

## **Health and Safety Policy Ebley Allotment Association (EAA)**

All activities carry an element of risk and allotment gardening is no exception. We must all take responsibility for health and safety on the site. Good gardening is safe gardening and many risks to ourselves and others can easily be prevented.

### **Our obligations**

Ebley Allotments are tenants of Cainscross Town Council and as such, we have a shared duty of care. Ebley Allotments Association is a self managed association with an elected Committee and has a duty to ensure that Health and Safety remains of the highest priority and that this policy is reviewed on an annual basis.

Under civil law, and as set out in the Occupiers' Liability Act 1957 and 1984, all plot holders have a duty of care to anyone accessing their plot and the pathways for which they are responsible. This includes authorised and unauthorised visitors. As an association the law requires that we exercise at least a 'reasonable' level of care regarding safety and this includes common areas such as the car park and main access paths. Although unlikely, a claim could be made for negligence when an individual suffered an injury because we didn't take reasonable precautions. It is not possible in English law to exclude liability, for example by way of a notice. We are also obliged to comply with other laws, such as those regarding environmental and wildlife protection.

### **Our Policy**

1. EAA has appropriate insurance cover for all activities (see below)\*.
2. Our Health & Safety Policy, although summarised in this document, is implemented through our Constitution (available on request) and Tenancy Agreement, email communications, web site and Introduction to the site by the Secretary.
3. Health and Safety Performance is treated by EAA as equal with other priorities.
4. There is continued support for all plot holders and committee members with the provision of advice and opportunities for continuing improvement in health and safety.
5. It is recognised that the control of health and safety risks is primarily the function of the EAA Committee but also dependent on the support of all plot holders with them exercising their duty of care to themselves and others.

### **Look after Yourself**

- It is recommended that, particularly at quiet times, plot-holders inform someone where they are, and their likely return time.
- Be aware of risks to yourself and others from sharp objects, broken glass, waste timber and objects left lying around. Remember untidiness can cause accidents.
- Wear sturdy footwear
- Ensure that tetanus vaccinations are up to date
- Cover any cuts and grazes with a waterproof dressing
- Wear gloves when handling manure or chemicals
- Reduce risks of tripping / slipping by keeping plots tidy and carrying out necessary repairs quickly.

### **Look after Children on an Allotment**

- Parents or guardians must supervise children at all times and they must not visit the plot without an adult. Allotment sites are not playgrounds and children should not be allowed to stray onto other people's plots or onto the wider site.
- Bacteria, machinery, tools, glass, water storage containers, poisonous plants, weedkillers and pesticides are some of the dangerous things children may come into contact with on an allotment site.
- If children put their fingers in their mouth after touching soil or even eat soil, they will be at risk from chemicals, which may be in the soil or harmful bacteria from manure or other animal products. Encourage children to wash their hands after helping on an allotment.

### **Here are some other safety rules:**

- Plot-holders should ensure that their plot 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. Please remember that we are legally responsible for the safety of anybody who may enter our plots.
- 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, asbestos, cement, oil, and fuel. These must be securely stored in the proper containers, and well away from possible reach by children.
- Plot-holders should acquaint themselves with the safe use, and storage, of tools, particularly power tools and, where necessary, wear suitable personal protective equipment.
- Plot-holders should be vigilant for rats, rabbits and other vermin, and inform a member of the Committee if evidence of vermin is observed.
- Plants infected with fungal diseases like Club Root, Downey Mildew or White Rot should be taken to an approved tip. Japanese Knotweed is a notifiable weed and is regarded as hazardous waste and therefore must not be removed by the plot-holder. A Committee member should be informed so that it can be dealt with safely by the Council.
- Plot-holders should report vandalism or other evidence of intruders to a member of the Committee for reporting to the police.
- Plot-holders should ensure that the gate to Victory Park is kept closed and locked at all times, both to prevent ingress of dogs and non plot holders, and egress of children.

### **Insurance**

#### **Liability Insurance**

Individual cover (as part of NSALG membership) protects against claims made by third parties for accidental bodily injury or property damage up to £5 million. Please note this insurance does NOT cover the plot holder for loss or damage to sheds or their contents and IS NOT personal injury cover. It is a liability policy - not a material damage policy. This cover is provided to named individuals so does NOT extend to a spouse/partner/ helper if they worked on your plot. If you require liability insurance cover for other named individuals working on your plot please e-mail the Treasurer [treasurer.ebleyalotments@gmail.com](mailto:treasurer.ebleyalotments@gmail.com) with the contact details of the person applying for membership and pay the additional fee (currently £3 per membership). Please see the NSALG leaflet for further information.

<https://www.nsalg.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2022/09/Allotmenteeers-Liability-Insurance-New-Version-August-2022.pdf>

#### **Public Liability Insurance**

The insurance cover provided by NSALG does not replace the requirement for associations to obtain Public Liability Insurance to cover self-management responsibilities so we have separate insurance to protect us from claims from third parties.

### **Risk and Hazard Assessment**

A hazard is something that can cause injury, for example power tools and exposed sharp edges. Hazards can sometimes be removed, but may be inevitable. Risks are the potential threats caused by the hazards, for example injury from a hidden sharp edge, a vehicle accident. Risks can usually be avoided.

Injuries and “near-misses”, and any other safety-related issues must be reported to the Committee so that any existing hazard or risk can be eliminated and prevented in the future.

The EAA Health & Safety Policy is implemented through our Tenancy Agreement and Constitution, newsletters, website and introduction to the site by the Secretary. In addition, regular/ ad hoc risk and hazard assessments are carried out by the designated member of the Committee and during routine Plot Inspections by Committee Members and plot holders will be alerted to any potential risks.