

Bidford On Avon Allotment Association

Health and Safety Guidance

To be read in conjunction with the Health and Safety Policy and the Rules

All activities carry an element of risk and allotments are no exception. Everyone needs to take health and safety seriously, but it is important to approach the issues sensibly. New and existing Members have a responsibility (a duty of care) to themselves and anyone on their Plot regardless of whether they have been given permission to be there. You should act responsibly and comply with any health and safety instructions provided to you or available to you (See www.bidfordonavon-pc.gov.uk/bidfordonavon-allotment-association and search for policies).

Health and Safety only becomes unmanageable when responsibilities are not accepted or appreciated. Each Member has sole responsibility for health and safety on their Plot.

Allotment sites and the activity of gardening is relatively risk free if people are aware of the hazards and make steps to ensure that themselves, other people and wildlife are not put at risk. Please read and always consider the following points before allotment gardening and have them in mind.

Personal Safety

Allotment gardeners often spend long periods of time on their own Plot, take personal safety seriously and tell another person where you are going and what sort of time you will be back.

- If you have a mobile phone take it with you
- Always close and lock the gate behind you upon entering and when leaving the Site.
- Be aware of weather conditions that can affect walking surfaces such as paths, hardcore or grass. In warm sunny weather take sunscreen to protect you from over exposure to the sun. In cold conditions wear warm clothing. Always wear appropriate footwear. Take a warm/ cold drink as appropriate
- You are advised not to attend the Plot during extremely bad weather, storms and high winds.

Physical Exercise

Digging the Plot is a physically demanding task as it involves continued bending and straightening of the back when lifting a spade of soil. It needs to be approached with care and moderation, particularly if you are not used to heavy energetic work. Wear appropriate footwear to avoid a fork in a foot!

Hazardous Rubbish

Please refer to the Rules regarding what must not be brought onto your Plot. Ensure you do not leave any hazardous materials or machinery in the open. Weedkillers must be safely stored and only used in accordance with manufacturer's instructions.

Tetanus or Lockjaw

This is a serious infection caused by bacterium that lives in the soil and especially manured soil. It enters the body through the tiniest of abrasion, scratch, thorn, puncture or cut and a few days or weeks

later the illness hits and it can be deadly. Please make sure that you have a vaccination that can protect you against the illness. If you have had a vaccination in the past consult your GP to see if you need a booster.

Skin Irritations

It is advisable to wear gloves and long-sleeved clothing when pruning plants many can cause skin irritations.

Gardening Tools

Tools can always present hazards if they are not stored correctly or are left lying about the Plot when not in use e.g. upturned forks spades and rakes. Remember the use of domestic power tools may have effects outside your Plot. Be aware that items like strimmers can throw stones several meters and could injure a Member on an adjacent plot remember you owe a duty of care! Always wear eye protectors and appropriate clothing when engaged in such activities.

In respect using larger or potentially dangerous power equipment e.g. rotovators, saws of any sort it is recommended that you seek and obtain professional instruction as to the use of such equipment and always take account of the manufacturers instructions and safety guidance.

Pesticides and Fertilisers

If you use chemicals please keep them within the confines of your Plot. When using pesticides or fertilisers ensure to follow the manufacturers instructions as to use and wear appropriate clothing and gloves. All pesticides and fertilisers that are not to be used must be disposed of responsibly off the Site. They should never be included in household rubbish, burnt or put into any drainage system or watercourse. Clause 8.2 of the Rules makes further reference to chemicals.

Asbestos and Asbestos cement

If you find Asbestos of any kind on your Plot it is essential to take great care over its removal. You should take expert advice as to how it can be encapsulated, bagged and removed from the Site. To a licensed tip. Discovery must be reported to the Committee using bidfordallotments@outlook.com

First Aid Kit

The Association does not provide a first aid kit. It is each Members personal responsibility to have a suitable kit on their Plot.

Legionella

In very hot weather especially in greenhouses, it is possible, although very rare, for Legionella to multiply to harmful levels. Avoid storing potting media in greenhouses or spraying fine mists. Keep very good ventilation. If you have symptoms such as a fever headache loss of appetite and feel lethargic seek medical assistance.

Ponds and Water

People most at risk of drowning in ponds are children under three years of age. Risk from drowning decreases as a child's age increases and so their understanding of the danger. Children on your Plot must be supervised at all times and must not be allowed to go onto another Members Plot. The same danger regarding drowning applies to water butts, baths and other items used for the storage of water

be aware of such danger at all times when a child is on your Plot. Remember that the Site is at least in part close to the River Avon. Certain plots are adjacent and therefore there is a greater danger, supervision at all times is imperative.

Hazards for Wildlife

These can include litter, low level fruit netting use of pesticides, slug pellets, mowing, strimming, and broken glass (which can obviously be a danger to you as well and should be removed forthwith off the Site).

Vermin

Rats carry 70 diseases including Weil's disease, which can cause human death via contaminated water or soil. All Members must be vigilant and report any signs of infestation, which include burrows, tracks droppings and observation. Reporting should be to the secretary at bidfordallotments@outlook.com with details of the location and what has been seen. The symptoms for Weil's disease include fever sickness, diarrhoea, aches/pains, red eyes. Medical assistance must be sought if you have any concerns.

Risk of Infection

Humans are at risk of infection from handling animal manure and composts. Always wear suitable gloves when handling any type of manure or compost. Fresh manure should be heaped for at least 6 months giving time for any e coli to break down. It is the responsibility of the Member for basic hygiene and as stated before to check tetanus boosters are up to date.

Always wash hands or use a hand sterilising gel after handling manure, compost or soil even after wearing gloves.

Unauthorised Persons on Site

If you become aware of any persons who you believe should not be present on the Site please report the same to the secretary as soon as possible using bidfordallotments@outlook.com. Do not put your personal safety in jeopardy.

Hazards

If you become aware or believe that something is or is likely to become a health and safety issue on the Site or ant Plot report the same to the Secretary using bidfordallotmants@outlook.com

This document incorporates must be read in conjunction with the Constitution, the Rules and the Associations Health and Safety Policy.