

Health & Safety Policy

1. Policy Statement

The purpose of this document is to define how the Collings Park Trust will manage the risk of harm occurring to site users and people involved with the project to develop and maintain a community garden at the site of the former lawn tennis courts in Collings Park, Plymouth.

Our aim is to reduce or eliminate the risk of harm or damage occurring through accident or incident. This will be achieved through the design of the project, by assessing risks, applying appropriate controls and by monitoring to ensure these controls remain in place over the long term.

2. Scope

This policy addresses those persons and other things directly and indirectly affected by the activities of the Collings Park Trust and the existence of the Trust's assets. This may include, but is not limited to:

- Members of the general public passing through the former tennis court site
- Members and Supporters of the Collings Park Trust
- Volunteers working on the site
- Users of the site
- Employees of the Collings Park Trust
- Contractors engaged by the Collings Park Trust
- Representatives of Plymouth City Council
- Our neighbours

3. Learning from Experience

The Trust will endeavour to learn from experience in order to constantly reduce the risk of harm or damage occurring. This will include learning from incidents on our own site as well as sharing experiences with other relevant organisations. This will be achieved by:

- Reviewing and reporting on all significant incidents and accidents
- Discussing Health and Safety incidents at management committee meetings and Trustee meetings
- Networking with other organisations
- Assigning action to address identified weaknesses or shortfalls

4. Responsibilities

Responsibility for the management of Health and Safety will be discharged by the Trustees via the management committee and through the roles of designated persons, including designated Health & Safety Coordinators. The management committee will assess each phase of the project to develop the site and determine any steps that need to be taken to reduce risk. This will be documented and will form part of the submission to Trustees for ratification prior to the implementation of each phase.

5. Documentation and Communication

It will be the responsibility of Trustees and management committee to ensure volunteers and site users are made aware of and, as far as is practicable, apply the policies, procedures and risk assessments referred to in this document. This will be achieved through clear communication and by making information and guidance readily available.

Health and Safety related documents will be assembled and held on behalf of the Trust by designated Health & Safety Coordinators under the guidance of the Secretary to the management committee. This may include, but is not limited to:

- Risk Assessments
- COSHH Data Sheets and Assessments
- Maintenance plans and records
- Competency assessment records
- Project assessment and risk reduction records

Such documents will be made available on request to those with a genuine need.

6. Planning for Safety

The Trust will minimise the risk of accidental injury by applying a policy of risk assessment and risk reduction throughout the design, establishment and ongoing maintenance of the community garden and any other projects it commissions. The proposed design of the community garden and other projects will be assessed to ensure that the risk of slips, trips, falls and other injury has been addressed; also that development works and ongoing maintenance works are viable without exposing contractors or volunteer workers to inordinate risk. During the design phase particular attention will be given to making the site safely accessible to persons of all physical abilities.

7. Control of Access

In general, access to the community garden will be unrestricted, so it is vital that the site remains in a safe condition. Where necessary, for instance when trees are being lopped,

temporary barriers and/or warning signs shall be used to deter unauthorised access to particular areas.

8. Control of activities

Adequate assessment of Health and Safety shall be undertaken and recorded before any planned activity takes place on the Trust's site or any project related activity takes place on any other site. Such assessment shall take account of the following criteria as a minimum:

- What the activity will involve and what tools and equipment will be used. If necessary the activity in question shall be sub-divided to make the assessment more thorough and meaningful.
- How the activity will be controlled and who will have overall responsibility for that control.
- Who is involved and what is their level of experience and competence? What support / guidance will be provided to inexperienced persons?
- When will the activity start and when is it planned to finish?
- Where the activity will take place, what conditions are likely to be and what else is likely to be happening in that area at the same time.

It is the Trust's policy that volunteers shall only use power tools either where they are inherently low risk items or otherwise where the volunteer group includes somebody suitably qualified and experienced either to use the power tool in question or to provide training and supervision of others using said power tool. Consideration shall be given to outsourcing any activity deemed as high risk.

The Trust expects to purchase a range of hand and power tools for use by volunteers. Such tools will be registered with a representative of the community garden management committee and will be the subject of regular inspection and maintenance. The periodicity of maintenance will be appropriate to the tool in question, as determined by risk assessment, in consultation with manufacturers' data and based on advice from suitably qualified and experienced members of the community. Tools belonging to the Trust will generally be stored on site in the proposed secure store, access to which shall be controlled by a nominated lead volunteer.

9. Risk Assessment and Risk Mitigation

During the establishment and ongoing maintenance of facilities under the control of the Trust it will be policy that all works undertaken will be subject to formal risk assessment and risk mitigation, whether the works are undertaken by contractors or volunteer workers. Working methods will be selected to avoid the introduction of undue risk wherever possible; methods of risk mitigation will be employed to ensure that all remaining risk is reduced to an acceptable level.

The Trust will develop and maintain general risk assessments to cover foreseeable and repeatable tasks; it will also establish specific risk assessments for tasks not covered adequately by the general risk assessments, also for tasks deemed high or very high risk.

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Risk Assessments will be recorded and held by the Trust's Health & Safety Coordinators and Secretary to the management committee for future reference. All volunteer workers will be provided with access to relevant risk assessments and the nominated lead volunteer shall satisfy themselves that all involved have an understanding of the risks and the risk mitigation actions they should follow. In particular, the lead volunteer shall ensure that appropriate Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) is available and is used throughout the activity in question (see separate PPE section below).

Completing a risk assessment shall include the following steps:

- Identify the hazards
- Identify severity of any potential accident and who might be harmed
- Evaluate the risk, decide if existing or new control measures are adequate
- Rate the risk (very high, high, medium or low)
- Record and date your findings and recommendations
- Diary a review date (within a 12 months or after an event)
- Share RA with members, volunteers and participants

All risk assessments should be undertaken by a competent person and be reviewed within 12 months or after any incident that results in an accident or near miss.

Fire risk assessment shall be considered as part of the overall Risk Assessment process where relevant and fire safety awareness training will be provided if deemed appropriate.

The Trust also recognises the need for the risk associated with its contractors undertaking works on the community garden site to be managed effectively. Accordingly, contractors will be required to submit and work in accordance with their own health and safety risk assessments relative to the tasks they are employed to undertake. Such risk assessments will be reviewed by one or more Trustee and/or suitable experienced member of the management committee to ensure they appear appropriate and adequate. However, the Trust will ensure that its actions in doing so cannot be interpreted as taking control of and responsibility for the contractor's activities.

10. Personal Protective Equipment

The type of equipment and activity being undertaken on the project will determine what Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) should be in use, for instance:

- Closed-in footwear or safety boots
- Gardening gloves
- Eye protection (e.g. safety glasses, goggles, full-face mask)
- Wet weather clothing.

General and specific risk assessments will identify PPE requirements within the control measures.

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The Trust will provide PPE under circumstances where it would either be unreasonable or inadvisable for volunteers to provide their own PPE.

11. Hazardous Substances

The Control of Substances Hazardous to Health (COSHH) regulations relate to substances that could affect health through misuse. All substances that fall under COSHH should be accompanied by a data sheet (obtainable from the supplier), which should be held by the Trust's Health & Safety Coordinators and Secretary to the management committee for future reference. These substances should be stored and used in accordance with manufacturers' guidelines. Access to such substances must be restricted to prevent handling by children or other vulnerable persons.

12. Contingency Planning

Where possible, volunteer groups will include a trained and qualified First Aider. Volunteer groups should ensure that at least one person is carrying a mobile phone, so that the emergency services can be called in the event of a significant accident or incident.

The design of community garden will take account of the possibility that the emergency services may need access to the site.

13. Recording of Accidents

An accident book will be available to log any accidents to members, volunteers, participants and members of the public as a direct consequence of assisting with the project or using the Trust's facilities. The accident book should log any accidents that required any form of treatment, who was injured, the type of injury and who completed the accident report. This information should then be removed from the accident book and stored by the Secretary to the management committee according to the Data Protection Act (1998). This report may also prove useful when reviewing any risk assessment associated with the accident. In certain cases a RIDDOR (Reporting of Injuries, Diseases and Dangerous Occurrences Regulations) report may need to be submitted to the Health and Safety Executive. For more information see CPT Accident Reporting Policy or visit www.hse.gov.uk

14. Inspection and Audit

Inspections and maintenance will be undertaken to ensure the Trust's facilities and assets are kept at an acceptably safe standard.

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