

# Green Gym Leader's role and responsibilities

This document is intended as an outline of a Green Gym Leader's role and responsibilities for anyone considering taking on the role, and as a reminder for those already in a Leader's Role.

## The role of a leader

- To lead volunteers with enthusiasm, including thanking them for their efforts
- To get to know the people
- To set goals
- To set and understand the tasks needed to achieve the goals
- To have overall responsibility for the group for the duration of a session
- To collect and return the tools to the Toolstore
- To have an overview of the site they are responsible for and liaise with site owners.

## A leader needs to

- Be helpful
- Be approachable
- Have a sense of humour if possible!
- Be a team player
- Be able to plan ahead
- Be able to organise, but adaptable if changes are needed
- Involve people
- Be a good communicator
- Be able to build confidence and motivate
- Respect individuals' needs

Getting down to the practicalities:

## Before the session

Visit the site shortly before the session to check it out.

Plan the tasks required, deciding what the priorities are if any.

Prepare a Risk Assessment for the session using the site specific Risk Assessment sheet and considering any special risks for this session.

It's good to have a variety of tasks as people often have strong preferences for what they want to do.

Bear in mind that some volunteers might be less able to do certain tasks, e.g. someone with a bad back or knees wouldn't want to do a task that involved bending or kneeling.

Pick up the tools required, including First Aid kit/Welfare kit/Medical details backpack.

Familiarise yourself with any medical conditions that volunteers may have as per medical details list.

If the weather is looking very bad (e.g. pouring with rain/sleeting/snowing heavily/very hot in an unshaded site) the leader needs to make a decision about going ahead. The latest they should do this is 8am and they should communicate with the Programme Co-ordinator who will send out an email to members if the session is cancelled. If the Programme co-ordinator is unresponsive, the Secretary can be asked to send out the message. Sometimes this can be a tricky decision, but other leaders can be asked for advice. Ultimately it's up to the Team Leader to make the decision.

## At the session

Take your mobile phone and make sure it is turned on so that volunteers can phone in if needed (e.g they are lost or going to be late).

Those who are able to are recommended to install the what3words app on their phone which enables a precise geolocation using 3 words to direct emergency services.

Note who the volunteers are.

If there are any new volunteers, introduce them to everyone.

### Warm up exercises

These are a good idea, especially if it's a cold day and people haven't had a long walk to the site.

### Safety briefing

Location of First Aid kit during the session.

Who is First Aid qualified

Reminder to let the leader know if you leave the session early

Reminder to let the leader know of any accidents/injuries during the session

Any particular hazards noted for this session

### Task briefing

Let the volunteers know what the tasks are, why they're doing them (if applicable) and what the priorities are, if any.

If any of the tasks are new or difficult, remember that demonstrating by doing can be more memorable than talking about it.

Any new volunteers could be "buddied up" with someone else.

Don't make it too long – people want to get started!

## During the session

The leader needs to circulate and make sure that:

Tasks are being done properly

People are happy with what they're doing

New people are being looked after by someone

If there are any accidents/injuries, note them in the accident book.

Remember that people are there to enjoy themselves and that if that means stopping to chat, that's fine.

Remember too that it's your responsibility as leader to be mindful of health and safety. If someone is being unsafe, you need to tactfully remind them of how to stay safe and ask them to stop doing anything that's unsafe.

## At the end of the session

Count the tools back in, paying particular care not to leave any bladed tools such as saws or scythes behind.

Check that all the volunteers have left the site.

Return the Tools to the Toolstore.

## Dealing with difficulties

These are few and far between. If there was a situation that made it difficult to carry on the session you could finish the session early. The other Team Leaders and committee members could be consulted as to the best approach going forward, but ultimately a volunteer could be asked not to continue attending sessions. Where there are vulnerable members who need supervising they are asked to come with a carer.

## After the session

Team leaders are asked to write a short email to the site owners letting them know what has been done during the session.

If there is a situation where an insurance claim needs to be made the Risk Assessment for the session might need to be referred to, so it is worth keeping it for a short while after the session.

Rachel Godfrey, March 9<sup>th</sup> 2026