

Code of Practice POLE

HEDGE CUTTER Vale Path

Volunteers.docx



VALE PATH VOLUNTEERS (VPV)

PATH MAINTENANCE TEAM OF THE RAMBLERS

VALE OF WHITE HORSE GROUP

Date assessed/re-assessed	1 March 2023 20 Aug 2024
Work operation	POLE HEDGE CUTTER (HC) IN USE
Assessor's name & designation	Patrick Rosum, VPV Coordinator

Event	Safe working practice
Before HC work commences	HC must only be used when there are at least two other volunteers present. 'People at work' warning signs are placed at each end of the section being worked on. The integrity of the HC should be checked by the hedge cutter operator (HCO) before use. The HCO should appoint banksmen to warn the public and alert the operator to their presence. Check for the presence of objects e.g. wire, bottles, stones, faeces and stinging insects within the vegetation to be cut. If cutting overhead vegetation, check for loose branches that might become dislodged. The HC should be initially switched on only when 15 metres or more from others (other than someone assisting with maintenance of the HC).
Operating the HC	The Hedge Cutter Operator (HCO) should wear safety spectacles, safety helmet with ear defenders and visor, gloves, suitable clothing and steel-capped footwear. The HCO should have good balance at all times, feet firmly on the ground, and not over-reaching. The HCO must stop operating the HC when others get within 15 metres. HCO should continue to check for the presence of objects e.g. wire, bottles, stones, faeces and stinging insects within the vegetation to be cut at the start of each section of vegetation. If cutting overhead vegetation, continue to check for loose branches that might become dislodged.
Members of the public or other volunteers approaching HCO	Volunteers should alert one another of an approaching person. Volunteer nearest the HC operator asks a person to stop as they get near 15 metres from the HCO. Volunteer attracts the attention of the HCO by raising their arms above their head, whilst keeping 15 metres from the HC. HCO stops BC work until the person has passed to 15 metres beyond them. Notwithstanding, a HC operator should look around them every few seconds to see if a volunteer or member of the public is approaching them.
Animal e.g. horse, dog, approaches BCO	As immediately above with the addition that the HC is switched off, so as not to scare the animal.
Fuel storage	The banksman is responsible for placing a fuel container well away from the HC when it is in use – off the PRow but remaining visible.