

Reedham Parish Council

Allotments Risk Assessment

Introduction:

Anyone involved in allotment management has a common duty of care to ensure that their allotment sites are run in as safe and appropriate manner as possible. This duty of care is extended towards all people accessing the allotment site and its boundaries, including allotment holders and tenants, Parish Council representatives carrying out duties, members of the public and bona fide visitors.

Responsibilities:

Allotment tenants have a duty of care and are responsible for their own health and safety and for the safety of others whilst on the allotment garden. Allotment tenants also have a duty of care to anyone on their allotment plot, regardless of whether they have given permission for them to be there. Risk assessments shall be used as a framework for the identification of risks, assessing their relative severity and development of a strategy for dealing with them.

Risk Assessments:

The objective of the risk assessment is to remove the risk completely or to reduce the risk to an acceptable level. Reduction levels are defined by the grading system in the risk assessment. Risk assessments shall be carried out at least once per year, and will look at risks such as ground hazards, e.g., broken glass on derelict plots, which may be hidden by summer weed and grass growth.

Risk assessments apply to the general site which includes plots, thus ensuring that allotment holders are complying with the policy, which is part of their tenancy agreement. Bad practices should be noted and pointed out to tenants in order that they can be rectified.

Remedial Action:

The Parish Council shall determine who is responsible for carrying out remedial action for each identified risk. Responsibility may lie with the Parish Council or the Allotment Tenant, depending on the nature of the issue. If remedial action is the responsibility of any person or organisation other than the Parish Council itself, written notification shall be sent immediately.

Enforcement:

Enforcement of the policy will be by Risk Assessments and remedial action notices, and in extreme circumstances a 'Notice to Quit' may be issued.

HAZARD	PERSONS AT RISK	DESCRIPTION	CONTROL MEASURES	RISK LEVEL
Machinery	Machine Operator Tenant Visitors	Operating machinery carries a medium level of risk unless the appropriate safety equipment is worn and the machinery is operated correctly. Injuries to hands, feet and face need to be guarded against. When strimmers and mowing machines are being used on an adjacent plot, stones and other flying objects can cause injuries.	Responsibility for the use of machinery lie with the owner/operator. It is a requirement that tenant's wear the recommended safety equipment when operating machinery. The instructions for these items of equipment make reference to the dangers. It is the responsibility of the operator to take due care.	M
Garden Tools and Equipment	Tenant	Injuries to hands and feet if equipment is not used correctly.	Garden tools and equipment should be used correctly and appropriate gloves & footwear worn as necessary.	M
Weed killers and pesticides	Tenant	There is a risk if chemicals are not used in accordance with the manufacturer's instructions.	The use of commercial grade weed killers and spraying equipment is strictly forbidden by Reedham Parish Council. All chemicals should be used in accordance with the manufacturers' instructions. If chemicals are kept on a tenant's plot they should be stored in a locked shed, in their original container and clearly identifiable.	L
Slips, trips and falls	Tenant Visitors	The allotments ground can be uneven. Ground maybe slippery after heavy rainfall and in the winter there may be icy conditions. After snowfall trip hazards may be hidden.	Keep communal paths maintained. Keep paths and plots clear of debris	M

Cuts	Tenant	Sharp tools, broken glass and plastic, and other debris can all cause cuts.	Wear appropriate gloves when handling tools and debris. Remove broken and damaged items and debris from site.	M
Eye injuries	Tenant Visitors	Stakes, canes and poles at low level can be the cause of eye injuries.	Cane caps should be considered as a safety precaution on short stakes.	L
Trees and hedges	Tenant Visitors	Broken branches and trees damaged by high winds can be hazardous.	Trees and hedges should be maintained according to the tenancy agreement. Severely damaged trees should be reported to Reedham Parish Council who will identify whether remedial action or removal is required.	L
Vermin	Tenant Visitors	Rats can carry Weil's disease. Although this is rare it is a serious disease.	The presence of rats should be reported to the allotments manager who will use controls as appropriate. The use of rat poison by tenants without the permission of the allotments manager is prohibited.	L
Bonfires	Tenant Visitors	Risk of burning or damage to property, risk to wildlife, risk to health.	Bonfires are not permitted on Reedham allotments. A small incinerator may be used for occasional burning, this should be attended at all times and extinguished before leaving the allotments.	L
Water	Tenant Visitors	Reedham allotments are bordered on one side by a dyke partially obscured by reeds.	Ensure visitors are aware of the dyke. No rubbish or allotment waste should be left alongside the dyke as this may constitute a trip hazard. Reeds to be cut periodically by Reedham Parish Council to clearly mark the edge of the dyke.	L
Lone Working	Tenant Machine Operator Visitors	Although the allotment site is not remote, not all plots can be seen by passing traffic If a lone person on the site was incapacitated they may not be discovered for some time.	Carry a mobile phone while on site. Consider advising a relative or friend of whereabouts.	L