

## **Old Marston Mill Lane Allotments Association Site Risk assessment 2012**

**Assessment date:** 8 May 2012; carried out by Dr. M. Unkovskaya  
Weather: cold, cloudy, occasional sun.

### **1. Entrance**

**1.1 Assessment:** There are two entrances to the allotments: through the First and Second gates. Both will be padlocked from the 1<sup>st</sup> of June. The plot holders have been notified and told about the conditions for obtaining keys. The gates face a non-residential part of Mill Lane at the far end of which there is a left turn to a farm. The plot holders can drive onto the allotments along two drive ways leading from the gates. At present the bottom of site is still waterlogged not permitting a safe turning at the turning space.

**1.2 Risk:** no risk in dry weather. After rains there is a risk of skidding known to all allotters. Thus no one drives on to the allotment's site after heavy rains.

**1.3 Action:** the allotters collect the stones from their plots and put them on to the drive way thus fortifying it. All new allotters are notified about the danger of driving on to the site in wet weather.

### **2. Signs:**

**2.1 Assessment:** There is a notice board situated on the left immediately inside the gates containing notices including the names of the Committee Members, Rules of Constitution and Pipe Band announcement. Has been painted and repaired last summer. Could do with a touch of paint.

**2.2 Risk:** No risk at present

**2.3 Action:** is being up dated as and when needed.

### **3 Grass cutting**

**3.1 Assessment:** Due to recent rains no grass cutting has been possible either on the main drives, the paths between the plots or on the turning spaces, one at the far end of the site at the end of main drive, the other towards the end of the second drive on the left.

**3.2 Risk:** Low to medium if wet.

**3.3 Action:** grass needs to be cut on regular basis throughout the season, the grass on the paths to be cut by plot holders, and by the association on the drive ways. The latter is difficult at present as we do not have an allotments' manager or a communal lawn mover because we are trying to get a secure container for keeping our equipment prior to purchasing one.

#### **4. Accumulation of rubbish/ non compostable material**

**4.1** Site is reasonably tidy. On the left side of the second drive next to the turning place there is a pile of communal compostable material.

**4.2 Risk:** Low

**4.3 Action:** Need to watch that Mrs. Mitchell will not bring again any of her own garden rubbish such as big branches and twigs on to our communal allotments' waste pile.

#### **5 Vermin**

**5.1 Assessment** Not noticed this season

**5.2 Risk:** Low

**5.3 Action:** Ongoing checks

#### **6 Dangerous/ Hazardous substances**

**6.1 Assessment :** No combustible material is stored on plots in a way accessible to any one, nor any chemicals either. All new plot holders are given clear instructions on erecting of sheds/green houses and on use of materials.

**6.2 Risk:** Potentially high. Low to medium at present.

**6.3 Action:** Constant care and vigilance when using the things like petrol or weed killers (the latter is very limited on site due to beehives and general strive of plot holders towards maintaining an organic site)

#### **7. Compost/ Manure heaps**

**7.1 Assessment:** Compost and manure are kept by individual plot holders either in compost bins (wooden or plastic) or in bags placed on their own plots. No sign of vermin.

**7.2 Risk:** Low

**7.3 Action:** Ongoing checks

## **8. Vandalism:**

**8.1 Assessment:** no vandalism last year

**8.2 Risk:** Low

**8.3 Action:** Regular monitoring of site by all the plot holders.

## **9. Water supply/ tap**

**9.1 Assessment:** At present there is one uncovered water trough positioned approximately in the middle of the first drive way on the left hand side with one tap marked, as of 9 May 2012 with WATER NOT SAFE FOR DRINKING.

Plan to extend water to plots 13, 25 and 32 to commence as soon as possible. Risk of accident and injury as follows:

- a) Digging the trench
- b) Hitting the one pipe we have left, installed by the Parish Council some three years ago.
- c) Storage of soil
- d) Trench hazard
- e) Installing pipes and T junction
- f) Backfilling spoil

**9.2 Risk:** Medium to high while work on trench is being carried out.

**9.3 Action:** Water was switched off at the mains and the pipe was drained off last October.

Extension plans:

All plot holders will be notified prior to the commencement of work about the dates and hazards. Notices will be placed on site for the duration of work.

- a) Insured contractor will carry out work with appropriate machinery.
- b) Allotment Committee will need to obtain printouts from Gas, Electric and water suppliers showing no services in the area. CAT scan will be carried out by digger contractor.
- c) Spoil will be stored on unoccupied plots and on the drive areas. Alternative routes to the affected plots will be indicated. Hazard tape will warn the plot holders.
- d) Qualified, insured plumber will carry out the work.
- e) Working party will be set up with guidelines.

## **10. Security**

**10.1: Assessment:** The two padlocked gates leading to the allotments provide reasonable security. The problem area is the broken wall which separates the site from Mr. B. Ward's mobile home park. This means that the site is currently open.

**10.2 Risk:** High. Last year some produce has been stolen from a number of plots. Several used syringes were found on several plots. One individual, lacking in sobriety, was chased out of the site last September. He ran straight through the breach in the wall.

**10.3 Action:** Report to the Parish Council and to the City Council if the Parish Council cannot persuade Mr. Ward to repair the breach caused by his own reversing vehicle.

## **11 Unoccupied/ untidy plots**

**11.1 Assessment:** There are two full plots and three half plots currently unoccupied. Plot No.19 has not been worked on due to an injury sustained by the plot holder in car accident. Three potential plots on the left hand side of the Second drive as yet cannot be developed due to the contamination of the soil in the past. Half of plot No.30 is kept by the Association as nature reserve and provider of black berries for the allotters.

**11.2 Risk:** Low to Medium

**11.2 Action:** The plot holder of No.19 has requested help in rotavating the part of his plot which contains no permanent plants. New rules concerning untidy plots and cutting of the grass on narrow paths adjacent to plots have been introduced two years ago. Pressure

needs to be put on plot holders to adhere to the Rules. Working parties are organised at the end of every season to tidy the site for the winter.

## **12. Personal injury**

**12.1 Assessment:** The whole site is very dry but is prone to being waterlogged after heavy rains, particularly on the right hand side where there is a ditch, at the bottom of site and some individual plots in the middle. The uncut grass both on the main drives and on the side paths makes walking difficult and might cause a twisted ankle.

**12.2 Risk:** Medium to high.

**12.3 Action:** New plot holders are told about the communal petrol streamer and given instructions as to how to operate it. The rest of the machinery used on site is individual property. Two people who owe the patrol lawn movers periodically cut the grass on main and some side paths. The Association needs to agree to provide them with petrol and oil money so that they could cut the grass more regularly. The wild growth on the outer sides of the site is cut by the City Council twice in season.