

## HEALTH AND SAFETY POLICY

Under civil law anyone involved in allotment management has a common duty of care to ensure that allotment sites are run in as safe and appropriate manner as possible, as set out in the Occupiers' Liability Act, 1957.

This duty of care is extended towards all people accessing the allotment site and its boundaries, including plot holders, association officers carrying out duties, members of the public, visitors, intruders, volunteers, and allotment authority staff. There are also environmental and animal husbandry laws to be observed.

### 1. The policy is:

- A. To provide a health and safety procedure which is clear and easy for anyone to understand.
- B. To publicise the existence of our health and safety procedure so that people know how it is applied.
- C. To make sure everyone at Halliwick Park Allotment Holders Association Limited knows what to do to reduce risks.
- D. To make sure all health and safety issues are addressed in a timely way.
- E. To gather information which helps us to improve what we do.

### 2. Definitions

A **hazard** is something with the potential to cause harm. That potential is always there, e.g. a bonfire will always have the potential to spread and cause damage and sparks from the fire could burn people or animals.

A **risk** is the likelihood that the harm a particular hazard can cause will happen, e.g. a bonfire will always be hazardous, but as long as it is lit away from property, only appropriate materials are burnt, there is a means of extinguishing it nearby and people and animals are kept at a distance, the actual risk from the hazard remains low. Risk will increase if one, or more, bonfires are lit regularly or if these precautions are ignored.

A **risk assessment** is a simple framework allowing us to identify risks, assess their relative severity and develop a strategy for dealing with them.

### 3. Responsibility

As an Association, we have a communal duty to ensure that our allotments are safe. The law requires that we exercise at least a 'reasonable' level of care regarding safety.

Overall responsibility for this policy and its implementation lies with the Committee.

## **4. Review**

This policy will be reviewed regularly and updated as required.

## **5. The Policy**

The Association's Health and Safety policy is implemented through the rules of the terms and condition of the allotment, the tenancy agreement and all other rules members have to observe.

In addition, a risk assessment will be carried out by the Committee or designated persons and appropriate actions will be taken to minimise hazards and risks.

All members have a responsibility for reducing risks to their own health and safety and the health and safety of other members and visitors to the allotments by following Health and Safety rules.

Most injuries are easily prevented. Good gardening is safe gardening and it is everyone's responsibility to ensure that we garden in a safe way.

### **Health and Safety rules that all must observe:**

- Plot holders must ensure that their plots and associated accesses are free from hazard: hazards may include sharp edges, exposed nails, improperly stored tools, hazards hidden within undergrowth such as discarded tools, improperly stored dangerous materials such as those listed below.
- Plot holders must acquaint themselves with, and adhere strictly to, the guidelines regarding storage, usage and disposal of hazardous materials such as glass, pesticides, fertilisers, etc. These must be securely stored in their proper containers so that help can be given in the event of an accident and well away from possible reach by children. Members should never store liquid chemicals in unmarked drinking bottles or containers.
- Plot holders should acquaint themselves with the safe use, and storage, of tools, particularly power tools. Any equipment and machinery should be used correctly and responsibly, in accordance with its health and safety guidelines.
- Plot holders should dispose their waste careful so it does not attract rats and other vermin, and inform a member of the committee if evidence of vermin is observed.
- Plot holders should carefully dispose broken glass.
- Plot holders should report vandalism or other evidence of intruders to a member of the committee for reporting to the police.

- Plot holders should park their vehicles in designated car parks, observe the 5mph driving speed limit in the sites, and drive in the indicated direction. Members are not allowed to create park spaces and park their cars in their plots.
- Children must always be supervised and stay close to their parents/carers or host member at all times.
- If asbestos is found, plot holders must notify the Committee. It must only be removed by those authorised by the Committee to do so.
- No flammable materials or liquids (or any kind or size) should be stored in sheds.
- **Gas cylinders are not allowed.** No gas cylinders (or any kind or size) should be stored in any of the sheds or other structures. Gas cylinders are forbidden as there is a real risk of explosion if there is a fire. The Association has the right to immediately terminate a tenancy if gas cylinders found in their allotment.
- In case of a fire that is not a managed bonfire, plot holders must ring the **Emergency Services (on 999)** at once and stand a long way, away from the fire. **Members are warned to NEVER approach a fire in case of explosion.**
- Plot holders should ensure that the gates are kept locked at all times for security purposes. If you approach a stranger on the sites please use caution and get help if in doubt. All unauthorised persons on site should be asked to leave and if they refuse, the **Police must be contacted (emergency contact 999 or 101)**. Crime incidents can be reported on line at: [www.online.met.police.uk](http://www.online.met.police.uk).
- It is recommended that, particularly at quiet times, plot holders inform someone where they are, and their likely return time.

## **6. Risk Assessment**

Twice a year, the Committee will carry out a risk assessment of the sites. This usually involves two Committee members (Health and Safety Officers) touring the sites, identifying hazards, assessing risks, and deciding on actions.

The risk assessment involves listing the potential risks caused by these hazards, assessing the frequency that people are exposed to those hazards, the probability of injury and the impact of such injury. Some risks are so great that immediate action must be taken, some are severe enough that some action needs to be considered, and others may need no action.

## **7. Contacts details for handling Health and Safety issues**

Any health and Safety issue can be reported to either the Secretary or any Health and Safety Officer(s) or any other committee member.