

Risk Assessment for OBCG members working on the Conservation Area

Hazard and risk

Control measures to reduce risk

Tetanus (lockjaw)

Immunisation against Tetanus is strongly advised.
Use thick gardening gloves.
Cover open cuts with plasters.
Clean any new cuts thoroughly and cover.

Prickles from thorns, cuts from rubbish.

Wear gloves. Collect rubbish so none is left on the ground.
Be aware of thorns at eye level when weeding around shrubs.

Injuries from gardening tools.

Carry sharp tools carefully - do not leave lying on the ground.
Place tools (e.g. rakes) with tines facing into the soil so others cannot tread on the sharp part, or place tools against a fence.
Mark tools clearly so they can be seen against the brown soil.

Injuries and fire hazard from the strimmer/brushcutter.

When using the strimmer always wear suitable clothing including thick trousers, gloves, heavy boots, goggles and face guard in order to avoid injury from flying stones etc. Ear defenders should be worn.
Ensure that you work a safe distance from other volunteers. Another volunteer should keep a watch out for members of the public crossing the site.
Ensure that petrol and oil for refuelling are not stored near the strimmer when in use. Keep all containers tightly closed. Remember that petrol fumes are heavier than air and will flow along the ground close to the container, and can result in a flashback which ignites the container.
Allow the strimmer to cool down before refuelling.
Be aware that excessive vibration can result in injury. Ensure that the two ends of the cutting line are maintained at equal length to avoid vibration.
Do not allow children to use the strimmer.

Twisted ankles from stepping in rabbit holes.

Wear boots with ankle support. Walk carefully. Know where the holes are.

Lone working and distance from telephone to call for help.

Go in a group if possible. One person in the group to carry a mobile phone.

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Injuries from tools, vegetation etc.

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Warn new volunteer helpers about risks above. Have a First Aid kit and a qualified First Aider.

Bonfires.

The Conservation Area is an exposed site subject to gusty winds that can easily spread fires to adjoining land, hedgerows etc. Do not light fires on windy days. Before lighting any fire fill all water containers and ensure that you have a fire beater (for example a large spade) and a working mobile phone. Ensure that you have sufficient time to complete burning and damping down in daylight. Allow at least an additional hour for a smouldering fire to die down after any new material has been added. Tie back long hair and do not wear clothing that is likely to flare or melt. Avoid burning wet material that will produce dense smoke. Never light more than one fire at a time unless there will be at least one person to supervise each one at all times. Never use petrol or other liquid fuels to assist in lighting a fire. Choose a position well clear of boundary fences, the path and combustible material. Remember that surrounding vegetation will be dried out by the heat of the fire even if it is green or wet before you start. Check for large stones that may explode when heated or damped down. Damp down the area around the fire as necessary to avoid progressive drying out and spreading. Do not pile material up too high - it is liable to blow around or topple over. Never leave the fire unattended. Before leaving the site ensure that the fire is out and rake over to ensure that no red hot ashes remain. Soak the perimeter and surrounding vegetation with water.