Risk Assessment

RA004 – Using machinery and maintaining field courses

**Who is at risk?**

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| Classification | Description/examples | Risks |
| Club | Club members and guests | Slips, trips and falls, impact injuries, strains and sprains, lacerations, abrasions and bruising, bites, stings and allergic reactions, eye injuries from poking hazards, machine malfunction, falling from heights, being hit by falling trees or branches, injury from tools and machinery. |
| Contractors | Contractors to maintain woodland on behalf of the club | Slips, trips and falls, impact injuries, strains and sprains, lacerations, abrasions and bruising, bites, stings and allergic reactions, eye injuries from poking hazards, machine malfunction, falling from heights, being hit by falling trees or branches, injury from tools and machinery. |
| Machinery | Chainsaws, brush cutters, hedge trimmers, strimmers, quad bikes, off road vehicles | Injury |
| Tools | Machetes, axes, branch loppers, hand saws, knives, secateurs, shears | Injury |

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| No. | Hazard description | Who is at risk? | Hazard likelihood | Possible severity | Pre-control risk rating | Control | Hazard likelihood | Possible severity | Post-control risk rating |
| 1 | Manual handling | Club | 2 | 2 | 4 | Club members should be aware of good manual handling techniques, example of which can be found on the Health and Safety Executive website:  <https://www.hse.gov.uk/msd/manual-handling/good-handling-technique.htm>    Depending on the task, members should not attempt to carry our lifting unless they are aware of manual handling techniques and are able to do so without discomfort. | 1 | 1 | 1 |
| 2 | Machinery | Club | 2 | 3 | 6 | Complete a risk assessment for each incident. If it is identified that a felled or ‘hung up’ tree (those only still standing because of support from other trees) needs to be removed, then ensure the person undertaking the work has the correct tools and training to undertake the work. If no one is suitable to undertake the work, instruct a professional or cordon off the area. This work should not be tackled by a lone worker. First aid and emergency extraction procedures must be in place. Any machinery must be used within the limits of the manufacturer’s guidelines. | 1 | 3 | 3 |
| 3 | Tools | Club | 2 | 2 | 4 | Ensure the tools are in serviceable condition and are not damaged or difficult to use. Any tools must be used within the limits of the manufacturer’s guidelines. Ensure the correct tool is used for the job, i.e., don’t swing a machete when secateurs are more suitable. | 1 | 2 | 2 |
| 4 | PPE | Club | 2 | 3 | 6 | All participants to wear appropriate PPE, long sleeved tops and trousers, sturdy footwear at all times. Use gloves and goggles to remove thorny plants such as bramble and blackthorn. Avoid touching eyes, mouth, and food with unwashed hands. Wash hands with soap and water at the end of a task. Cuts and splinters (especially from blackthorn) to be treated promptly to avoid infection etc. Hand cleansing gel, first aid kit plus sterile water, and eyebath to be available. Check for ticks post work. | 1 | 2 | 2 |
| 5 | Working environment | Club | 2 | 3 | 6 | Safe working practices to be followed and suitable clothing and PPE worn. Participants to work a safe distance apart, depending on the task and tools used, but at least far enough apart to avoid being caught by branches if removing brash. Tools and materials never left unprotected where they could cause injury.  Check mobile phone coverage at location, have mobile available and be constantly alert for problems or ensure emergency procedure identifies how to raise the alarm if there is no mobile signal. Note nearest road access point and be able to give directions. Participants to inform if leaving early and all participants are counted in and out. Consider wearing high visibility clothing and ensure no one is shooting in the woods. | 1 | 2 | 2 |
| 6 | Weather/light | Club | 1 | 2 | 2 | Maintenance only undertaken during good weather. Ensure work is completed before darkness falls. Participants not to work for long periods without a rest and a drink. | 1 | 1 | 1 |
| 7 | Other hazards | Club | 1 | 2 | 2 | Cordon off hazardous barbed wire or electric fence-lines if applicable. Be vigilant when clearing undergrowth for hazardous materials (dumped liquids) or hidden wildlife (adders, wasp nests), old sharp machinery, old mine shafts etc. | 1 | 1 | 1 |
| 8 | Participants health | Club | 1 | 3 | 3 | Ensure that anyone undertaking maintenance work, especially when using machinery, is fit to do so. Some area where extra vigilance may be needed are mobility (e.g., arthritis, stroke); alertness (e.g., diabetes or alcohol/drug dependency); physical strength (e.g., heart conditions); vision (which cannot be corrected by glasses or contact lenses); manual dexterity/grip strength (e.g., vibration white finger); balance (e.g., vertigo, giddiness, or epilepsy). | 1 | 3 | 3 |

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| Additional notes   * A risk assessment should be completed for each piece of machinery * At all times the NFAS rulebook takes precedence * At all times have care for the environment * See other relevant risk assessments * All risk assessments must be reviewed regularly, particularly after any changes * Consider land owner’s requirements, who may have requirements when using machinery |

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| Assessor signature: |  | Print name: |  | Date: |  |

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| Implemented by: |  | Print name: |  | Date: |  |
| Position: |  |

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| Implemented date: |  | Last reviewed date: |  |

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|  |  |  | SEVERITY | | |  | 1. The risk is assessed as high if the value is 7 to 9 (**Red**).   *It is unacceptable for this level of risk to remain, and additional measure shall be put into place.*   1. The risk is assessed as medium if the value is 4 to 6 (**Amber**).   This activity can only take place with committee authorisation and additional measure should be looked at.   1. The risk is assessed a slow if the value is 1 to 3 (**Green**).   The activity can take place and no additional measure are required. |
|  |  |  | Trivial injury | Minor injury | Major injury |  |
|  |  |  | LOW (1) | MEDIUM (2) | HIGH (3) |  |
| PROBABILITY AND LIKELYHOOD | Unlikely | 1 | 1 | 2 | 3 |  |
| Likely | 2 | 2 | 4 | 6 |  |
| Highly likely | 3 | 3 | 6 | 9 |  |

Trivial injury: Basic 1st aid or not requiring treatment at all

Minor injury: 1st aid and/or requiring professional medical attention or trip to hospital

Major injury: Disabling, life threatening or fatal

**Committee revision date due:** **31/12/2025**