

Safe gardening with Bandstand Beds Association (BBA)

We want as many people as possible to enjoy our wonderful garden – and to do so safely.

Please familiarise yourself with this document. It is intended to help our members think and act in ways that minimise the risk of harm to themselves and others. It includes some basic rules and guidance for safe gardening and identifies some of the hazards you may come across while volunteering with BBA.

Make sure you understand and observe the rules and guidance outlined in this document. If you have any questions, please speak to a trustee.

All new members should receive a tour of the garden and a health and safety briefing from a trustee. If you haven't received one, or would like a refresher, please ask.

As volunteers, health and safety law will not normally apply. However, BBA works to common sense, moral obligations and HSE guidance (see www.hse.gov.uk/voluntary/employer/index.htm). We ask volunteers to take care of their own health and safety and of others working in the garden. The role of all trustees is to demonstrate good practice, encourage a safe environment and to raise awareness when necessary.



The basics of safe gardening

Principles

1. Put your safety and that of others first! Safety is our priority.
2. If something doesn't look safe, say!
3. If something doesn't feel safe, don't do it!
4. If you don't know how to do something (such as use a piece of equipment), ask!

Six basic steps for safe gardening

1. Fit to garden

- Tell us of any medical conditions or issues that might impair your ability to work in the garden safely.
- Think carefully about your capacity to work in groups, your capacity to work to precise instructions and your capacity to work in conditions that can be loud, busy and somewhat unpredictable.
- Choose tools and tasks that suit your ability. If you have arthritis or a condition that affects bones, muscles or ligaments, try to use tools that are easy to grasp.
- If you are taking medication that could make you drowsy, impair your judgment or reaction times, don't operate machinery, climb ladders, etc.
- Listen to your body. Keep an eye on your heart rate and level of fatigue, and look out for signs of physical discomfort. If you feel tired, consider drinking water, take a break or stop.
- Gardeners are advised to get a tetanus vaccination. The NHS recommends a full course of boosters every 10 years.

2. Dress to protect

- Wear protective gloves when doing anything that could scratch, cut or bruise your hands, or when working with soil and untreated water.
- Wear suitable protective footwear and consider whether steel-toed boots are necessary. Sandals, flip-flops and flimsy trainers or plimsolls are not suitable.
- Consider covering your arms and legs if working with spiny or sharp plants.
- Wear protective glasses/goggles if there is any risk of injury to your eyes.
- Consider covering up and using sunscreen when spending time in the sun.
- Remember to wash your hands after gardening and always before handling food.

3. First aid

- If you are injured, or experience any form of chest or arm pain, dizziness or light-headedness, stop immediately and let the session leader(s) know.
- Call the emergency services (999) and seek medical attention without delay if you or others deem it necessary.

- Immediately treat any cuts, scratches, bruises or burns. Take time out to wash any cuts or wounds, and make sure they are protected with plasters or bandages. Seek assistance from the session leader(s) if you need help.
- A first aid kit is available on site for minor injuries. The session leader(s) will know where this is located.
- Make sure all injuries, however small, are recorded in the site incident book.

4. Use tools and equipment safely

- Tools and equipment can cause serious injury if not used properly or if they are not safe to use in the first place.
- Read and follow the instructions and warning labels on all equipment before using. If in doubt how to use a tool or equipment, ask.
- Make sure any tools or equipment are working properly and are safe. Don't use anything that looks worn, broken or is blunt.
- Keep tools and equipment out of children's reach if they are working in the garden.
- Never leave tools lying around on the ground. If you aren't using a tool while working, prop it up safely so it won't fall and become a trip hazard. Once no longer needed, put tools away safely in the correct storage area or container.
- If you are a parent gardening with your child/children, be extra vigilant about tool safety.
- Chemicals and paints must only be used under guidance from a workshop facilitator or session leader(s).

5. Observe all opening and closing times for gardening sessions and avoid working alone, with the exception of watering

- Please stick to the opening and closing times of our sessions.
- Don't enter the garden unless you're permitted to be there.
- Try to avoid lone working in the garden.
- Lone working should be agreed in advance. Let a trustee know when you're going to be there and what time you expect to finish. Let them know when you've finished in the garden.
- If working alone in the garden (e.g. watering), ensure the gates are kept locked.

6. A garden safe for all

- During some of our regular sessions, members of the public are welcome to walk around the garden. Please pay particular attention to the safety of those unfamiliar with the garden.
- Children (under 18s) must be supervised by their own caretakers at all times. Volunteers may guide/remind parents and guardians if they are not closely supervising their children. Volunteers should only intervene if children are at immediate risk (such as wandering off site). Children should be observed in particular around the frog pond, around tools and when near the exits. Neither volunteers nor unattached visitors should ever be alone with children.

- During our Monday sessions, held in collaboration with Froglife's *Leaping Forward for Dementia*, please keep the garden gate closed. The garden is not open to visitors while we have vulnerable adults on site.
- A copy of BBA's Safeguarding Policy is available in the **Take Part** section on our website: <http://bandstandbeds.org.uk/take-part/>. It is mandatory to read and absorb the Safeguarding Policy on becoming a BBA member.
- Should you have any safeguarding concerns or questions, please contact BBA's safeguarding lead, Lynn Keane, at BBAsafeguarding@protonmail.com or by telephone (07902 790221).
- When we hold public events, BBA has a duty of care for attendees and will complete a risk assessment in advance.

Getting to know our garden and some of the hazards you may encounter



1. The pond

- Our pond is a fantastic home for frogs and toads, but getting too close poses a risk of slips, trips and falls into the water for adults and children.

- Always pay close attention to children or people with mobility issues near the pond, and keep them at a safe distance away from the water.
- Please do not lean over the pond, stand on any of the logs or stones that provide a natural barrier around the pond, or climb around/through plants to access the pond from the Windmill Drive side.
- Look, don't touch!

2. The field kitchen

- Our field kitchen is located within one of our shipping containers. The area designated for food preparation is marked by the change in flooring roughly halfway into the container.
- The food preparation area is to be kept clean and tidy at all times.
- Volunteers preparing food must obtain a Level 2 Food Hygiene Certificate, and will work to best practice in food hygiene at all times. Stay out of the food preparation area if you do not have a Food Hygiene Certificate.
- The kitchen sink units are for washing-up only and not for handwashing. Please use the available portable handwash stations instead.

3. Tools container

- The second shipping container is home to our tools and equipment.
- Please ensure that the tools container is kept clean and tidy at all times and tools and equipment are securely stored, paying particular attention for any trip hazards. The upper levels of storage units are for lightweight items only; be conscious of the risk of items falling when removing from storage.

4. Our garden

- Our garden is located on an old waste site, so we often find bits of broken glass, ceramics and other sharp objects when digging into the ground. Please wear gloves when digging in the ground and be vigilant for any objects that could cut. Please dispose of any sharp items safely – in the general waste.
- Our site has uneven surfaces and undergrowth, which may conceal objects and trip hazards. Please be aware of the possibility of these hazards when moving off the main pathways.
- Please keep accessways between the raised beds as clear as possible (such as by cutting back grass and removing debris).
- Take particular care of the hose when it is being used for watering, as it poses a trip hazard.
- Do not run in the garden.
- If you come across other discarded sharp objects, such as syringes or knives, do not touch! Inform the session leader(s) immediately.

5. The Waste Site

- Our composting bays and 'orchard' are located within a patch of land managed and used by Lambeth as a waste site for the Common. This area is home to heavy machinery, equipment and lots of different materials that pose hazards.
- Do not enter any areas of the waste site managed by Lambeth, other than those marked on the site map above by the dotted line.
- When accessing the orchard or composting bays, consider whether it is safe to do so. If Lambeth staff are busy working, wait until they have finished.
- Please keep the green gate that marks the edge of our garden / beginning of the waste site shut at all times so that members of the public – especially children – do not mistakenly wander into the site.

6. Windmill Drive

- The main double gated entrance to our garden is on Windmill Drive – a busy road with many passing pedestrians and cyclists. e-bikes and scooters, for example, pass the garden at speed. While the road is now closed to vehicular traffic, it continues to be used by Lambeth parks vehicles and, unfortunately, some motorists.
- Please be careful and conscious of other road users when entering and exiting the garden via Windmill Drive – especially when transporting tools and equipment.
- When used, the small side gate opens onto a busy footpath, used by fast moving cyclists, e-bikes and scooters as well as pedestrians.
- Please ensure the main gates (and side gate) are shut at all times (when the garden is not open to the public) and be careful of road users when opening and closing the gates.

7. Working off-site

- BBA oversees two other areas for planting and growing produce on Clapham Common outside of our main community garden: our namesake raised beds near the Bandstand, beside Pear Tree Café, and our fruit beds in front of public toilets opposite the children's playground (areas marked in red on below map).
- BBA members should take particular care when working offsite to ensure that tools and equipment aren't left accessible to the public and that any work being carried out does not constitute a risk to passing members of the public.

- Please be careful when transporting tools and equipment between the main garden and our other sites.

