



Plant Health & Biosecurity Policy: TreeLink Stirling

1. Purpose

Biosecurity is vital for successful tree production and woodland management because of increasing threats from pests, diseases, and invasive species

- To protect plant stock and maintain quality throughout all processes
- To maintain TreeLink's reputation
- To support broader environmental and ecosystem health

This policy applies to all TreeLink operations, from seed gathering and processing, to final planting out of seedling trees and woodland management.

2. Roles and Responsibilities

- Tree Nursery Co-ordinator: Oversee the implementation of biosecurity measures, ensure volunteers and dispersed growers are aware and trained, and maintain records.
- Volunteers: Follow biosecurity protocols, report any suspected pest/disease issues to event leader or trustee, and take part in training as requested.
- Dispersed growers: Follow good horticulture practices around cleaning of equipment, and check regularly for pests and diseases
- Event leaders: Check existing tree health; check for presence of invasive species such as Giant Hogweed, Himalayan Balsam or Japanese Knotweed and ensure these are noted in the event Risk Assessment.

3. Regulatory Bodies, Registration and Reporting

- TreeLink Stirling is registered with SASA (Science & Advice for Scottish Agriculture) as a professional grower and can access advice on any suspected pest or disease if required: TreeLink does not currently need to register for Plant Passports
- TreeLink Stirling is registered as a supplier of Forestry Reproductive Materials (FRM) with the Forestry Commission
- Links for notifiable diseases:-
- <https://www.observatree.org.uk/>
- <https://treealert.forestresearch.gov.uk/>

Practical Guidelines for Tree Nursery Users & Tree Planting Teams

Cleaning

- Wipe down all tools, equipment, and machinery (eg strimmer) after visiting different sites. Keep rags in container for this purpose
- Cleaning boots, pots and equipment with water is generally adequate for our low-risk nursery site. If pathogens such as Phytophthora known to be present elsewhere, disinfectant such as Cleankill Sanitising Spray should be used. **Check COSHH data sheets before any chemicals are used and note that no chemicals may be used at Braehead Community Garden.**
- Be especially vigilant about cleaning equipment when invasive species (eg Japanese Knotweed) known to be present
- This may require an appointed person to take tools and equipment home to wash before returning to the storage container
- Wash or sanitise hands after handling plants or soil. Wear gloves.

Plants entering tree nursery

- Only accept seeds, seedlings, and other plant material into the nursery from growers who are known to TreeLink (or quarantine for 6 months off-site)
- Ensure dispersed growers are aware of Biosecurity Policy & offer training
- Seed-gathering: from healthy trees only, and from as many trees as possible.
- Inspect all new plants for signs of pests, diseases, or abnormalities.
- Isolate new plants in a quarantine area for observation
- Remove and destroy infested or diseased plants immediately, do not compost. Burn diseased plants off-site; consult SASA if required.

Water and soil management at the tree nursery

- Use water from central, sealed IBC tanks first, and the nursery's open bins only if necessary. Clean out bins at least annually
- Wash all pots, trays and containers thoroughly before re-using
- Be aware of Braehead Community Garden's guidelines 'Please do not bring the following into the garden: chemical fertiliser; soil conditioners (this will be made onsite for your use or can be ordered by the garden); chemical pest control / disease control products'

Training & Record Keeping

- Maintain records of source, health & dispersal of seedlings and trees using the online Tree Inventory spreadsheet on Teams
- Informal training for volunteers through discussion and demonstration of best practice

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