further action do you need to take to control the risks?	Who needs to carry out the action?	When is the action needed by?	Done
	in lower back injuries	No use of powered machinery. Volunteers within audible range of group leader at all times.				

What are the hazards?	Who might be harmed and how?	What are you already doing to control the risks?	What further action do you need to take to control the risks?	Who needs to carry out the action?	When is the action needed by?	Done
<p>Slips, trips and falls</p>	<p>Volunteers and site users may suffer a wide range of musculoskeletal injuries including sprains and fractures caused by uneven or slippery surfaces in LBB parks</p>	<p>LBB undertake annual auditing of all parks (which includes assessing potential surfacing hazards) with remedial action undertaken within reasonable timeframes</p> <p>LBB provides guidance of suitable clothing, footwear and PPE in the handbook LBB agrees annual work programmes.</p> <p>Extraordinary tasks to be individually risk assessed.</p> <p>Unexpectedly poor ground conditions or dangerous vegetation which could cause harm to site users should be reported to LBB by the 'Friends of' group.</p>	<p>Monitor reported incidents as part of the annual 'health check'.</p>	<p>LBB</p>	<p>Annual review</p>	

What are the hazards?	Who might be harmed and how?	What are you already doing to control the risks?	What further action do you need to take to control the risks?	Who needs to carry out the action?	When is the action needed by?	Done
<p>Exposure to toxins/disease</p>	<p>Volunteers may be exposed to toxins and disease through:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Contact with litter - Contact with dog faeces - Contact with tools (tetanus) - Contact with injurious vegetation (such as giant hogweed) - Contact with needles and syringes - Insect and animal bites, scratches and stings - Contact with unclean water 	<p>Procedures and PPE recommendations are described in the handbook.</p> <p>Task specific risk assessments, written on-site, on the day will highlight particular hazards and detail the locations of the nearest washing facilities and the location of the nearest hospital and ambulance meet points.</p> <p>Incidents and near misses recorded in an accident book. Major incidents reported as per RIDDOR</p> <p>The latest government guidance regarding groups and COVID-19 must be followed</p>	<p>Monitor reported incidents as part of the annual 'health check'.</p>	<p>LBB</p>	<p>Annual review</p>	

What are the hazards?	Who might be harmed and how?	What are you already doing to control the risks?	What further action do you need to take to control the risks?	Who needs to carry out the action?	When is the action needed by?	Done
		Greenspaces Officer to be contacted in the case of hazardous waste or drugs paraphernalia being found so that hazardous waste contractor can attend				
Objects falling from height	Volunteers, site users	<p>Training leaders to ensure volunteer tasks are not taking place in multi-level environments.</p> <p>Ensuring that proper distances from other volunteers are maintained when carrying out small tree felling tasks. No trees or shrubs over 150mm diameter to be felled.</p>	Monitor any accidents and near-misses as part of the annual 'health check'.	LBB	Annual review	

What are the hazards?	Who might be harmed and how?	What are you already doing to control the risks?	What further action do you need to take to control the risks?	Who needs to carry out the action?	When is the action needed by?	Done
		<p>No branches to be cut over shoulder height.</p> <p>Ensuring proper signage is placed to keep members of the public away from work areas.</p>				
Working at height	Volunteers	<p>No working at height is permitted under any circumstances.</p> <p>If working from height is unavoidable as part of an agreed task, LBB will instruct a contractor to undertake that work.</p>				
Receiving verbal or physical abuse	Volunteers may receive abuse from site users.	<p>Procedures described in handbook, including contact details for the Community Safety Team BarnetCST@barnet.gov.uk</p>	Extra training at sites where incidents have recently occurred	LBB	Work programme commencement	

What are the hazards?	Who might be harmed and how?	What are you already doing to control the risks?	What further action do you need to take to control the risks?	Who needs to carry out the action?	When is the action needed by?	Done
Hygiene/comfort	Volunteers may suffer discomfort from being too hot/cold, or if hygiene requirements are not met. Potential for sunburn.	Location of nearby toilets with appropriate sanitary disposal facilities to be described in the task risk assessment. The handbook describes suitable clothing for summer and winter work and appropriate PPE	No further action required			
Stress to young or elderly individuals	Young or old volunteers may be more susceptible to physical or mental stress while volunteering	Training is given to group leaders in sensitively supporting the young and old by tailoring tasks to their needs. Self-paced training to be used if appropriate.	Review as part of annual 'health check'	LBB	Annual	
Stress to volunteers with	Volunteers with physical or mental disabilities may be	Training group leaders to properly support these	Review as part of annual 'health check'	LBB	Annual	

What are the hazards?	Who might be harmed and how?	What are you already doing to control the risks?	What further action do you need to take to control the risks?	Who needs to carry out the action?	When is the action needed by?	Done
<p>physical or mental disabilities</p>	<p>more susceptible to physical or mental stress while volunteering</p>	<p>volunteers while maintaining their dignity.</p> <p>Individual risk assessments to be conducted if appropriate</p> <p>Offering self-paced training</p> <p>Maintaining an inclusive approach so that carers can join in</p>				
<p>Stress to pregnant women or new mums</p>	<p>Pregnant volunteers, or those recently having given birth may find some tasks mentally or physically taxing</p>	<p>Training group leaders to properly support these volunteers while maintaining their dignity.</p> <p>Identifying rest areas, with screening if appropriate</p> <p>Individual risk assessments to be conducted if appropriate</p>	<p>Review as part of annual 'health check'</p>	<p>LBB</p>	<p>Annual</p>	

What are the hazards?	Who might be harmed and how?	What are you already doing to control the risks?	What further action do you need to take to control the risks?	Who needs to carry out the action?	When is the action needed by?	Done
Language barriers may cause confusion or danger	Volunteers, site users may be harmed if instructions in English are not understood	Training group leaders to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Identify circumstances where language barriers may exist - Ensure adequate time is available so that everyone can understand - Encourage other members of the volunteering group to interpret - Use council resources to produce written instruction in the required language - Supplement instruction with pictorial information - Be mindful of cultural differences 	Review as part of annual 'health check'	LBB	Annual	

More information on managing risk: www.hse.gov.uk/simple-health-safety/risk/