

Bristol Parks and Green Spaces Volunteer Programme: Activity Risk Assessment



Orchard care and bulb planting

Activity: Orchard care and bulb planting **Date:** Feb 2026

- If this risk assessment is relevant to your work session it must be identified on your site risk assessment
- These hazards must be reassessed before an activity take place.
- Please contact TreeBristol to agree work on new or existing trees and hedges

Hazard	Possible Outcome	Who at risk?	Control measures	Risk rating	Person responsible
Weeding and vegetation clearance	Toxic or harmful plants leading to rash, discomfort or poisoning	Volunteers	Visually inspect areas to be weeded, point out plants or areas to avoid to other volunteers. Advise long sleeves, trousers and gloves and use hand tools. Check volunteers have personal medication for allergies. Provide hand sanitiser and advise to wash hands after removing gloves, before eating and end of session. Raise awareness of the danger from Blackthorn thorns.	Low	Designated health and safety lead on the H&S plan
Tree protection– working around stakes, canes, guards, wire	Injury or irritation from canes, treated timber stakes or wire	Volunteers	Visually inspect the area. Check for loose or broken stakes or wire mesh / caging. Inform volunteers to check safety of work area. Provide gloves and eye protection	Low	Health and safety lead
Cage or other protection – removing caging	Injury from removal tool, cage wire or fixing. Nail falling and getting lost.	Volunteers	Group lead demo safer use of tools and cage removal. Advise to work in pairs for better chance of holding onto nail to use again.	Low	Health and safety lead
Mulching	Back injury, fatigue	Volunteers	Provide wheelbarrow / moving aids, and shovel. Demo	Low	Health and

			use of tools at start. Provide gloves. Inform on hygiene.		safety lead
Watering	Back injury, fatigue pr water spillage leading to slip, trip or fall	Volunteers	Use hose where possible. If using watering can or container consider weight and distance to plants and carry in wheelbarrow	Low	Health and safety lead
Pruning – using tools with blades (secateurs, loppers, or pruning saw / bowsaw)	Injury from sharp blades	Volunteers	Demo correct use of tools to all at start and monitor use. Use the right tool for the size of material pruning (secateurs up to little finger size; loppers up to a thumb size). Use clean, undamaged tools that you know how to use and demonstrate safer use. Provide and use lower risk tools (loppers and secateurs) rather than riskier tools (saws) unless there is a first aid trained person present.	Medium	Health and safety lead
Pruning using long handled tools	Injury from falling branches above head height. Slip, trip while working leading to injury from tool.	Volunteers	Bystanders to be kept a safe distance from tool user at work - Use a cordon if necessary. Tool user to keep both feet on ground, keeping a firm footing and well balanced. Tool user to wear hard hat, long sleeves and gloves.	Medium	Health and Safety lead
Pruning – moving, caught, flicking or falling branches	Injury from branches and twigs	Volunteers	Check bush or tree for loose, dead and hanging branches. Only prune smaller branches (less than a thumb size) and no higher than shoulder height unless a first aider is present. Provide eye safety wear. Wear hard hat when pruning above shoulder height.	Medium	Health and safety lead
Handling and planting bulbs and plants	Possibility of infection from micro-organisms	Volunteers	Gloves worn when handling plants and mulch. Provide hand wash facilities. Wash hands before food, drink or smoking. Cuts and grazes properly dressed before and during activity. Use tools and feet, not hands, to move and firm soil.	Medium	Health and safety lead
Planting bulbs - method	Back injury / general injury / strain / fatigue.	Volunteers	See MANUAL HANDLING risk assessment: Manual handling risk assessment online	Low	Health and safety lead

Planting bulbs – using trusted supplier	Cross pollination, disease or competition with native bulbs	Volunteers Public, staff	Use suppliers recommended by Bristol City Council parks and green space service	Medium	Health and safety lead
---	---	--------------------------------	---	--------	------------------------