

The Bourne Conservation Group Health and Safety Guidance for Individuals

By joining this group you are able to take part in worthwhile conservation tasks in The Bourne area. Although the atmosphere is invariably friendly, relaxed and enjoyable, every effort is also made to ensure the safety of members and others who may be associated with or affected by the work. Establishing this safe working environment is not only common sense, it is a legal requirement on volunteer groups such as ours and you have your part to play in achieving it.

Under the law, individuals have a primary “duty of care” to themselves. This means that, while working with the Group you should:

Be satisfied that you are fit enough to participate. Someone with a serious medical condition or chronic back problems, for example, would be best advised to restrict their activities.

Not undertake tasks for which you are unsuited or for which you have no experience. This might apply, for example, to heavy lifting, prolonged physical activity or use of tools with which you are unfamiliar. During most work sessions there are a variety of tasks thus catering for a range of experience and physical strength.

You also have a responsibility to the team not to put other volunteers or members of the public in danger. Therefore:

Be clear on what it is you are being asked to do and understand any risks involved. This means listening carefully to the briefing by the team leader at the start of each session and asking questions at any point if anything is unclear.

Be dressed appropriately for the weather conditions on the day including boots or stout shoes and gardening style gloves. Special requirements (eg Wellington boots) will be notified in the calling notice for the session. Any other protective equipment such as goggles or hard hats will be provided when considered necessary.

Do not undertake unauthorised tasks. If in doubt ask the team leader.

Be conscious that there are some minor risks attaching to conservation work, just as there are to gardening eg, some plants have poisonous elements. Please make sure your tetanus injection is up to date and that any cuts and grazes are covered.

Be aware of the arrangements for first aid. There will always be a first aid kit available and, on most occasions, a first aider present. Mobile phones will be available for administrative and emergency purposes.

Working with Children and Young Persons. Our Group endeavours to encourage children and young persons to take part in our work and activities to introduce them to the natural world and community service. When children are present you need to:

Be aware of our Safeguarding Policy for children and young persons contained on our website; in particular the need to inform the leader of the work session immediately if you have any safeguarding concerns about a child taking part in that session.

Adhere to the Code of Behaviour given in that Policy and reproduced overleaf

Be very careful not to place yourself in a position that might cause doubts as to your actions or intentions.

Full details of the commitment of the Group to your safety is embodied in its Health and Safety Policy Statement and Safeguarding Policy for Children which are available on the website.

Code of Behaviour for All Volunteers (Extract from Children's Safeguarding Policy)

In establishing the right safe and secure environment, volunteers should at all times show respect and understanding for individual rights, safety and welfare, and conduct themselves in a way that reflects the ethos and principles of The Bourne Conservation Group as set out in its Constitution. This applies equally to non-members who may be working with the Group on specific occasions.

- **Attitudes.** Volunteers should be committed to:
 - Treating children and young persons with respect and dignity
 - Always listening to what a child or young person is saying
 - Recognising the unique contribution each individual can make
 - Giving encouragement when necessary

- **Setting an Example.** Volunteers should endeavour to:
 - Set an example they would wish others to follow
 - Use appropriate language and challenge any inappropriate language used by a child or young person
 - Respect the right to privacy

- **One to One Contact.** Volunteers should:
 - Not spend excessive time alone with children away from others
 - In the event of having to meet with an individual child or young person, make every effort to keep the meeting as open as possible
 - If privacy is necessary, ensure that others are informed of the meeting and its whereabouts

- **Physical Contact.** Volunteers should **never**:
 - Allow or engage in inappropriate touching of any kind
 - Engage in provocative or rough physical games

- **General.** Volunteers must:
 - Be aware that someone might misinterpret their actions however well intentioned
 - Not be drawn into inappropriate attention-seeking situations such as tantrums or crushes
 - Not exaggerate or trivialise child abuse issues.