

# Health and Safety Guidelines

With a growing public awareness of safety, the NGS takes a practical approach to minimise the risk of accidents in gardens. This involves:

- Pre-opening checks in areas of gardens open to visitors
- Reporting any incidents to Head Office so that any resulting insurance claim can be managed effectively.

No GO, CO/ACO should admit liability in the case of any accident.

## **Pre Opening Checks**

County Teams can help garden owners identify risks such as uneven paths, steep banks, unsafe bridges etc. identified, GOs should either rectify the problem, (e.g. in the case of an unsafe footbridge or an uneven path) or place warning signs (e.g. in the case of a steep bank). Poisonous plants such as giant hogweed should be marked and/or roped off. The garden registration form includes a section to confirm this check has been done.

## **Reporting Incidents and Accidents**

Thankfully incidents in gardens are rare, but use these guidelines if an incident occurs. Head Office can give further advice if needed.

### **When is it necessary to make a formal report to Head Office?**

If there is an accident leading to the death, or injury to a member of the public, volunteer or anyone else. The GO should advise their CO/ACO as soon as possible. We need to know basic details of the incident, the names of those involved, witnesses, what happened etc. Most gardens open at weekends but the report must be made as soon possible after the incident.

### **When else should a formal report be made?**

If there is doubt about the seriousness of an injury, or if someone is taken to hospital then a formal report should made, because the condition of the individual may deteriorate.

### **What else should be considered?**

Record as much information as possible to assist with insurance claims. This could include: photographs or sketches, notes, details of witnesses, name and address.

### **What if treatment or help is refused?**

In some cases individuals may make light of an injury and make their own way home or to a hospital. Whilst no formal report may be necessary, it is best to note their name and address, or even the registration number of their car, so they can be traced if necessary.

**Commercial gardens**

They should be aware of their responsibilities under RIDDOR, but should still notify their CO/ACO should an accident occur.