



Ulverston Town Council

Allotments Risk Assessment

Our Obligations

Under Civil Law, and as set out in the Occupiers' Liability Act 1957, all plot-holders have a duty of care to anyone accessing their plot, and the pathways for which they are responsible. This includes both authorised and unauthorised visitors. As a Council, we have 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. It is not possible in English law to exclude liability, for example by way of a notice.

This assessment is subject to a review every 12 months by Ulverston Town Council and the Allotments Committee but can be updated as required if any changes are identified. This Risk Assessment applies to Dragley Beck, The Ellers, Hill Fall, Mill Dam, Poplar Grove, Sandside and Tank Field allotment sites.

A hazard is something that can cause injury, for example the road access, the parking area, 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 or a vehicle accident. Risks can usually be avoided. Injuries and "near-misses", and any other safety-related issues must be reported as soon as possible to the Allotments Officer so that any existing hazard or risk can be eliminated and prevented in the future.

Definition of Risk

Any identified risk in the table below is scored Low (L), Medium (M) or High (H).

Low = unlikely but action can still be taken to reduce the risk further

Medium = review of control measures required to reduce the risk as much as possible

High = special control measures must be put in place. If it relates to an activity, it must be immediately stopped.

Hazard	Nature of Risk	Level	Control Measures
Machinery	User: Operating machinery carries a medium level of risk unless the appropriate safety equipment is worn and the machinery is operated correctly. Injuries to hands, feet and face need to be guarded against.	M	Instructions for the use of machinery lie with the owner/operator. It is a requirement that tenants wear the recommended safety equipment when operating machinery (irrespective of the owner)
	Other tenants and visitors: When strimmers and mowers are being used on an adjacent plot, stones and other flying objects can cause injuries.	L	It is the responsibility of the operator to take due care.
	Children: Children can act unpredictably exposing themselves to risk from machinery	M	It is the responsibility of the tenant to ensure that children are supervised. No children to operate machinery.
Garden tools and equipment	Possible injuries to hands and feet if equipment is not used correctly	L	Appropriate gloves and footwear to be worn as necessary. Garden tools and equipment should not be left on common paths or left available for others to use.
Overhanging branches	Overhanging branches could cause injuries to tenants, visitors and children.	L	Regular inspection by Ulverston Town Council. Tenants to report any problems
Security of site	Vandalism/ theft	M	Padlock on gate when not in use. Tenants advised not to keep anything valuable on site and to have their tools security marked
Paths	Slip hazards - paths can be slippery when wet Trip hazards – tools on paths, uneven surfaces	M	Paths to be kept trimmed during growing season. Regular inspection by Ulverston Town Council.
Bonfires	Danger of bonfire spreading if not attended or if there is strong wind	M	It is the responsibility of the tenant to conform to the rules covering bonfires. Children must always be supervised.
Rats	Rats can carry Weil's disease. Although this is rare it is a serious disease	M	Tenants to report any problems to Ulverston Town Council. If rat boxes have been laid down, these must not be touched or moved by tenants.
Manure heap	Risk of rat infestation	M	Regular inspection by Ulverston Town Council. Tenants to report any problems.

Accumulation of rubbish and non-compostable material	Could become a slip/trip hazard and a harbourage for vermin	L	Regular inspection by Ulverston Town Council. Tenants to report any problems
Poultry	Possibility of livestock escaping Spreading of avian diseases such as bird flu	L	Plot boundary fences to be secure. Provision of clean water supply and adherence to Animal Welfare Regulations. Tenants to adhere to DEFRA recommendations Regular inspection by Ulverston Town Council and report to Animal Welfare Authorities if necessary
Dangerous/ hazardous substances / pesticides	Burns, irritation, allergies. Contamination of water sources	M	Chemicals, especially ones harmful to the environment are discouraged. Eco friendly alternatives are strongly encouraged. Any chemicals, sprayers etc should be used in accordance with the manufacturers' instructions. If chemicals are held on site, they should be stored securely, clearly identifiable and with correct hazard/ warning labels. Take constant care and be vigilant when using any chemicals and petrol. Any spillages should be reported to the allotment rep.
Water butts/ hosepipes	Legionella	L	Tenants not to drink from water sources on site
Unoccupied / untidy plots	Possible slip/trip hazard if overgrown	L	Regular inspection by Ulverston Town Council. Tenants to report any problems.

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

- Each allotment holder responsible for their actions and use of allotment gardens
- Each allotment holder is responsible for their health and safety and the health and safety of others
- All children must be supervised at all times by parents or carers
- Continued misuse of allotment or careless actions towards others may result in appropriate action by Ulverston Town Council if deemed necessary.
- Ulverston Town Council accept no responsibility for any damage or injury caused by allotment holders' personal equipment or appliances.