

POLICY: HEALTH AND SAFETY COMMUNITY GARDEN AND ALLOTMENTS

Statement of Intent

The Ebbsfleet Garden City Trust (EGCT) is committed to ensuring the safety of its employees, volunteers, Trustees, members of the public and anyone else who is affected by our operations, as far as is reasonably practicable. EGCT is committed to operating in accordance with the Health and Safety at Work Act 1974, the Occupiers Liability Acts of 1984 and 1957 and any other H&S regulations and codes that are applicable.

EGCT will ensure that significant risks are assessed, and suitable and sufficient measures are adopted. It is the policy of EGCT to do all that is reasonably practicable to prevent personal injury and damage to property.

This policy currently pertains to the running of the Community Gardens and Allotments.

DEFINITIONS

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. Risks can usually be avoided.

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

Hazards, which may exist, are identified and eliminated through risk assessments and training.

EGCT intends:

- To provide information, instruction (and training where necessary) to ensure the competency of all members to safely carry out any activities.
- To minimise the risk of accident or harm to any site visitor.
- To ensure adequate first aid provision on site
- To ensure the safe handling and use of all substances.
- To maintain safe and healthy working conditions.
- To review and revise this Health and Safety Policy as necessary at regular intervals.
- To carry out Risk Assessments to ensure no one is injured or becomes ill as a result of activities carried out on the community garden or allotments.

Responsibility for Health & Safety

EGCT will work with all users (allotment holders, community gardeners) and maintenance personnel to ensure safety measures are understood and followed.

All plot-holders have a duty of care to anyone accessing their plot (whether authorised or unauthorised), and the pathways for which they are responsible.

EGCT has a duty to ensure that common areas, such as the car park and main access paths are safe. The law requires that in all these areas we exercise at least a ‘reasonable’ level of care regarding safety.

Overall and Final Responsibility for Health and Safety is: Mark Patchett

Day to Day responsibility for ensuring this policy is put into practice is: Site contact

Arrangements

A number of tools will be used to ensure the requirements of this policy are met:

- EGCT will carry out Risk Assessments and take any required actions to reduce or eliminate identified risks.
- Health and Safety Site Information will be provided to all Community Gardeners and Allotment Plot holders.
- Suppliers carrying out maintenance activities will be provided with the safety information of the site.
- The Tenancy Agreement and Allotment Handbook will contain safety instructions for plot holders and community gardeners. The Allotment Handbook shall be provided to all allotment holders upon signing the tenancy agreement, and is readily available on the EGCT website.
- Plot holders and community gardeners will be consulted on Health and Safety matters, and informed when there are any changes to the Health and Safety policy.

The following guidelines will be given to all plot holders:

- 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.
- Plot-holders must acquaint themselves with, and adhere strictly to, the guidelines regarding storage, usage and disposal of hazardous materials such as glass, pesticides and fertilisers. 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 the EGCT site contact, if evidence of vermin is observed.
- Plot-holders should report vandalism or other evidence of intruders to the police, and notify EGCT site contact.
- Plot-holders should ensure that the gate is kept closed and locked at all times.

Emergency Action Plan

The Emergency Action Plan shall be in the Allotment Handbook. In case of fire or serious accident, phone 999 on a mobile phone if available. The fire services have been provided with the keycodes to access the site. (email: Enquiries@kent.fire-uk.org with site address, contact details and key code)

In the case of fire:

- Plot holders, community gardeners and visitors should leave the allotment site immediately, and gather at the main gate.
- Allotment plot holders should ensure that all people working on their allotment garden are accounted for.
- Allotment plot holders and Community Gardeners are encouraged to look out for other gardeners or visitors on adjoining allotment plots to ensure their safety.

The address and unique 3 word location for our sites is displayed on the notice board to provide to emergency services.

In the case of fire or serious accident the allotment tenant must also inform the EGCT contact as soon as possible after the incident and when it is safe to do so.

Reporting a near-miss or serious accident

If there is a serious or non-serious accident or near miss (i.e. a hazard which poses a medium to high risk) occurring on any part of the site, the site user must notify the site contact, as soon as possible. This will be recorded by the site contact and investigated. Site users will be expected to co-operate with any subsequent investigation. Any serious incidents will be reported to the EGCT board during their regular board meetings.

This policy was adopted by the EGCT board on 13th March 2023

This policy was last reviewed in September 2024