

Brighton Permaculture Trust (BPT)	
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Health & Safety Policy Statement

The Brighton Permaculture Trust ('BPT') trustees ('The Trustees') accept ultimate responsibility for health and safety and are committed to ensuring that these responsibilities are fully discharged throughout BPT. The Trustees consider health and safety to be a core management function and therefore will ensure that the necessary resources are available to implement the policy successfully. This includes ensuring that the policy is communicated effectively and that all employees, contractors and volunteers are competent to fulfil their health and safety roles.

The Trustees accept that successful health and safety management can only be achieved through planning, and that the policy must be regularly reviewed and developed. It acknowledges that the primary responsibility for implementing the policy lies with the Management Team, the course and events convenors and activity co-ordinators but all employees, contractors and volunteers have an important contribution to make.

Introduction

This policy applies throughout BPT being a requirement of the Management of Health & Safety at Work Regulations. It is the primary Health & Safety document within BPT and will be supported by additional policies if the need arises in the future.

Safety statement

BPT's policy is to provide and maintain safe and healthy working conditions, equipment and systems of work for all employees, contractors, volunteers and course participants, and to provide such information, training and supervision as is needed for this purpose. BPT also accepts a responsibility for the health and safety of other people who may be affected by its activities.

Organisational arrangements

1. Overall and final responsibility for health and safety in BPT is that of the Trustees.
2. The Management Committee is responsible for the overall operation of the health and safety policy, together with policy implementation and review, investigating serious accidents and notifying appropriate accidents to the Health & Safety Inspector.
3. The Health & Safety Officer (John Matthews) is responsible for ensuring that risk assessments are in place throughout the organisation and reviewed annually.
4. Course and events convenors, those employees and contractors responsible for events and activity co-ordinators on activity days are responsible for the day-to-day operation of the health and safety policy and for recording all accidents and reporting serious accidents or near misses to the Management Committee, ensuring fire/emergency procedures are in place where necessary and first aid provision. They should also familiarise themselves with the relevant risk assessments and ensure that they act on the points raised in the assessments.
5. All employees, contractors and volunteers have a responsibility to co-operate with co-ordinators, tutors and convenors to achieve a healthy and safe working and learning environment and to take reasonable care of themselves and others.
6. Whenever an employee, contractor or volunteer notices a potential or actual health and safety problem, which they are not able to put right, they should inform the activity co-ordinator and/or BPT's Health & Safety Officer.
7. Under RIDDOR (Reporting of Injuries, Diseases and Dangerous Occurrences 2013), BPT must report and keep records of work related accidents which cause certain serious injuries and dangerous occurrences with the potential to cause harm. Any such occurrences causing injury or almost

causing injury to employees, contractors, volunteers, course participants or members of the public must be recorded in the Accident Reporting Form (which is on BPT's Dropbox) and reported to BPT's Health & Safety Officer, John Matthews who will inform the Health & Safety Executive if required to do so.

Safety arrangements for hazards

Systems and procedures relating to particular areas of concern are listed below.

1. Courses

Participants will be given advice and guidance on the correct use of tools.

Potential participants are asked to provide details of any medical problems from which they suffer, when enrolling. After registration, participants are provided with a general information sheet which includes details of those things they need to bring along on the day, including drinking water, sun hat, sensible footwear etc.

2. Planting trees

Participants and volunteers should be warned that particular care should be taken when digging holes for trees especially as some holes need to be fairly deep. No heavy hacking of soil should be attempted with a spade, but a fork or pickaxe used to loosen compaction which then can be easily removed with the spade. Care should also be taken when carrying heavy buckets of water or other heavy loads and participants and volunteers should be given advice where necessary.

3. Use of ladders

It should be emphasised to volunteers and participants that if they have a fear of heights or are uncomfortable climbing ladders, then they should not do so. Previous experience is desirable in order to minimise the risk of falls or people getting stuck. Climbing of trees apart from on the very low branches is not permitted and ladders should be used at all times.

Volunteers and participants should be given a safety briefing about use of ladders. Ladders should be held by another person before use if the ground is

uneven and/or the ladder is at all unstable. Greater care should obviously be taken if conditions are wet and/or muddy.

It is BPT's policy that only one-handed tools may be used when working up trees or ladders. Only those trained in using saws are allowed to do so.

4. Harvesting fruit

All the points on climbing trees and ladders in 3 above are relevant to this item. Containers to hold picked fruit should not be hand-held, but satchels or bags that fit around the body should be used, thus leaving both hands free. Care should be taken by pickers to avoid dropping fruit on people standing under the trees.

Adequate training and supervision should be given to ensure that volunteers are aware of the proper way to lift heavy weights (boxes of fruit etc) in order to avoid damage to back and muscles.

5. Working with children and vulnerable adults

When BPT works with children whether in schools or at any of its sites, it does not act in loco parentis.

Children visiting BPT sites are the responsibility of those adults accompanying them and not that of BPT employees, contractors or volunteers and children must be supervised at all times.

BPT employees and contractors working with children and/or vulnerable adults will undergo DBS checks every 3 years.

BPT employees, contractors and volunteers will read BPT's Safeguarding Policy before starting work/volunteering and will act in compliance with the policy when children and/or vulnerable adults are present.

6. Training

It is BPT's policy to ensure that adequate training and supervision is given to all employees, contractors and volunteers where necessary. However, employees, contractors and volunteers should request training where they feel it is needed.

New volunteers will be given an induction about BPT and the activity to be carried out as well as health and safety and any particular risks arising from the activity concerned.

7. Pressing apple juice

When pressing apples for juice, a crusher is first used to smash the fruit and unwary fingers could become trapped, resulting in broken or crushed bones. Anyone using the crusher should be reminded of this and where parties of children are present, strict supervision should be maintained. The machine also has a large handle which could also provide a hazard.

The above strictures also apply to the pressing barrel and as the lid is wound down further into the barrel, it becomes harder to move. This can result in back problems and those using the equipment should be warned in advance and given advice on its use.

When the water-pressure juicer is used, volunteers should be trained in its use particularly in relation to monitoring the water pressure to ensure it remains at a safe level. Similarly with the fruit scatterer, volunteers should be trained in its correct use and in particular advised that extreme care should be taken if it becomes blocked and that they should not in any circumstances put their hands in the machine to try and unblock it.

The above advice on carrying heavy baskets/boxes of fruit should also be noted in respect of these activities.

8. Scything

At the commencement of the course, a demonstration will be given on the sharpening of scythes to ensure that everyone is aware of how to do this safely.

Although cuts to the legs of the person wielding the scythe are unusual, it should be emphasised that this equipment can pose a substantial threat to others in the immediate vicinity and that great care should be taken at all times. The safest way to carry a scythe is by holding it by the blade itself, rather than held aloft over one shoulder.

Although no stipulations are currently made about footwear, course participants should be encouraged to wear sturdy boots.

9. Grafting

Grafting is a process that involves the use of very sharp knives held close to the fingers and it is therefore of great concern to BPT to keep volunteers and participants safe. The course will begin with a training demonstration and supervised activities and it will be emphasised to the participants that this is a

prescribed way for a prescribed purpose and that deviating from this method could result in injury.

Tutors and volunteers with first aid training should always be in attendance on this course together with a properly maintained first aid box.

10. Lifting heavy weights

No-one should be asked to carry very heavy weights and employees, contractors and volunteers are asked to be mindful of this when helping to run courses or working on the plot or in the orchards. Advice and training on lifting and carrying heavy weights will be given to all participants and volunteers where necessary.

11. Lone workers

Lone workers should carry mobile phones when working on the plot or in the orchards. In the interests of safety they should be made aware of potential dangers if an accident were to happen with no method of communication.

Those working alone should know how to keep themselves safe and not take undue risks. Volunteers should never work alone and should be supervised at all times.

12. First aid training

Employees, contractors and volunteers are encouraged to undergo first aid training. A minimum of one emergency first aid-trained person should be in attendance at each BPT course or event and if the event is higher risk, eg where ladders are used, then a minimum of one person trained in first aid at work should attend. A first aid kit should always be available.

13. Working outside

Employees, contractors, volunteers and course participants should be made aware of the problems caused by extremes of weather i.e. heat and sun, cold, heavy winds, heavy rain etc.

Course participants are advised in the handouts sent to them on confirmation of booking to dress according to the weather, i.e. to bring sun-hats, sun cream, a supply of cold water to drink etc in the case of hot weather. All course venues have access to cold drinking water.

14. Drinking alcohol and/or taking drugs

Employees, contractors and volunteers must not drink alcohol and/or take any drugs while working or volunteering for BPT and must not carry out any work while under the influence of alcohol and/or drugs.

15. Courses

The BPT booking form asks the participant to let the course convenor know of any medical or physical problems that may need to be taken into consideration. In the event of a positive response, a discussion should be held between the course convenor, tutor and participant concerned as to his/her particular needs and how BPT can meet them.