



Allotment Site Hazards Checklist

Familiarise yourself with the rest of the pack before using this form in conjunction with the Risk Assessment Form. Tick the boxes as you check each hazard as part of the risk assessment.

Asbestos	Found on buildings, fencing, and hidden on derelict plots. Contact local authority for disposal advice (regulations apply): do not touch.	
Boundary	Overhanging trees/obstacles from outside site. May have shared responsibility with other landowner.	
Committee emergency contact details	Check posted on notice board.	
Communal paths/roadways	May be uneven, slippery when wet/icy weather (grit)/steep gradient. Are pedestrians at risk from vehicles colliding/speeding/turning. Check for fuel leaks and potholes. Is a speed limit needed?	
Fuel storage	See 'Trading Hut' (below). Insist ploholders store own supply of fuel, e.g. paraffin, bottled gas or coal, in non-flammable container away from structures.	
Gates	Check for loose hinges, awkward locks, unsafe structure, ease of use.	
Hedging	Gaps create access for intruders. Overgrown/thorns? Check status with English Nature (ancient hedges may be protected; hedges contain nesting birds that restrict when brush cutting can take place).	
Perimeter fencing	All metal fencing requires an annual inspection to ensure that it is safe and in good condition. Barbed wire not recommended and is not permitted next to public thoroughfare - razor wire never permitted. Anti-vandal paint must have signage. Gaps create access for intruders.	
Ponds	No concealing vegetation on pond surface or at sides. See ARI factsheet Advice on activities requiring special management (in this pack).	
Refuse	No rubbish causing risk to wildlife or people.	
Signs	Legible. No sharp edges or nails exposed. Emergency contact details clearly displayed and safety information provided where useful.	
Taps	Ensure non-return valve fitted. Tanks at safe height or covered.	
Trees	Check for Tree Preservation Orders (local authority). Use a qualified tree surgeon to carry out risk assessments.	
Toilets	Refer to ARI factsheet Installing an affordable toilet. Hand washing facilities should be provided. Contact council Environmental Health for advice.	
Vermin	Check for evidence of vermin, e.g. burrows/droppings/sightings.	
Water supply	Cover drains. Identify officer responsible for water supply. Ensure hosepipes do not present trip hazards.	
Water storage	No sunken containers or stagnant water. Secure covers.	

Additional checks on plots (tenanted and untenanted)

Bonfires	Insurance may have specific rules. Ensure ploholders are aware of local bylaws and association rules re. timing/materials/location/extinguishing/nuisance.	
Compost bins/ manure storage	Should not contain any hazardous materials. Check for any evidence of vermin, e.g. burrows/droppings/sightings.	
Fencing between plots	See 'perimeter fencing'. Barbed wire is not permitted. Discourage sharp-edged metal. Check heights and condition.	
Glass	Check for broken glass at ground level in greenhouses or cold frames and trip hazards leading into glass structures.	
Trip hazards	Could include hidden glass/rusty metal objects, potholes/unfilled holes or uncoiled hosepipes.	
Structures (sheds/ greenhouses/ polytunnels)	Check all foundations, roof, doors, windows, walls, floor are safe. Chemicals and fuel should be safely stored. Should not contain broken glass or other hazards.	

Trading hut/meeting hut/other building

Access	Accessible safely, including by disabled people.	
Electricity	Supply and equipment periodically checked by qualified electrician.	
Fertilisers	Storage/supply/sale conforms to Fertilisers Regulations (1991) and Agricultural Industries codes of practice.	
Fire prevention	Guidance obtained from local Fire Service, staff instructed, fire escape route and fire exits clearly signposted, advice posted on notice board.	
Fixtures/fittings	Check access/exit doors, guttering/down pipes, shelving/storage units, counters, cupboards, security shutters and floor surface (level/not slippery).	
Fuel	Storage should conform to Control of Pollution (Oil Storage) Regulations (England). If in Northern Ireland, Scotland or Wales consider these regulations as best practice guidelines. Emergency plan should be developed and staff instructed regarding fire/spillage.	
Kitchen	If ever used for sale of food, consult Environmental Health.	
Pest control/ vermin	Check for signs, e.g. droppings or signs of gnawing on electrical cables. Consult Environmental Health Dept. Ensure staff are aware of procedure for control/reporting.	
Pesticides	Storage/supply/sale should conform to COPRA (1997) regulations. Develop an emergency plan and instruct staff regarding spillage of pesticides.	
Safe structure	Foundations, walls, lintels, windows, floor, asbestos (see above).	
Water supply	Clearly marked to show whether suitable for drinking or not. Ensure water supply for drinking is monitored to avoid pollution.	