

Risk Assessment

What is a risk assessment?

Risk assessment is a way of identifying and controlling the things that could cause harm to people in their work as a member of staff or as a volunteer.

This risk assessment is simply a careful examination of what, in carrying out your activities, could cause harm, so you can weigh up whether you have taken enough precautions or should do more to prevent harm.

Definitions

Two main elements combine to form the basis of a risk assessment exercise:

Hazard Means anything that has the potential to cause harm.

Risk Is the likelihood that somebody will be harmed by the hazard, together with an indication of how serious the harm could be.

Why does Bromley Council need to complete a risk assessment for volunteers?

Bromley Council wants to ensure volunteers completing tasks on behalf of the Council are kept safe.

The Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999 also place a duty of care on the Council for volunteers and a responsibility to carry out a suitable and sufficient assessment of all significant risks to their health and safety and that of others who may be affected by their undertakings.

What is Bromley Council responsible for when it comes to health and safety?

- The safety of volunteers
- Producing a risk assessment and ensuring that volunteers have read and understood the risk assessment
- Identifying potential precautions that can be taken by volunteers to minimise risk
- Ensuring that volunteers have access to personal protective equipment that helps to keep them safe
- Ensuring that volunteers receive appropriate training for the activities that they are undertaking
- Monitoring and reviewing the effectiveness of precautions applied to reduce risk

What is your responsibility as a volunteer?

Whilst carrying out activities for Bromley Council as a volunteer you are responsible for considering your own health and safety and that of others around you.

As a volunteer you should not put yourself in a position that could place yourself, or others, in danger.

You are under no obligation to undertake any activity and you should never undertake any activities if you have concerns about your own or others' health and safety.

Please:

- Put your safety and that of others first
- Read the risk assessment
- Consider specific health and safety hazards associated with the specific task and location that you are working in
- Apply practical precautions to minimise the level of risk
- Report any concerns about safety related to the activities undertaken to the Council

How to assess the risks in the area where you are undertaking volunteer activities?

The risk assessment included at the end of this document aims to identify all risks associated with the activities that you may be conducting when you volunteer for the Council, however, it is still important that you conduct your own dynamic risk assessment each time you start activity as there may be some risks that are specific to your location or individual circumstances. To do this please follow the steps below:

Step 1 Look for any hazards

Step 2 Decide who might be harmed and how

Step 3 Evaluate the risks and decide whether the existing precautions are adequate or whether more should be done

Risk Matrix

| Risk Rating | | Likelihood | | | | |
|--------------------|---|-----------------------|---------------|-----------------|-----------------|-------------|
| | | Almost Certain | Likely | Possible | Unlikely | Rare |
| Severity | Catastrophic: Catastrophic harm | 25 | 20 | 15 | 10 | 5 |
| | Major: Major injury – hospitalisation | 20 | 16 | 12 | 8 | 4 |
| | Moderate: Moderate physical / emotional injury | 15 | 12 | 9 | 6 | 3 |
| | Minor: Minor injuries needing first aid | 10 | 8 | 6 | 4 | 2 |
| | Insignificant: Overall very minor injury | 5 | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 |

Severity:

- 1 – Insignificant
- 2 – Minor
- 3 – Moderate
- 4 – Major
- 5 – Catastrophic

Likelihood:

- 1 – Rare
- 2 – Unlikely
- 3 – Possible
- 4 – Likely
- 5 – Almost certain

Record of risk assessment



| | |
|--|---|
| Risk assessment on tree work by volunteers | |
| Who is affected? All registered Tree Friends | Work location: Public Highway |

| What could cause harm? | Severity | Likelihood | Risk rating | How can you reduce the risk? |
|--|----------|------------|-------------|---|
| Slips | 3 | 3 | 9 | Wear suitable sturdy footwear with good grip. |
| Trips and falls | 3 | 3 | 9 | Work during daylight hours or in well-lit areas. Do not leave any items on the footway (pavement) that create a tripping hazard. |
| Weather (Effects of cold - hypothermia) | 3 | 3 | 9 | Wear suitable clothing to keep warm. It is better to wear more layers rather than fewer thick layers. Have regular breaks and drinks. |

| What could cause harm? | Severity | Likelihood | Risk rating | How can you reduce the risk? |
|--|----------|------------|-------------|---|
| Sunny weather (Effects of strong sunlight, heatstroke, sunburn, dehydration) | 3 | 3 | 9 | Wear a protective sunhat and suitable sun lotion. Have regular breaks and drinks. |
| Vehicular traffic when working in the highway (Tree Friend struck by moving vehicle) | 5 | 3 | 15 | Never work alone. Wear upper body hi-vis clothing. Only work in hours of daylight. Only work on the pavement/footway and in roads with a maximum of 30mph speed limit. Face on-coming traffic. Stand back and watch for vehicle to go past if it is passing in close proximity. Carry a charged mobile phone in case of emergency. |
| Lifting water (Manual handling injury) | 3 | 3 | 9 | Practice good manual handling techniques, as referred to in the Tree Friends training video which all Tree Friends must observe before watering trees. Refer to Manual Handling Operations: A Brief Guide, that can be found at www.hse.gov.uk . |
| Using secateurs and loppers (Injury from tools or cut branches) | 3 | 3 | 9 | Secateurs and loppers should not be used by anyone under the age of 18. Only cut branches up to 10mm thick. Always work on the ground (i.e., do not stand on a chair or up a ladder). Do not remove anything above chest height. |


| What could cause harm? | Severity | Likelihood | Risk rating | How can you reduce the risk? |
|---|----------|------------|-------------|---|
| Sharp branches (cut to skin or injury to eye). | 3 | 3 | 9 | Check that your tetanus vaccinations are up to date. Further details can be found at www.nhs.uk . Make sure a first aid kit is close at hand. Wear safety glasses to protect eyes. |
| Allergic reaction to plant sap (Irritation to skin and/or eyes) | 3 | 3 | 9 | First aid - Wash skin with water and for eye contact: irrigate with clean water for at least 10 minutes. If severe symptoms develop, obtain medical attention. |
| Lone working on footway | 3 | 3 | 9 | Never work alone. |
| Physical exertion (Exhaustion, injury) | 3 | 3 | 9 | Work within your own capabilities. Be mindful of your limitations. Take frequent rest breaks. Consult with a doctor if you are unsure of whether you are physically capable of the task you are undertaking. |
| Children working | 3 | 3 | 9 | Children under the age of 18 should only carry out tasks under the supervision of an adult. A parent/guardian should ensure that the child understands how to use any equipment that has been provided and that they are undertaking tasks within their physical capabilities. |

| What could cause harm? | Severity | Likelihood | Risk rating | How can you reduce the risk? |
|----------------------------|----------|------------|-------------|---|
| "Insect" bites and stings. | 3 | 3 | 9 | <p>Wear clothes that cover the skin as much as possible and apply insect repellent to exposed skin. Repellents that contain 50% DEET (diethyltoluamide) are most effective.</p> <p>If you notice a tic or have been stung and the sting is still in your skin, remove it as soon as possible, then wash the affected area with soap and water (refer to www.nhs.uk/condition/lyme-disease and www.nhs.uk/conditions/insect-bites-and-stings/symptoms).</p> <p>Most insect bites and stings are not serious and will get better within a few hours or days, however, seek medical help if:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - your symptoms do not improve within a few days, or are getting worse -you've been stung or bitten in your mouth, throat or near your eyes - you have symptoms of a wound infection, such as pus or increasing pain, swelling or redness - you have symptoms of a more widespread infection such as high temperature, swollen glands, or other flu-like symptoms. <p>Occasionally, a severe allergic reaction can occur. Dial 999 for an ambulance if you have wheezing or difficulty breathing, a swollen face, mouth, or throat, feeling sick or being sick, a fast heart rate, dizziness or feeling faint or difficulty swallowing.</p> |

Important

- Take reasonable care to look after your own health and safety and to safeguard the health and safety of other people.
- Ensure that you have contacts' phone numbers in your mobile phone in case of emergency but call emergency services in the first instance if there is an immediate threat to life.
- Inform a contact of your exact location when working alone and your expected time in that location. Call the contact again when you have returned home.
- Always follow LBB health and safety guidance.
- Use tools, in accordance with any relevant safety instructions and training.
- Ensure that there is a first aid kit nearby in case of injury.
- Carry sufficient water for hydration and hygiene purposes or to wash hazardous substances from your body.
- Report all accidents, injuries, near-misses, and other dangerous occurrences as soon as is practicable to Jackie Baxter Environmental Campaigns Officer (tree.friends@bromley.gov.uk / 020 8464 3333).

Name & Signature of Assessors:



Jackie Baxter



Hugh Chapman

Date: 13/06/23