

**South Willesborough and Newtown Community Council  
Draft Risk Assessment for Hedge Cutter usage.**

Draft Risk Assessment  
Assessors SWANCC  
Area of Work South Willesborough Newtown Orbital Park  
Assessment date April 2024 to be reviewed annually or if need arises.  
Signed Community Council Manager *S Evans* 23.4.24

<b>Hazards Identified</b>	<b>Who may be harmed and how</b>	<b>Severity (S)</b>	<b>Control Measures Currently in Place</b>	<b>Likelihood (L)</b>	<b>Rating</b>
Hit by stones and other hard or sharp flying debris	Operator & Members of the public. Cuts to the body	5	Other workers should be at least 10 metres away from the hedge cutting or mower in operation. Ensure that working area is coned and warning signs are in place for the public. Operator should use a visor or goggles kite marked for impact protection. Any hedge cutting or mower guards present must be in place and in good working order	2	Medium
Illness from pre-existing medical condition, especially affected by the physical nature of the task	Operator Becoming ill when using equipment	5	Officer to ask participants about medical conditions at start and check that people have inhalers/ medication where needed. Officer to carry mobile phone. Officer is First Aid trained and carries a First Aid kit.	2	Medium
Delays in getting immediate assistance from First Aider and/or emergency services if required.	Operator & Members of the public. Full first aid may be required.	5	Officer to check for mobile phone coverage at location, have mobile telephone and be constantly alert for problems. Officer to note nearest road access point and be able to give directions.	2	Medium

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Dehydration	Operator	3	Adequate water should be drunk throughout the day. Water bottles to be provided for staff member	2	Low
Injuries due to poor manual handling	Operator	3	Manual Handling training and Operator to be fully UpToDate on the Manual Handling Training Adjust harness carefully for comfort Take regular breaks Do not overreach work at a comfortable length of arm	2	Low
Injury from malfunctioning hedge cutting or mower	Operator Public / Passerby from broken machinery	5	Operator to be fully conversant with the machinery read the machinery instructions. Make full safety checks before using, make sure kill switch and dead mans lever operate properly, equipment to be maintained in good working order. Operator to stop using machine immediately if any fault is detected. Operator to inspect hedge cutting regularly to ensure effective cutting	1	Low
Cuts from hedge cutting and other related injuries	Operator	5	PPE should be worn Gloves, Steel toe cap Boots, Suitable work trousers not shorts The operator to read hedge cutting instructions Safe working distance between operator and public Operator must be in regular contact with another person First Aid kit present The operator to take extra care when working on slopes greater than 45 degrees and uneven ground	1	Low
Burns from exploding fuel	Operator Public / passers by	5	Fuel must be in approved containers up to 5 litres in plastic (two stroke) No fuel to be stored in the machinery or in the Council storage area and fueling to take place 3m away from an ignition source work area and water course or drain. Spill Kit must be present.	1	Low

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Spills of petrol	Operator and passers by and public	3	Fuel can and hedge cutting fuel cap to be on at all times. Unless refueling on stable level ground away from any watercourse.		
Reaction to Plants or Insects	Operator	5	Officer to check if anyone suffers from allergic reactions to insects or plants in summer. Risk increases in summer. Long trousers and sleeves should be worn to reduce skin contact with plant sap which may result in allergic reaction. Brushcutter Strimmer harness should have quick release in case equipment needs to be dropped quickly	1	Low
Damage to Hearing	Operator Passers by	4	Ear defenders to be worn at all times when using equipment. Other people to keep their distance as cordoned off in work area.	1	
Vibration White knuckle syndrome	Operator	4	Machine well maintained, and vibration dampeners to be inspected before every use. Manufacturers instruction will show maximum usage time for operation and optimally maintained hedge cutting take regular breaks 10 mins between tank refuels and 30 mins between every 3 tank fills	2	Low
Twigs / stones in eye and facial injuries	Operator Passers by	3	Operator should use visor or goggles kite marked for impact protection. Other people to keep their distance as cordoned off in work area.	1	Low
Zoonotic diseases, including toxocariasis- a likely source is animal faeces being scattered during cutting.	Operator Passers by	4	Walk area before starting operation. Remove faeces to approved container. Suitable visor with eye shield /glasses and gloves should be worn by operator. Do not use the hedge cutting above shoulder height. Other people to keep their distance as	2	Low

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			cordoned off in work area.		
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Assessor
Signed
Date