



VALE PATH VOLUNTEERS (VPV)

PATH MAINTENANCE TEAM OF THE RAMBLERS VALE OF WHITE HORSE GROUP

Date assessed/re-assessed	19 August 2024
Work operation	HEDGE CUTTER BATTERY POWERED (HCBP) in use
Assessor's name & designation	Patrick Rosum, VPV Coordinator

(1) Hazard	(2) Hazard effect	(3) Measures to control the risk from hazard effect
Oscillating blades (operator)	Serious damage to hands.	Machine is switched off before blades are examined.
Oscillating blades (other team members and members of the public)	Serious damage to body.	Machine is not operated near other people. A VPV team with a hedge cutter will comprise at least two people in addition to the machine operator. These act as banksmen to warn public and alert operator to their presence. Hedge cutting to cease when people get to within 15 metres of the machine operator. 'Men at work' warning notices are placed on both flanks of a VPV team.
Operator falls over, losing control of machine. (operator)	Hedge cutter could hit operator, causing cuts.	Operator has good balance at all times, feet firmly on the ground, and not over-reaching. 'Dead man's handle' on machine turns machine off if it is dropped.
Operator falls over, losing control of machine. (Other people)	Hedge cutter could hit other people, causing cuts.	Mitigations as for 'oscillating blades (other team members and members of the public)' above.
Noise of hedge cutter	Could cause animals e.g., horses, dogs, on PRoW to panic which could cause harm to animal, volunteer and/or member of the public.	Machine is not operated near other people or animals on a PRoW. In addition to the mitigations above, the machine is turned off until the operator judges that the animal has moved a safe distance away.
Debris flying (operator)	Could hit face.	Operator wears safety spectacles and safety helmet.
Debris flying (Other people)	Could hit face or other part of the body.	Hedge cutter operation ceases when people approach to within 15 metres.

Falling branches etc. (operator)	Could hit head or face or other part of the body.	Operator looks for loose branches etc. before commencing work and subsequently. Operator wears safety spectacles and safety helmet.
Falling branches etc. (other people)	Could hit head, face or other part of body.	Operator stops cutting when people approach to within 15 metres
Fatigue (operator)	Strain caused by lifting the machine and taking its weight in order to cut high branches.	Operator to use the machine for no more than one hour or cease sooner if the operator's body starts to hurt.