

# VOLUNTEER INSURANCE

## Background

The Council wants all of the Friends activities and events to be successful and safe. To that end, there are a number of processes that need to be adhered to ensure that this happens, for example, completing a risk assessment prior to each event, the provision of liability insurance, obtaining licences, etc.

In terms of insurance there two different types of activity and/or event:

- Task days/sessions i.e. litter picking, conservation tasks, bulb planting, etc. - activities that enhance the landscape of a park or green space. Friends and their actions are covered by the Council Liability insurance policy.
- Events (e.g. concerts, fetes, picnics, etc.) - activities that primarily entertain. When the Friends initiate an event or activity, as the organiser, it is their responsibility to ensure the event or activity is planned and executed within park and green space regulation. The Friends will need to obtain relevant permissions, licences and insurance.

## Work Session Insurance

### **Cover provided by the Council's Liability Policy – Overview**

Once you are registered as a member of a Park Friends group, the Council will support you should there be a claim made against you/your group, providing you undertake agreed tasks with reasonable care. London Borough of Bromley does not hold any personal accident insurance for staff or volunteers.

The better prepared we all are for a potential claim, the better chance we have in successfully supporting you. Should an incident happen and/or a claim be made we will need to show that the person(s) in question was on site at the time and was doing an agreed task safely. To clarify the process and keep paperwork to a minimum, we have agreed the following with the Council's insurance team and the Friends Forum.

At the beginning of the year or season, there will be a meeting with an officer or officers of the Council and/or contractors with whom you (the Friends group) will agree what sites you intend working on and what range of tasks you intend carrying out. This will be written up and held by the Friends and the Council and/or contractors.

### **Cover provided by the Council's Liability Policy – Unsupervised tasks**

If you want to perform a task without a member of staff present (unsupervised), the following tasks may be performed by members of your group without pre-notification as long as it has been agreed by the Council (as above) and those performing the tasks do so with knowledge and understanding of the associated risks:

- Clearing litter and debris by hand, using litter picker or other similar implement;
- Sweeping paths or raking leaves using broom or rake;
- Trimming vegetation using secateurs or other small hand tool;
- Scattering of grit and salt in winter by hand or small spreading implement.

If you want to perform a more involved task the following procedure applies:

- Ensure the task you want to carry out on the site you want to operate on, is agreed by the Council and has risk assessments that are logged with and approved by the Council;
- Check those performing the tasks have the appropriate skills, knowledge and understanding of what they are doing;

- Keep a dated attendance register of those on site;
- If circumstances (i.e. weather, ground conditions) are not suitable for the proposed task, an alternative task can be undertaken provided risk assessments are in place and the task has been identified and previously agreed with the Council.

*Note: If you wish to carry out a new task not previously agreed and recorded, a risk assessment together with an outline of the task and the site in question must be approved by the Council before work commences.*

### **Cover provided by the Council's Liability Policy – Supervised tasks**

For those volunteering directly with Council staff or contractors at predetermined task sessions, as stated previously, no action is required by individuals or groups as the responsibility to produce a plan and risk assessment lies with Officers.

## **Events Insurance**

### **Cover provided by the Forum's Liability Policy**

LBB's public liability insurance policy does not cover non Council events or activities that Friends groups organise and promote themselves, such as a fete or music event. Events and/or activities that are initiated and/or organised by a Friends Group are their responsibility to insure.

As individual event insurance can be prohibitively expensive, the Friends Forum holds a basic Public Liability policy which every member group of the Forum can avail themselves of, provided the event is logged with and approved by the Council and they are a registered Friends Group member of Forum.

It should be noted that this provides only a basic level of cover and the event itself must conform to certain defined criteria (i.e. low risk event and no more than 500 attendees). Should more extreme cover be required then the Friends would need to source their own public liability insurance.

## **Support - Tasks & Events**

To support groups leading independent sessions we will provide a series of basic training on subjects such as *Leading Practical Conservation Tasks, Risk Assessment, Safe use of Hand Tools* with the expectation that at least one member of each group (that works independently) completes each training session every other year and/or if said person leaves the group a replacement is identified and trained within three months

Support for planning & running events will be in the form of a series of drop-in sessions to help guide you through the process.

Further advice can be obtained from your Friends Officer, by email at [friends@bromley.gov.uk](mailto:friends@bromley.gov.uk) or by contacting the Friends Forum at [bromleyfriendsforum@outlook.com](mailto:bromleyfriendsforum@outlook.com).