

Sustainable South Brent Hedge and Woodland Group

Risk Assessments

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| 1 | Woodland Management & Coppicing |
| 2 | Hedge laying |
| 3 | The Marsh Recycling Site: storage and processing of timber |
| 4 | Use of chainsaws |

Updated April 2021. Robin Toogood

Site/activity: **Woodland Management & Coppicing**

Activity (describe what you plan to do, e.g. hedge trimming with power tools)	Type of Risk (describe risks, e.g. trips and falls, cuts, eye injuries and rate its severity as Low, Medium or High)	Level of Risk (rate the likelihood of the risk happening without mitigation – Low, Medium or High)	Mitigation (detail the measures you will put in place to reduce the probability and/or severity of the risk)	Risk rating after mitigation (Low, Medium or High). Mitigation should aim to reduce the risk to low. If not, review the measures to be taken.
Tree felling	Injury to workers and passers-by from falling trees and branches	High	Leader gives safety briefing at the start of the activity; a communication/warning procedure is explained; inexperienced workers are teamed up with experienced workers; a lookout is posted to keep the drop zone clear of people during felling; only trees that can be easily be tackled with hand tools are felled. Workers wear appropriate p.p.e. (= hard hats, high-viz jackets).	Low

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Additional measures relating to felling of trees with Ash Dieback (or any trees with a dead wood component)	Heightened risk of injury from brittle branches falling and from loss of felling control caused by snapping of felling hinges	High	Additional briefing and training is given before work starts; each tree is hazard-assessed before work begins; only one person works under a tree during felling unless a two-person cross-cut saw is being used; hard hats are worn; a rope is secured in place before cutting begins in order to provide additional control over direction and timing of fell. Only trees up to 30cm d.b.h. are tackled, and only when sited away from roads or adjoining property.	Low
Moving heavy logs and felled timber	Injury to backs from heavy lifting; crush injuries to legs and arms if the logs are dropped	Medium	Leader gives safety briefing at the start of the activity; weights too heavy for lifting are rolled or are reduced in length to manageable sizes; sufficient numbers of people are used to lift materials.	Low
Cutting wood using hand tools (saws, axes, loppers)	Cut injuries to workers' hands, legs, feet. Strike injuries to others being hit by tools during use	High	Leader gives safety briefing at the start of the activity; including safe working distances between workers and correct use of tools.	Low
General moving around the work site	Slips, trips and falls	Medium	Participants are asked to wear suitable footwear and clothing; rest breaks are taken; work does not take place in foul weather.	Low
All the above	Risk of injury being made more serious because of remoteness of site from help	High	A first aid kit is brought on site; sufficient group members are trained in emergency first aid; a mobile phone is brought on site to call for emergency assistance if required; no "lone working" takes place.	Low

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All the above	Risk of spreading Coronavirus infection between workers	Currently low (there is a zero/very low incidence of Covid 19 in the area).	A briefing is given to all participants before work begins about hygiene precautions; suitable distancing (minimum 2m) is observed (which also matches existing safe working distance precautions); hand sanitiser is provided on site. Specific tools, equipment and p.p.e. are allocated to the same person for the working day. Where this is not possible tools are sprayed with disinfectant or wiped down with anti-septic before being handed on. All handheld equipment such as saws or loppers are disinfected before being handed out and at the end of the working day. All workers bring their own drinks and refreshments and do not share. A register of participants is maintained to enable tracking & tracing.	Low
Site/activity:	Hedge laying			
Activity (describe what you plan to do, e.g. hedge trimming with power tools)	Type of Risk (describe risks, e.g. trips and falls, cuts, eye injuries and rate its severity as Low, Medium or High)	Level of Risk (rate the likelihood of the risk happening without mitigation – Low, Medium or High)	Mitigation (detail the measures you will put in place to reduce the probability and/or severity of the risk)	Risk rating after mitigation (Low, Medium or High). Mitigation should aim to reduce the risk to low. If not, review the measures to be taken.
Tree felling/hedge laying	Injury to workers from falling trees and branches	High	Leader gives safety briefing at the start of the activity; a communication/warning procedure is explained; inexperienced workers are teamed up with experienced workers; a lookout is posted to keep the drop zone clear of people during felling; only trees that can be easily be tackled with hand tools are felled.	Low

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Moving heavy logs and felled timber	Injury to backs from heavy lifting; crush injuries to legs and arms if the logs are dropped	Medium	Leader gives safety briefing at the start of the activity; weights too heavy for lifting are rolled or are reduced in length to manageable sizes; sufficient numbers of people are used to lift materials.	Low
Cutting wood using hand tools (saws, axes, loppers)	Cut injuries to workers' hands, legs, feet. Strike injuries to others being hit by tools during use	High	Leader gives safety briefing at the start of the activity; including safe working distances between workers and correct use of tools.	Low
General moving around the work site	Slips, trips and falls	Medium	Participants are asked to wear suitable footwear and clothing; rest breaks are taken; work does not take place in foul weather.	Low
All the above	Injury to workers from passing vehicles, when working at roadside	High	High visibility jackets are worn when working at roadside; warning signs are posted to alert passing vehicle drivers; roadside work only takes place on very minor lanes carrying little traffic.	Low
Casting up and filling hedge with Brash	Falls/slides down bank into road	High	Work from field side of hedge (attention barbed wire fence see below!) if possible. When working on roadside use carefully placed ladder. Careful footing and working with due attention. If not confident move onto another place. If working with another passing shovel between you for Covid19 precautions wear work gloves and maintain distance	Low

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Casting up and filling hedge with Brash	Snagging on barbed wire fence	High	Working from filedside of bank involves being close to the barbed wire fence. Keep mindful, wear thick sleeves. Drape piece of carpet or similar padded fabric over the fence at suitable crossing point. Get person/people to pass brash over fence (maintain 2m distance) or collect a larger amount and position along your working area before climbing over to save too many trips over fence. If unsteady on feet or not confident choose other job	Low
Burning Brash	Burns, trips, contact within 2m	High	We will have as many fire sites as needed to avoid close contact (envisage three). Fires to be kept small enough to control, brash is to be cut small. Only one person to attend to the fire at a time. Alternate bringing brash to fire, coordinating with others who are feeding same fire to maintain 2m distance. Buckets of water available at each fire. 1 first aider attending each fire. Work slowly and methodically mindful of layered briar causing trip hazards.	Low
All the above	Risk of injury being made more serious because of remoteness of site from help	High	A first aid kit is brought on site; sufficient group members are trained in emergency first aid; a mobile phone is brought on site to call for emergency assistance if required; no "lone working" takes place.	Low

Risk Assessment

All the above	Risk of spreading Coronavirus infection between workers	Currently low (there is a zero/very low incidence of Covid 19 in the area).	A briefing is given to all participants before work begins about hygiene precautions; suitable distancing (minimum 2m) is observed (which also matches existing safe working distance precautions); hand sanitiser is provided on site. Specific tools, equipment and p.p.e. are allocated to the same person for the working day. Where this is not possible tools are sprayed with disinfectant or wiped down with anti-septic before being handed on. All handheld equipment such as saws or loppers are disinfected before being handed out and at the end of the working day. All workers bring their own drinks and refreshments and do not share. A register of participants is maintained to enable tracking & tracing.	Low
Site/activity:	The Marsh Recycling Site: storage and processing of timber			
Activity (describe what you plan to do, e.g. hedge trimming with power tools)	Type of Risk (describe risks, e.g. trips and falls, cuts, eye injuries and rate its severity as Low, Medium or High)	Level of Risk (rate the likelihood of the risk happening without mitigation – Low, Medium or High)	Mitigation (detail the measures you will put in place to reduce the probability and/or severity of the risk)	Risk rating after mitigation (Low, Medium or High). Mitigation should aim to reduce the risk to low. If not, review the measures to be taken.
Stacking logs and firewood for drying and storage	Crushing injury from collapse of wood stacks	High	Log stacks are held in place with stakes, fences, or other suitable supports	Low
Moving heavy logs and timber	Injury to backs from heavy lifting; crush injuries to legs and arms if the logs are dropped	Medium	Leader gives safety briefing at the start of the activity; weights too heavy for lifting are rolled or are reduced in length to manageable sizes; sufficient numbers of people are used to lift materials.	Low
Cutting wood using hand tools (saws, axes, loppers)	Cut injuries to workers' hands, legs, feet. Strike injuries to others being hit by tools during use	High	Leader gives safety briefing at the start of the activity; including safe working distances between workers and correct use of tools.	Low

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General moving around the work site	Slips, trips and falls	Medium	Participants are asked to wear suitable footwear and clothing; rest breaks are taken; work does not take place in foul weather.	Low
Processing timber to firewood logs or "chunks" by mechanical equipment	Risk of severe injury from use of processing machines, tractor p.t.o. including crushing, cuts, damage to eyes and hearing	High	Log processing equipment is only used by contractors with appropriate training and insurance. When Hedge and Woodland Group members act in a support/assistance role (such as carrying timber to the machine), they are given a full safety briefing by the operator, they operate only under the direct personal supervision of the operator, and wear suitable personal protective equipment.	Low-medium
All the above	Risk of injury being made more serious because of remoteness of site from help	High	A first aid kit is brought on site; sufficient group members are trained in emergency first aid; a mobile phone is brought on site to call for emergency assistance if required; no "lone working" takes place.	Low
Site/activity:	Use of chainsaws			
Activity (describe what you plan to do, e.g. hedge trimming with power tools)	Type of Risk (describe risks, e.g. trips and falls, cuts, eye injuries and rate its severity as Low, Medium or High)	Level of Risk (rate the likelihood of the risk happening without mitigation – Low, Medium or High)	Mitigation (detail the measures you will put in place to reduce the probability and/or severity of the risk)	Risk rating after mitigation (Low, Medium or High). Mitigation should aim to reduce the risk to low. If not, review the measures to be taken.
Note - refer also to the risk assessments for coppicing/woodland work and for hedge-laying. This risk assessment addresses the additional risks associated with the use of chainsaws. Note that chainsaws are not used on the group's advertised general work days, but only on separate occasions arranged when just the chainsaw operators plus lookout assistants are present.				
Use of chainsaws for woodland and hedge management	Severe injury from chainsaw blade cuts	High	Only competent (trained and certificated) users are permitted to use chainsaws on project sites; users wear full personal protective equipment; chainsaws have chainbrakes;	Low

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Use of chainsaws for felling larger trees	Severe injury to operators, assistants and passers-by from falling trees, hung up trees, etc	High	Only competent (trained and certificated) users are permitted to use chainsaws on project sites; users wear full personal protective equipment; operators have suitable equipment to hand for dealing with difficult trees including ropes, wedges and felling levers; a system of communication and posting lookout assistants is agreed and implemented to exclude passers-by and other workers from the hazard zone.	Low
Refuelling chainsaws	Risk of fire/explosion from use of petrol	Medium	Fuel storage and refuelling take place away from the work area and other people; fuel is only carried in purpose-made and labelled containers; no smoking or fires are permitted near fuel and refuelling sites	Low
All the above	Financial risk of a claim for damages in the event of an accident	High	Chainsaws are only used when there is suitable insurance cover held by the operators personally (given that chainsaw use is not covered by Sustainable South Brent general insurance).	Low