



Barrowby Parish Council

Email: clerk@barrowbyparishcouncil.gov.uk

Address: Reading Room, Church Street, Barrowby, NG32 1BX

Website: <https://barrowby.parish.lincolnshire.gov.uk>

RISK ASSESSMENT

Flower Group (Ad-hoc / Flexible Volunteering)

Document control

- **Owner:** Buildings and Assets
- **Responsible officer:** Clerk / Proper Officer
- **Adopted:** 11.05.2026 (Minute ref: 8e [26/008])
- **Version:** 2026.1
- **Review:** Annually or earlier if legislation/guidance changes
- **Next review due:** January-March 2027 at Buildings and Assets for formal adoption at Parish Council May 2027

This Risk Assessment documents the measures required to ensure that Flower Group volunteers working independently or in small informal groups can carry out activities safely and with minimal risk.

It should be read in conjunction with the Barrowby Parish Council Volunteer Policy.

Barrowby Parish Council recognises that the Flower Group often works as and when required, rather than at formal events; therefore this assessment is designed to be applied each time a volunteer attends a planter or flower bed.

Description of Activity

Planting, sowing, watering, feeding plants, weeding, tidying planters and beds, low-level pruning, trimming, digging, handling compost and plants, transporting tools and wheelbarrows.

Locations: public planters, beds and green spaces in Barrowby as authorised by the Parish Council.

How this risk assessment must be applied

Because Flower Group tasks are carried out individually and at variable times, the following must happen before work begins:

- Volunteers must brief themselves using this Risk Assessment and safety controls.
- Volunteers must inform the Lead Volunteer before attending a location (text/WhatsApp is acceptable).
- Volunteers must carry out a visual safety check of the area on arrival.
- If conditions appear unsafe — stop and do not proceed.
- A quick after-session message to the Lead Volunteer must be made (to maintain insurance participation records).

The Lead Volunteer keeps an ongoing list of volunteers and participation dates for insurance purposes.

Hazard Identification and Controls (Adapted for ad-hoc work)

Hazard	Risk	Control Measures
Traffic near roadsides, car parks, bus stops	Collision, crush injury	High-visibility vests required near roads; stand away from traffic; avoid narrow pavements; daylight working only; stop if conditions feel unsafe.
Hand tools (trowels, forks, secateurs, spades)	Cuts, bruises, punctures	Gloves recommended; demonstrate safe tool use; keep tools close to you; do not leave tools where public might trip; inspect tools before use; only tools approved by Lead Volunteer may be used.
Manual handling (soil bags, compost, water, plants)	Strain, back injury	Lift within personal ability; use wheelbarrows/trolleys; take multiple lighter loads rather than one heavy load; volunteers may refuse lifting tasks with no explanation needed.
Slips / trips / falls	Sprains, fractures	Visual check of ground before starting; tidy hoses and tools; suitable footwear required.
Weather	Heat stress, sunburn, slips on rain/ice	Check weather forecast; postpone work in heavy rain/ice/high winds; take breaks; hydration and sun protection encouraged.
Harmful debris (glass, dog mess, needles, brambles)	Cuts, infection	Do not handle hazardous waste — report to Lead Volunteer / Clerk; gloves to be worn; wash or sanitise hands after work.
Lone working	Lack of support in emergency	Lone working discouraged; where unavoidable, volunteer must notify Lead Volunteer before and after the session; no lone working with step-ups or heavy lifting.
Working at height	Injury from fall	Volunteers must not work at height unless using approved hop-up or small step platform; no chairs/benches; if reach is insufficient, stop and refer to the Clerk / contractor.

General Safety Rules

All volunteers must:

- Work only within their individual competency and comfort level.
- Stop immediately if anything feels unsafe.
- Follow the volunteer policy, ToR and this Risk Assessment.
- Notify the Lead Volunteer if:

- a hazard was identified
- something broke or was damaged
- any incident or near-miss occurred
- a planter/bed requires follow-up attention

Use of Tools

- Volunteers may bring their own hand tools, but they may only be used at the discretion of the Lead Volunteer.
- The Lead Volunteer has the authority to prohibit tools that appear unsafe, unsuitable or unfamiliar.
- Power tools are not permitted unless specifically approved by the Parish Council following a separate risk assessment.

Final Assessment

- Acceptable — Activity may proceed with the above controls**
- Not acceptable — activity must not proceed until risk is reduced**

Sign-off

(To be completed when adopted and reviewed)

Name	Role	Signature	Date
Lead Volunteer / Assessor			
Parish Clerk (optional)			

Review

This Risk Assessment will be reviewed **annually**, or sooner if:

- tools or equipment change
- new planters/locations are added
- incidents occur or concerns are raised
- tasks change significantly