

# Collings Park Community Garden – General Risk Assessment

Update 02 August 2017

## Introduction

This document fulfils the Collings Park Trust's commitment to develop and maintain a generic risk assessment to cover foreseeable and repeatable tasks and activities, as stated in its Health and Safety Policy document. This document will be amended and added to as required, under the control of nominated Health & Safety Coordinators and the Secretary to the management committee.

## Risk rating system

**Consequence:** What harm could happen as a result of the identified risk?

| Descriptor    | Examples   |
|---------------|--|
| Insignificant | Injuries not requiring first aid                     |
| Minor         | First aid required                                   |
| Moderate      | Medical treatment required                           |
| Major         | Hospital admission required                          |
| Severe        | Death or permanent disability to one or more persons |

**Likelihood:** What is the likelihood of the determined consequence occurring?

| Descriptor     | Examples                                    |
|----------------|---|
| Almost certain | Is expected to occur in most circumstances  |
| Likely         | Will probably occur in most circumstances   |
| Possible       | Could occur at some time                    |
| Unlikely       | Not likely to occur in normal circumstances |
| Rare           | May occur only in exceptional circumstances |

### Risk levels matrix

| Likelihood     | Consequences  |        |          |           |           |
|----------------|---------------|--------|----------|-----------|-----------|
|                | Insignificant | Minor  | Moderate | Major     | Severe    |
| Rare           | Low           | Low    | Medium   | Medium    | Medium    |
| Unlikely       | Low           | Low    | Medium   | Medium    | High      |
| Possible       | Low           | Medium | High     | High      | Very high |
| Likely         | Medium        | Medium | High     | High      | Very high |
| Almost certain | Medium        | High   | High     | Very high | Very high |

### Recommended action

**NB:** In all cases where risk is high or very high, the first option considered should be to do something differently, such that the risk initiator is no longer present. For instance, using a hand saw in lieu of a power-driven chain saw; building a scaffold tower rather than working from a ladder.

**Very high / High:** Consider the use of a specialist contractor who is better able to undertake the task due to their training, qualifications, experience and/or access to specialist equipment. In other cases act prior to the start of the activity to lower the risk level to as low as reasonably practicable (ALARP) by instigating the listed control measures as a minimum. Sign-on sheets to be used.

**Medium:** Proceed with caution, but actively seek methods of reducing the risk or eliminating it altogether.

**Low:** Continue as the activity progresses to seek ways of lowering the risk further or eliminating it altogether.

| IDENTIFIED RISK | CONSEQUENCES                          | LIKELIHOOD | UNMITIGATED RISK LEVEL | MITIGATION/CONTROL MEASURES   | MITIGATED RISK LEVEL  |
|-----------------|---------------------------------------|------------|------------------------|---|---|
| Use of Chainsaw | Severe: Deep laceration or amputation | Possible   | Very High              | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ensure persons using the equipment have received appropriate training and obtained a relevant certificate of competence or national competence award relevant to the type of use. This to be recorded by a nominated H&amp;S coordinator</li> <li>• Assess the working area to ensure it is clear of obstructions and segregated to prevent unauthorised access</li> <li>• Ensure that a specific risk assessment has been carried out and issued to the operator prior to commencing work</li> <li>• All identified PPE to be used throughout activity</li> <li>• Safety check activity incorporated into sign-on sheet</li> <li>• Ensure that equipment is maintained in good working order before use</li> <li>• Ensure that equipment is secured to prevent unauthorized use</li> <li>• First Aid kit available at site</li> </ul> <p><b>NB:</b> Refer to HSE guidance on <a href="#">Use of Chainsaws INDG317</a></p> | <p>High (likelihood reduced to unlikely)</p> <p><b>Therefore aim to use specialist contractor</b></p> |

| IDENTIFIED RISK  | CONSEQUENCES  | LIKELIHOOD | UNMITIGATED RISK LEVEL | MITIGATION/CONTROL MEASURES   | MITIGATED RISK LEVEL                       |
|--|---|------------|------------------------|---|--|
| Use of mains electrically powered equipment  | Severe: Electric shock or electrocution<br><b>+ see below</b> | Possible   | Very High              | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Protect from electrocution by always using a residual current device (RCD) when operating electrically powered equipment in the community garden<br/><b>+ see below</b> (dependent on type of equipment)</li> </ul>  | Medium<br>(likelihood reduced to rare)     |
| Use of sharp, power-driven cutting equipment, e.g. lawn mower, strimmer, brush cutter, hedge cutter, other similar power tools | Major: Deep lacerations broken bones                          | Possible   | High                   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Safety check activity incorporated into sign-on sheet.</li> <li>Under 18s not to use power cutting tools</li> <li>18s &amp; overs to be assessed for competence to use power tools by H&amp;S Coordinator (with assistance from recognised competent person as necessary) and record completed prior to use</li> <li>Volunteers using power tools MUST wear enclosed shoes, long sleeved top, long trousers and eye protection as a minimum, with other PPE requirements as dictated by a specific risk assessment or manufacturers' safety instructions (to be available on site).</li> <li>Eye protection provided in secure store</li> <li>Annual maintenance schedule for power-driven tools to ensure they are in good working order</li> <li>Ensure that equipment is secured to prevent unauthorized use</li> <li>First Aid kit available at site</li> <li>No lone working</li> </ul> | Medium<br>(likelihood reduced to unlikely) |

| IDENTIFIED RISK   | CONSEQUENCES                           | LIKELIHOOD | UNMITIGATED RISK LEVEL | MITIGATION/CONTROL MEASURES   | MITIGATED RISK LEVEL                    |
|---|--|------------|------------------------|---|---|
| Use of sharp, non-powered equipment, e.g. saw, axe, pick-axe, secateurs, spade, knife | Moderate: Deep lacerations             | Possible   | High                   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Safety check activity incorporated into sign-on sheet.</li> <li>• Volunteers using sharp, non-powered tools MUST wear enclosed shoes, long sleeved shirt, long trousers and eye protection as a minimum, with other PPE requirements as dictated by a specific risk assessment</li> <li>• Eye protection provided in secure store.</li> <li>• Annual check of tools to ensure they are in good working order</li> <li>• First Aid kit available at site</li> </ul>   | Medium (likelihood reduced to unlikely) |
| Working at height from steps or ladder  | Major: Broken bones, internal injuries | Possible   | High                   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Use a stable working platform (e.g. scaffold tower) where feasible.</li> <li>• Check the condition of steps and ladders prior to use</li> <li>• Use ladders at a safe angle (1 in 4)</li> <li>• If working at any significant height from steps or a ladder then a second person should be present to stabilize (or 'foot') the steps/ladder</li> <li>• <b>NB:</b> If power-driven work equipment is to be used whilst working at height then a specific risk assessment should be carried out and appropriate additional control measures put in place</li> </ul> | Medium (likelihood reduced to unlikely) |

| IDENTIFIED RISK   | CONSEQUENCES                 | LIKELIHOOD | UNMITIGATED RISK LEVEL | MITIGATION/CONTROL MEASURES   | MITIGATED RISK LEVEL                    |
|---|------------------------------|------------|------------------------|---|---|
| Use of pointed gardening tools: e.g. pick-axe, crowbar, garden fork | Major: Deep wounds           | Possible   | High                   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Safety check activity incorporated into sign on sheet</li> <li>• Age-appropriate training provided for all under 18s / inexperience persons in safe use of gardening tools.</li> <li>• Active children encouraged to play away from main work area within garden</li> <li>• Annual inspection &amp; maintenance of garden tools (e.g. check pick-axe heads)</li> <li>• First Aid kit available at site</li> </ul>  | Medium (likelihood reduced to unlikely) |
| Slips, trip hazards and uneven ground                               | Major: Sprains, broken bones | Possible   | High                   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Handrail installed adjacent to steps</li> <li>• General housekeeping, volunteers encouraged to store tools and equipment so that they cannot be tripped over</li> <li>• Volunteers encouraged to barricade and/or fill in uneven ground/holes</li> <li>• All gardening volunteers must wear enclosed shoes when on site</li> <li>• Regular safety check of site and prompt remedial action as required</li> <li>• Active children encouraged to play away from main gardening area</li> <li>• First Aid kit available at site</li> </ul> | Medium (likelihood reduced to unlikely) |

| IDENTIFIED RISK                           | CONSEQUENCES                                     | LIKELIHOOD | UNMITIGATED RISK LEVEL | MITIGATION/CONTROL MEASURES  | MITIGATED RISK LEVEL                    |
|---|--|------------|------------------------|--|---|
| Contact with animal faeces                | Major: Threat of ill health, which may be severe | Possible   | High                   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Encourage dog owners to bag and dispose of dog faeces</li> <li>If animal faeces is found on site it should be moved to a place where it is unlikely to come into contact with garden users, e.g. 'flicked' into bushes</li> </ul>   | Medium (likelihood reduced to unlikely) |
| Use of hazardous substances               | Major: Threat of ill health, which may be severe | Possible   | High                   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Follow manufacturers' instructions for use and storage of hazardous substances, keeping all hazardous materials out of the reach of children</li> <li>Never transfer to alternative containers that could confuse and lead to poisonings</li> <li>Wear appropriate personal protective equipment e.g. gloves, safety glasses, coveralls, personal respiratory equipment, etc. as recommended</li> <li>Where appropriate, segregate areas where hazardous materials are being or have been used</li> </ul> | Medium (likelihood reduced to unlikely) |
| Plant hazards, i.e. poisons and allergens | Major: Threat of poisoning and allergic reaction | Possible   | High                   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Selective planting - check plant labels for toxicity warnings / research donated plants</li> <li>Use gloves when pruning or weeding and keep skin covered</li> <li>If it is not a food plant, do not eat it, and teach children not to play with or eat growing plants</li> <li>Warning information on display</li> </ul>   | Medium (likelihood reduced to unlikely) |

| IDENTIFIED RISK                                     | CONSEQUENCES  | LIKELIHOOD | UNMITIGATED RISK LEVEL | MITIGATION/CONTROL MEASURES  | MITIGATED RISK LEVEL                    |
|---|---|------------|------------------------|--|---|
| Bonfires, barbecues, other forms of outdoor cooking | Major: Burns, smoke inhalation, uncontrolled fire                                     | Possible   | High                   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Avoid uncontrollable fires by always siting bonfires and barbecues well away from fences, sheds and trees. Supervise children all the time when anywhere near a fire</li> <li>Avoid smoke inhalation by standing upwind of bonfires. Avoid lighting bonfires in high winds</li> <li>Follow sensible precautions when using a barbecue, pizza oven or similar. See ROSPA advice at: <a href="https://www.rospa.com/Home-Safety/Advice/General/Barbecue-Safety.aspx">https://www.rospa.com/Home-Safety/Advice/General/Barbecue-Safety.aspx</a></li> </ul> | Medium (likelihood reduced to unlikely) |
| Falling tree branches                               | Major: Broken bones; concussion   | Rare       | Medium                 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Annual check for unsafe branches and after periods of high wind. Initiate remedial action as required</li> </ul>  | Medium                                  |
| Stings and bites – insects, spiders, ants           | Minor: Swelling; pain; itching  | Possible   | Medium                 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Wearing of long sleeved shirt, long trousers where appropriate</li> <li>Use of insect repellent</li> <li>First aid kit available at site</li> </ul>   | Medium (likelihood reduced to rare)     |
| Vehicles  | Major: Collision, injury to pedestrians/ passers-by from a vehicle in the garden area | Rare       | Medium                 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Very limited vehicular access, only through special arrangement with Plymouth City Council</li> <li>Segregation of vehicles and pedestrians</li> </ul>  | Medium                                  |



| IDENTIFIED RISK  | CONSEQUENCES                                       | LIKELIHOOD | UNMITIGATED RISK LEVEL | MITIGATION/CONTROL MEASURES  | MITIGATED RISK LEVEL                 |
|--|--|------------|------------------------|--|--------------------------------------|
| Recreational hazards   | Moderate: Injury from collision                    | Unlikely   | Medium                 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Advising public and local residents of timing of garden activities and events</li> <li>Advising volunteers of the multi-functional nature of the area</li> </ul>  | Medium (likelihood reduced to rare)  |
| Dog off lead attacking garden user                           | Moderate: Bites, mauls                             | Unlikely   | Medium                 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Request dog owners to keep their pets on lead within the community garden</li> <li>Advise volunteers to stay away from dogs off lead</li> <li>Any problem dogs to be reported to owners, and if necessary, Plymouth City Council</li> </ul> | Medium (likelihood reduced to rare)  |
| Excessive exposure to sun, high temperatures                 | Minor: Sunstroke, dehydration, sunburn             | Possible   | Medium                 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Encourage wearing of hats in sunny weather</li> <li>Use of 30+ SPF sun-screen protection</li> <li>Encourage volunteers to bring and consume water or other fluid to reduce the risk of dehydration</li> </ul>                               | Low (likelihood reduced to unlikely) |
| Use of gardening equipment such as trowels, other hand tools | Insignificant: Cuts, blisters, abrasions, chaffing | Possible   | Low                    | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Encourage wearing of gloves</li> <li>First Aid kit available on site</li> </ul>   | Low                                  |

| IDENTIFIED RISK  | CONSEQUENCES  | LIKELIHOOD | UNMITIGATED RISK LEVEL | MITIGATION/CONTROL MEASURES  | MITIGATED RISK LEVEL                   |
|--|---|------------|------------------------|--|--|
| Contact with soil, potting compost, decomposing material (compost) | Major:<br>Legionellosis,<br>Bioaerosols,<br>Tetanus, Weil's disease | Unlikely   | Medium                 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Wear gloves whenever handling soil, compost, fertiliser or pesticides</li> <li>• Do not open bags of compost or potting media with head right over it, avoid potting-up in confined spaces, moisten dry potting media before use, and fold over the top of compost bags when not in use</li> <li>• Dampen down dry compost heap before turning/use</li> <li>• Consider wearing a dust mask when turning compost heaps and handling potting media</li> <li>• Avoiding storing potting media where it may heat up, as this may encourage Legionella</li> <li>• Keep water storage containers such as tanks and butts clean by emptying and sanitizing once a year</li> <li>• Wear gloves and keep arms covered when pruning plants that can cause irritations, e.g. Ivy, Fremontodendron, Euphorbia or Rue</li> <li>• Ensure tetanus jabs are up to date</li> <li>• Protect from water-borne diseases such as Weil's disease by wearing waterproof gloves, clothing and boots when clearing out ponds</li> <li>• Always wash your hands after gardening and especially before eating and make hand sterilizing gel available</li> </ul> | Medium<br>(likelihood reduced to rare) |

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