



Health & Safety Policy

Oaks Meadow Project CIO

Statement of intent

1. The policy of the Oaks Meadow Project is to provide and maintain safe and healthy working conditions and environment for all our volunteers and users, plus any other people who are directly affected by our activities, such as members of the public at our events.
2. This policy applies to all Trustees, volunteers, work placement students, contractors and members of the public.

Responsibility

1. Overall and final responsibility for health and safety at all events and activities organised by the Oaks Meadow Project lies with the Trustees. This responsibility will be delegated to a named 'Lead Volunteer' for each event or activity. This volunteer will be responsible for ensuring that this policy is upheld.
2. For all other events the responsible person will be named in advance and their name will be noted on all relevant risk assessments. All volunteers involved will be made aware of who is responsible for health and safety.

Important contacts

Health & Safety Officer: Stephen Green 07789 537811

Email: sg.green@btinternet.com

IN CASE OF AN EMERGENCY CALL 999

General arrangements

1. The main activity of the Oaks Meadow Project is to create and maintain a greenspace comprising woodland and orchard as well as vegetable, herb and medicinal gardens and a wildlife pond. Areas for quiet reflection, creative play, learning and community projects will also be provided. The construction of a community room on the meadow is planned, where people of all ages can take part in organised activities and access community services.

2. A risk assessment will be carried out before every one-off event. This will include assessing risk as it relates to all aspects of the event including: equipment; venue; volunteers; attendees and weather conditions. Appropriate precautions will be taken to minimise hazards at all events and activities.

For more information on risk assessment and to download a risk assessment template go to:

www.hse.gov.uk/simple-health-safety/risk

3. Oaks Meadow Project may also run regular activities/events at the same venue using the same resources and equipment i.e. working party activities. In this case we will carry out a generic risk assessment for the event/activity/equipment/venue. All generic risk assessments will be reviewed at least once a year.
4. Oaks Meadow Trustees will have an 'Appointed Person' responsible, to take charge of the first-aid arrangements, including looking after the equipment, and calling the emergency services when required. An appointed person is not required to have any formal training. A first aid box will be on-site, clearly marked and accessible during all activities which are open to the volunteers and public. All accidents, however minor, should be reported to the Appointed Person and an accident report form (RIDDOR 2013) completed, detached from the report book and submitted to the Trustee Secretary for storing in a secure place in accordance with GDPR guidelines.
5. We will make sure all volunteers and individuals at events and activities are aware of the Appointed Person and location of emergency access and evacuation exits.
6. All volunteers and Trustees will be made aware of the precautions they need to take as noted on the relevant risk assessment.
7. No volunteer or trustee will run an event or activity on their own, and where practical, at least two volunteers or trustees should stay at an activity/event until it is finished and the last attendees have left.
8. Oaks Meadow Project holds *Public Liability Insurance and Employers liability*
This can be viewed on request oaksmeadow@gmail.com
9. Our policies and procedures in relation to safeguarding are outlined in our *Adult and Child Safeguarding Policy*.

10. **ELECTRICAL EQUIPMENT** Oaks Meadow Project will ensure any portable electrical equipment brought onto site or used within the open space is in a good and safe condition. All portable electrical equipment must be PAT tested and display a valid inspection label in date. Equipment found to be out of date or faulty when visually inspected will be removed from use. Under no circumstances are volunteers and Trustees allowed to use portable electrical equipment on site that does not display a valid PAT label.
11. Portable electrical extension cables must not exceed their rating and all electrical equipment should only be used in accordance with the manufacturer instructions and guidelines. Electrical equipment must not be used in wet or damp conditions.
12. **PERSONAL PROTECTIVE EQUIPMENT** Oaks Meadow Project will ensure, so far as is reasonably practicable, that all personal protective equipment supplied or used by its volunteers and Trustees is used in accordance with the manufacturers guidelines and is also fit for purpose.
13. **MANUAL HANDLING** Volunteers and Trustees should avoid any manual handling operations which involve the risk of injury. They should not lift anything which is too heavy (over 25kg), bulky or unwieldy, difficult to grip, hot or hazardous.
14. **CONTRACTORS ON SITE** Trustees will check with contractors (including self-employed persons) before they start work that:

The contract specifications are clear and understood by both the contractors and the Trustees

The contractors are competent to carry out the work e.g. have appropriate qualifications, references, experience

Contractors are aware of any hazards which might arise e.g. electricity cables

Contractors do not work alone on ladders at height (if necessary, an assistant or volunteer should be present)

Contractors have their own health and safety policy for their staff

The contractor knows which Trustee is responsible for overseeing that their work is as specified and to a satisfactory standard

15. **PLAY EQUIPMENT** All play equipment in unsupervised areas will be inspected three times per year to make sure they are safe, usable and secure. These three monthly Operational Inspections will be carried out by inspectors fully accredited

to the Register of Play Inspectors RPII. Routine visual inspections to identify/recognise potential hazards will also be carried out more frequently (normally weekly) by a nominated Trustee who has attended basic training in playground inspections.

A contract for regular maintenance and inspections to British Standard EN 1176 is in place with an accredited supplier (Sovereign Design Play Systems limited)

16. **POND SAFETY** Oaks Meadow offers to our visitors an attractive area for supervised children to play and explore the surroundings. A shallow pond area has been established to enhance the wildlife area. The trustees wish to ensure that visitor access to this environment is available in a safe and controlled way.

The Trustees aim to allow parents and children to use the pond as a “hands on” resource to enhance their experience. This policy is designed to be practicable and reasonable in managing the risks associated with an open water, shallow pond environment. The pond has a maximum depth up to 90cm with a water level overflow into an adjacent field drainage ditch.

Pond Safety Policy Document (*Appendix 1*)

A safety notice will be displayed at the pond with emergency and location details. (*Appendix 2*)

Review:

This policy will be reviewed annually.

Adopted:

Date: 12.05.21

Signature (Chair) *D G Shelley*

Signature (Secretary) *N Cleaver*

Reviewed: 08.11.23

Signature (Chair) *D G Shelley*

Signature (Secretary) *S Green*

Reviewed: 15.12.25

Signature (Chair) *D G Shelley*

Signature (Secretary) *D Lambert*

APPENDIX

1. POND SAFETY POLICY DOCUMENT

Overall

The pond must be regularly maintained to ensure that the perimeter does not become obscured and that the area around the pond does not deteriorate. The overflow pipe (inlet and outlet) should be checked for obstructions. Edges that are open for access to pond dipping should be gently sloping, or flat and well defined. The edges of the pond must be clearly visible. Grass must be trimmed in access areas. Wooden jetty structures must be maintained in good repair and regularly inspected.

Adequate warning signage must be in place and visible. These should warn visitors of the dangers and the restrictions in place when using the pond.

The main risk is children falling into the pond water. It is not anticipated that young children under 5 years will be using the pond unless accompanied.

Pond dipping

Pond dipping is a popular activity for children, both in their leisure time and as an educational activity. It is a **LOW RISK** activity with high benefits.

Who might be harmed?

- Young children, particularly under fives
- Teenagers (peer pressure often leads to risk taking)
- Volunteers and lone workers
- Children with special needs
- Members of the local community
- The elderly

GUIDELINES

Children and adults must be kept safe at all times.

The Trustees will check the pond regularly to ensure that the perimeter area is safe and that there are no trip hazards present.

Children must be supervised by an adult at ALL times.

Weil's disease (leptospirosis)

Weil's disease is a form of a bacterial infection, also known as leptospirosis, that is carried by animals, most commonly in rats and cattle.

It can be caught by humans through contact with rat or cattle urine, most commonly occurring through contaminated fresh water. Although human infection in the UK is minimal it is reasonable to take some preventative measures to decrease the possibility of contracting it.

During pond dipping activity try to ensure and advise visitors with cuts on their hands to cover them with waterproof plasters or wear suitable gloves, avoid ingestion of water and ensure that all children wash their hands after the activity especially before eating. Hand gel sanitizer may be used instead of washing.

Advise parents and children to avoid touching any part of their face with their hands before hands are washed or sanitized.

Visually check the pond area to remove (hygienically) any visible faeces in the pond before children enter the area.

Blue green algae blooms

Surface scum formed on the pond surface during warm weather may be a blue green algal bloom that can cause illness. If suspected, then alert the Environment Agency (REPORT Telephone number 0800 80 70 60) and close the pond to visitors until confirmed by tests. Erect signs notifying visitors that the pond is closed.

General

Trustees and volunteers should wear suitable footwear when working around the pond during maintenance work.

Emergency Action Plan

For incidents associated with the pond:

All Trustees are familiar with the need to maintain a low-risk environment and must assure themselves that the pond appears safe and operational and that the paths and banking are not obstructed.

In the event of a child falling into the pond resulting in injury or near drowning follow the steps below:

A life hook is located at the edge of the platform with a long handle reach, use this to pull the child onto the side of the pond.

Due to the size of the pond an adult can reach the victim easily by wading if necessary.

Summon other help and the emergency services if necessary.

If suspected drowning. **Ring Emergency Services on 999**

The address is: OAKS MEADOW, Bildeston Road, Little Finborough, Stowmarket IP14 2LA

What3Words: angry.scoring.vineyard.

Give details of the incident to the operator.

REFERENCES:

RoSPA - www.rospace.com/leisure-water-safety/water/advice/pond-dipping

2. POND SAFETY NOTICE

WELCOME TO OAKS MEADOW WILDLIFE POND

SAFETY AROUND THE POND

CHILDREN must be supervised at all times. Do not walk into the pond whether there is water in it or not.

DOGS must not go into the pond area. Flea & tick preparations are highly toxic to aquatic pond life. Dogs must be kept on a lead everywhere on the meadow.

WILDLIFE must not be disturbed, including animals, birds, pondlife, plants or nesting areas.

Do not run near the pond or on the platform or jetty. Surfaces may be uneven or slippery especially if muddy.

Do not throw objects of any kind in the water.

IN AN EMERGENCY CALL 999

**Oaks Meadow, Bildeston Rd, Lt.Finborough
IP14 2LA**

What3Words: angry. scoring. vineyard.

A life hook and pole is available at the corner of the platform for emergencies only.

If you would like to book a guided pond dipping session email: oaksmeadow@gmail.co

REFERENCES

Health & Safety at Work Act 1974

Management of Health & Safety at Work Regulations 1999

Health & Safety (First Aid) Regulations 1981

RIDDOR - Reporting of Injuries, Diseases and Dangerous Occurrences Regulations 2013

Manual Handling Operations Regulations 1992

Electricity at Work Regulations 1989

Institute of Electrical Engineers Wiring Regulations 16th Edition

HSE Generator Earthing

HSE Lone Working