



Health and Safety Manual Edition 3.1, August 2013

1. The Bourne Conservation Group's (BCGs) Health and Safety Manual comprises three parts:

- **Policy Statement.** A statement of the Group's commitment to the health and safety of its members and those affected by its work.
- **Organisation.** A description of the roles and responsibilities of the Group, its individual members and the external organisations it works with.
- **Arrangements.** A summary of how health and safety measures are applied in BCG.

Policy Statement

Commitment to Safety

2. BCG, an entirely volunteer organisation, is committed to a policy of carrying out its activities in accordance with its Constitution in such a way as to ensure the health and safety of its members and everyone associated with or affected by its work.

General Responsibilities

3. The execution of this policy is the responsibility of the elected committee of BCG which, under Common Law, has an obligation to take all reasonable steps to ensure the safety of volunteers taking part in the Group's activities and of others who may be affected. In this context the Health and Safety Executive considers that it is good practice and highly recommended that people working as volunteers are given the same level of protection as those in the workplace.

4. The committee will coordinate the work and activities of the Group ensuring that:

- Each member of the Group is made fully aware of this Health and Safety Policy and how it applies to them individually on the various tasks undertaken.
- The exact division of Health and Safety responsibilities is clear when working in cooperation with external organisations (such as local authorities).

This straightforward and clear approach will enable members not only to contribute to their conservation work constructively and enjoyably but also safely.

Meeting this Commitment

5. BCG, working either independently or in conjunction with national and local authorities and formal conservation bodies, will strive to meet its commitment to health and safety by:

- Identifying and assessing hazards associated with its work and activities, and introducing measures to eliminate or reduce the risks arising from them.
- Adopting safe and healthy working practices using as appropriate the Codes of Practice recommended by The Conservation Volunteers (TCV).
- Making available appropriate instruction and, where necessary, training in the tasks to be undertaken.
- Providing supervision and first aid cover during work sessions.
- Reporting any incidents as required, and analysing information on them with a view to modifying methods of work if necessary.
- Taking informed advice on health and safety matters in the conservation field.
- Ensuring the provision of adequate insurance cover that meets the needs of the Group.

Documentation

6. This policy statement is supported by a description of the organisation and arrangements for health and safety which, together with other information, constitutes BCGs Health and Safety Manual. This is available for all members to read on the Group's website.

7. Health and Safety aide memoires are included for (1) All Members and (2) Team Leaders.

8. The special provisions that apply when working with Children and Young Persons, and Vulnerable Adults are contained in a separate BCG Policy Statement.

Authorisation

9. This Policy Statement has been approved by The BCG Committee

Signed.....Print Name.....Chairman

Signed.....Print Name.....Secretary

Signed.....Print Name.....Treasurer

Organisation

Committee Responsibilities

10. The elected committee of BCG is responsible for formulation of health and safety policy taking into account legal requirements and any rules or conditions arising from cooperation with national and local authorities, formal conservation bodies and private landowners.

11. The relevant national and local authorities are:

- **The Environment Agency.** This is relevant to any work in connection with main rivers and is exercised through the SE Area Office located at Alice Holt. The River Wey and The Bourne and Frensham Vale Streams are all classed as main rivers.
- **Surrey County Council (SCC).** In particular the Countryside Access Department (for Rights of Way), the Highways Department and the County Biodiversity Officer.
- **Waverley Borough Council (WBC).** In particular the Countryside and Parks Department.
- **Farnham Town Council (FTC).** The appointed point of contact is the Outside Works Manager but direct contact may be made with the Town Clerk and councillors including those involved with the Farnham Rivers Group and Farnham in Bloom.

12. The main conservation bodies are:

- **The Surrey Wildlife Trust.** Routine contact is through the Greenspace Team but will also be with the South Team for work at the Underdown Reserve and other specialist departments.
- **Blackwater Valley Countryside Trust.** This comes within the ambit of Hampshire County Council.
- **The Royal Society for the Protection of Birds.** Exercised through the warden of their Farnham Heath reserve.
- **The Surrey Hills AONB.** Coupled with the Surrey Hills Society of which BCG is an Associate Member.

There may also be occasional contact with specialist groups such as the Surrey Amphibian and Reptile Group and the Surrey Bat Group.

13. The committee is to review health and safety matters at its regular meetings and is to maintain the Group's policy up-to-date. It is also to analyse reports of any incidents with a view to revising policy, responsibilities or arrangements as necessary. For reference to private landowners see paragraph 17 below.

Individual Responsibilities

14. Within the BCG committee, the chairman is overall responsible for implementation of health and safety policy. Delegated responsibilities are as follows:

- **Individual Volunteers.** All members have a principal duty of care to themselves which means they are not to undertake tasks for which they are unsuited or with which they are unfamiliar. They also have a responsibility to correctly observe instructions and information briefed in detail at each work session. Guidance for

individuals on these matters is contained in **ANNEX A** to this Manual which is to be issued to all Group members.

- **BCG Health and Safety Officer.** A committee member, normally the Secretary, is nominated as Health and Safety Officer. He has responsibility for ensuring that BCG policy is correctly carried out in all work sessions and other activities, working through project managers and team leaders as appropriate. He is to ensure that a pool of trained First Aiders is always available to BCG and also that, through the Treasurer, adequate insurance cover that suits the needs of BCG is in place.
- **Project Managers.** For all major projects and activities a project manager will be appointed. He or she is responsible for correctly applying health and safety policy to all aspects of the project.
- **Session and Team Leaders.** For every work session there is a session leader. If, because of the nature of the work, the group is split, team leaders will be appointed. All such leaders are responsible for correctly applying health and safety policy to their tasks.

External Responsibilities

15. **National and Local Authorities.** When BCG carries out work on behalf of the authorities listed in paragraph 11 above it is the responsibility of those organisations ahead of the work session to:

- Agree the scope of work
- Carry out a Risk Assessment and make it known to BCG
- Provide tools if required
- Provide specialist support such as chain saw operation or vegetation spraying
- As necessary, notify residents and landowners that work is to take place

In some cases the authorities will then supervise the work. Otherwise it will be the responsibility of BCG to brief its own members on the task, stick to the agreed scope of work, and supervise it. The advice from TCV to BCG is that insurance cover should be provided by whichever organisation is in control of the work session on the ground. There are some variations on insurance cover which are noted in paragraph 57 below.

16. **Conservation Bodies.** As for National and Local Authorities.

17. **Landowners.** Site owners have various responsibilities placed on them under both criminal and civil law. In many cases BCG will be working with local authorities or formal conservation bodies on land which they own, in which case there is no conflict of interest. In some cases, however, work will take place on private property which will be enabled by prior arrangement between the BCG project manager and the landowner. Landowners have a duty of care responsibility to ensure the reasonable safety of lawful visitors to their land or property. The BCG project manager should ask them to point out any specific hazards which need to be incorporated into his risk assessment.

Foundation of BCG Work

16. BCG considers that sound organisation and leadership are the foundations for good health and safety practices. Through its committee, the Group therefore strives to be well organised to carry out conservation work in its area of interest in and around The Bourne, Farnham, Surrey. Measures taken include:

- An agreed Constitution
- A committee elected annually by members at the AGM
- Provision of a website for the information of members and others, backed by use of e-mail as the principal means of communication. This Manual is contained on the Health and Safety page of the website.
- Maintenance of an up-to-date membership list and a record of attendance with hours worked
- Adequate warning for members of work sessions and other activities, including details of clothing and equipment needed
- Good liaison with all organisations responsible for or involved with conservation in the local area

Work Sessions

17. BCGs work is mainly carried out in monthly work sessions on a Sunday morning in accordance with a programme published six months ahead. This is supplemented by mid-week work sessions called at shorter notice but adequate warning of at least one week is normally given to members. Additionally, small maintenance teams may be set up for some sites to carry out regular tasks on a flexible basis. BCGs Health and Safety Manual applies equally to small mid-week work sessions and maintenance tasks as to main sessions.

18. For each work session an experienced volunteer is nominated as Session Leader who is responsible for preparation and conduct of the task including:

- Planning and reconnaissance
- Liaison with national or local authorities, conservation bodies and landowners as appropriate
- Where necessary, giving prior warning to residents and landowners of the work to be carried out (see sample letter at **ANNEX B**)
- Conduct of a Risk Assessment or adherence to one carried out by the responsible authority
- Provision of tools, other equipment (including Hi-viz jackets when required), stores, plants etc. In some cases tools may be on loan from local authorities.
- Control of tools on site in terms of accounting, security and handling
- Ensuring a first aid kit is available and first aid cover clearly defined
- Having at least one mobile phone switched on all the time
- Completing a Task and Attendance Record (**ANNEX C**)
- Clearly briefing volunteers at the start of the session on the tasks to be carried out, the risks involved and the method of work plus issue of Hi-viz jackets
- Supervising the work. The emphasis for the Session Leader is supervision rather than carrying out work.
- Dealing with questions from the public and any incidents including reporting to the committee after the event.

- Provision of drinks and refreshments. This is particularly important in very hot and very cold weather conditions
- Clearing the site of any debris and ensuring the site is left in a tidy and safe condition
- Disposing of rubbish in an environmentally friendly way which will most often mean a trip to the local re-cycling point in Farnham
- Return of tools and equipment to the BCG store in a clean condition, reporting any faults.

The Session Leader needs to allow sufficient time for these activities.

19. On occasions when it is necessary to split the workforce into smaller groups, the Session Leader is to nominate suitably experienced volunteers who are familiar with the type of work to act as Team Leaders. For work on widely separated sites this needs to be done in advance to allow familiarisation with the task and locality. The Session Leader is to ensure that Team Leaders:

- Are fully acquainted with the specific tasks they are to undertake
- Are aware of their responsibilities for the health and safety of their volunteers
- Have a mobile phone switched on and are aware of (through a duplicate of the Task and Attendance Sheet) the essential contact numbers.
- Are familiar with first aid cover arrangements

The above arrangements are particularly applicable to maintenance of Rights of Way and work in streams where teams tend to get strung out. In these cases, in addition to the split into teams, volunteers must stick together in pairs on a “buddy-buddy” basis ie, you always keep your partner in sight and look out for them.

20. A ready reference guide for Team Leaders is at **ANNEX D**.

21. Lone Working. BCG discourages lone working but recognises that in some instances, for low risk activities or work in non-remote areas, it may be necessary. In those cases the individual concerned must carry a mobile phone and leave a clear message with a responsible adult as to the precise location and expected timing of the activity.

22. Night Work. Members may occasionally take part in night time activities such as toad watches, moth trapping or wildlife observations. Careful risk assessments are necessary and the same conditions noted above for Lone Working must be applied.

Projects

23. From time to time BCG will undertake tasks which may take considerable time to plan and execute. These are termed Projects and are the responsibility of a nominated Project Manager, normally a member of the committee. In some cases a Project Steering Committee, including members from outside BCG, may be formed to oversee the programme strategically.

24. The Project Manager is responsible for making a Project Plan and this is to include a Risk Assessment for the project as a whole. Model plans for different types of work are available in the Group archive held by the chairman. The project work will be carried out in normal work sessions in accordance with the guidelines given previously.

Risk Assessments

25. All work carried out by BCG is to be the subject of a prior Risk Assessment which in some cases will be carried out by the local authority or other responsible agency.

26. The BCG Session Leader nominated for the task is responsible for conducting the Risk Assessment some days before the task is to take place. This should be reviewed with a second experienced person and then briefed to the team at the start of the session.

27. In making Risk Assessments, Session Leaders should refer as appropriate to:

- HSE Leaflet INDG 163 “Five Steps to Risk Assessment”
<http://www.hse.gov.uk/pubns/indg163.pdf>
- Surrey County Council Leaflet “Think Safety” for Rights of Way volunteers
- Surrey County Council form “Volunteer Worker’s Risk Assessment.” (**ANNEX E**)

28. Further references if needed are:

- Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations, Approved Code of Practice, HSC L21 <http://www.hse.gov.uk/pubns/priced/l21.pdf>
- TCV publication “Generic Risk Assessments”
<http://shop.tcv.org.uk/shop/stock?!=level2;lid=163;sid=964>

29. Risks are to be rated as follows:

Risk Level	Hazard Examples	Potential Outcome
High (H).	Work on exposed sites, steep banks or in the stream. Use of strimmer. Working at heights above 2m. Work in confined spaces.	Major injury: Life threatening – loss of limb, major fractures, exposure, penetrating eye injury, death
Medium (M).	Bio-hazards – Lymes and Weils disease. Tool maintenance. Tree felling. Bonfires. Lifting heavy sacks. Traffic related accidents.	Major injury: Non- life threatening – fractures, dislocations, muscle strains, cuts or burns needing medical treatment
Low (L).	Use of hand tools including spades and forks	Minor injury: Cuts, bruises, sprains, minor burns

30. They are to be recorded on the BCG Task and Attendance sheet (**ANNEX C**)

Particular Hazards

31. BCG operates in an area on the outskirts of Farnham which is increasingly built-up and is riddled with services which present a series of potential hazards to conservation work:

- **Overhead Services.** In addition to telephone wires, there are many overhead power cables. Care must be taken to identify these before the start of pruning work or tree felling and when digging near the supporting poles.
- **Underground Services.** Mainly running along roadsides, there are many LV and HV power cables, water pipes, gas mains and telephone cables. Whenever possible the following precautions are to be taken;
 - Obtain maps and other data from the service providers. This is particularly relevant before the start of a major project. Contacts are:

Telephone. dbyd@openreach.co.uk and 0800 917 3993. BT will also offer to send an engineer to the site to advise.

Electricity. mapping.services@sse.com and 01256 337294

Water. 07703 316727

Gas. 0845 835 1111
 - Carry out a Catscan before any digging commences. SCC will often provide this help.

In all cases, dig with the greatest possible care.

32. **Bonfires.** BCG will not normally implement bonfires on project work for which it is responsible. This includes the Middle Bourne Lane project where residents previously used controlled fires to dispose of garden waste. If bonfires are used on local authority projects it is they that are responsible for safety aspects. However, the BCG team leader will satisfy himself as to the safety of volunteers, calling to attention any hazards or unsafe practices.

Hazardous Substances.

33. BCG is aware of the need to control hazardous substances both for the good of the environment and the health of individuals. The Group has a copy of HSEs leaflet "COSHH: A Brief Guide to the Regulations." <http://www.hse.gov.uk/pubns/indg136.pdf>

34. In all current work only Roundup is used for occasional tasks. This is a Glyphosate based product for use in home gardens. Should there be a need to use more powerful controlled substances, help will be sought from the local authorities, the Surrey Wildlife Trust or other licensed operative.

Tools and Equipment

35. The wide range of conservation tasks undertaken by BCG necessitates use of a range of common and mechanical or electrical tools. Chain saws are specifically excluded under the terms of the group's insurance.

36. Project Managers and Session Leaders are to ensure that any tools used are within the competence of team members on the day and are to brief them on their use and the risks associated with them. In doing this, leaders need to be aware that there is a wide spread of competence in BCG. Particular attention needs to be paid to understanding the knowledge and skills of new members.

37. Tools are mainly obtained from BCGs own stock or by borrowing from local authorities or conservation bodies. Occasionally members may be asked to bring their own gardening type tools. On occasions where specialist tools (such as power tools) are required, appropriate arrangements will be made with qualified practitioners. Special care needs to be taken with use of power cables especially in wet or damp conditions.

38. **ANNEX F** summarises handling and safety points about BCGs commonly used tools. Further details are to be found in TCV publication "Hand Tools – A guide for safe use and care." <http://shop.tcv.org.uk/shop/stock?l=level2;lid=163;sid=7658>

Disease

39. Conservation workers are vulnerable to three particular diseases:

Tetanus. This is a serious but rare infection caused by bacteria that can live in the soil. It usually occurs when a flesh wound becomes contaminated. Volunteers should ensure they have adequate immunisation, keep cuts covered and wear gloves when working in the soil. If they have a tetanus-prone injury, they should seek medical advice.

Lyme Disease. This is a bacterial infection that is spread to humans by infected ticks. Ticks are tiny arachnids found in woodland areas that feed (bite) on the blood of mammals, including humans. If a volunteer discovers a bite, the tick must be removed carefully. If a volunteer with a bite develops a rash or flu-like symptoms, they should seek medical advice.

To prevent tick bites, volunteers should keep skin well covered, use insect repellent and check for ticks after a work session.

Weil's disease (Leptospirosis). This is caused by touching soil or water contaminated with urine of wild animals infected with the bacteria. Volunteers are most at risk when working with water. They need to keep cuts well covered and wash hands after a work session.

Clothing

40. Members are advised in the calling notices for work sessions of any particular clothing requirements eg, stout footwear and gardening type gloves are advised for most group tasks; Wellington boots will be mandated for work in streams. The calling notice also invites members to "dress for the weather expected on the day."

41. BCG will provide yellow Hi-viz jackets to be worn at sessions where this is deemed necessary and at all times when working on highways verges. It will also provide special protective items, such as hard hats and goggles, when these are required.

First Aid

42. Every effort will be made to provide first aid cover for all BCG work sessions. Whenever possible this should be provided by a trained First Aider as part of the team.

43. It is BCGs intention to always have a pool of First Aiders trained up-to-date who have attended, as a minimum, a one-day course delivered by St John's Ambulance, The Red Cross or other recognised body. Current practice is that these courses are valid for three years after which the first aider requires a short refresher.

44. Two First Aid Satchels are available for use. It is the responsibility of a nominated First Aider to ensure the contents of First Aid Satchels are complete and in-date.

45 Local authority rangers are normally first aid trained.

46. Any incidents are to be recorded by Team Leaders and assessed by the BCG committee. In this context it is mandatory to report deaths and major injuries, over 3 day injuries, certain diseases and certain dangerous occurrences. Reporting is to the HSE Contact Centre 0845 3009923.

47. The BCG Accident Report Book is kept with the First Aid Satchels in the tool store. SCC uses an Injury Report Form which contains much the same information as in the book.

Training

48. It is the Group's policy to progressively improve its skills by taking advantage of training courses available through TCV, Surrey County Council and other organisations. Recent training has included, for example, hedge laying techniques.

Policy for Working with Children and Young Persons

49. BCG welcomes the opportunity to involve children (up to age 16) and young persons (up to 18) in its work and activities so as to encourage their interest in the natural world and community service. The Group does, however, recognise the need for sensible policies to protect the interests of all concerned in such joint activities.

50. The Group's policy on this subject, including its Child Protection Policy, is contained in a separate document also available on the website.

51 When the Group works with groups of children from local schools or youth organisations such as the Beavers, the same general rules will be applied by BCG as set out for individuals in **ANNEX F**. It shall be the responsibility of the teachers or leaders to supervise all appropriate safety precautions. BCGs responsibilities will be to:

- Make all necessary arrangements beforehand with the teachers or leaders for a well organised, enjoyable and safe event including any special provisions for example with respect to photography.
- Carry out a risk assessment for the agreed activity
- Brief all concerned at the start of the event
- Supervise the activity technically

52. BCG will not ask children to undertake dangerous tasks. **ANNEX G** lists the tools allowed by age groups.

Attitude to Pregnant Women

53. Volunteers who are pregnant sometimes like to continue with their community work. The onus is entirely on them. However, BCG will insist that they only undertake very light tasks with their feet firmly on flat ground.

Insurance

54. BCG has standard insurance cover with Zurich Municipal provided through TCV. The purpose of this is to provide:

- Public Liability cover up to £5m
- Personal Accident cover for members of the group.

Additional cover has been taken for use of power tools (except chain saws) and also for Property.

55. The benefits, terms and conditions are held by BCGs Treasurer and also given on the TCV website. Cover is not provided for children under 4 and, in the event of personal accident, payouts are limited for members over 75.

56. It is the task of the BCG Health and Safety Officer to ensure that this cover is always in place, to adjust cover should this be necessary and to negotiate non-standard terms with BTCV should these be required.

57. The cover provided by local authorities also has age limitations. SCC has given notice that their personal accident insurance cover is not valid for individuals aged over 80. Also that any payout under personal accident cover is less for volunteers in the 75-80 bracket. BCG has informed them of known volunteers aged over 70.

Insurance Cover for Additional Tasks

58. Some members volunteer for other activities closely related to BCGs activities such as becoming SCC Footpath Wardens or River Search Surveyors for SWT. These additional tasks are welcomed by BCG because they broaden the skills and knowledge of the Group. While carrying out such tasks, BCG volunteers need to comply with the agreed rules and will be covered by the insurance of the organisation concerned.

Annexes:

- A.** Health and Safety Guidance for Individuals
- B.** Sample Warning Letter to Residents
- C.** Task and Attendance Sheet
- D.** Guidance for Team Leaders
- E.** SCC Volunteer Worker's Risk Assessment
- F.** Summary of Safe Use and Care of Hand Tools
- G.** Hand Tool Use by Children and Young Persons

The Bourne Conservation Group

Health and Safety Guidance for Individuals

By joining this group you are able to take part in worthwhile conservation tasks in The Bourne area. Although the atmosphere is invariably friendly, relaxed and enjoyable, every effort is also made to ensure the safety of members and others who may be associated with or affected by the work. Establishing this safe working environment is not only common sense, it is a legal requirement on volunteer groups such as ours and you have your part to play in achieving it.

Under the law, individuals have a primary “duty of care” to themselves. This means that, while working with the Group you should:

Be satisfied that you are fit enough to participate. Someone with a serious medical condition or chronic back problems, for example, would be best advised to restrict their activities.

Not undertake tasks for which you are unsuited or for which you have no experience. This might apply, for example, to heavy lifting, prolonged physical activity or use of tools with which you are unfamiliar. During most work sessions there are a variety of tasks thus catering for a range of experience and physical strength.

You also have a responsibility to the team not to put other volunteers or members of the public in danger. Therefore:

Be clear on what it is you are being asked to do and understand any risks involved. This means listening carefully to the briefing by the team leader at the start of each session and asking questions at any point if anything is unclear.

Be dressed appropriately for the weather conditions on the day including boots or stout shoes and gardening style gloves. Special requirements (eg Wellington boots) will be notified in the calling notice for the session. Any other protective equipment such as goggles or hard hats will be provided when considered necessary.

Do not undertake unauthorised tasks. If in doubt ask the team leader.

Be conscious that there are some minor risks attaching to conservation work, just as there are to gardening eg, some plants have poisonous elements. Please make sure your tetanus injection is up to date and that any cuts and grazes are covered.

Be aware of the arrangements for first aid. There will always be a first aid kit available and, on most occasions, a first aider present. Mobile phones will be available for administrative and emergency purposes.

Working with Children and Young Persons. Our Group endeavours to encourage children and young persons to take part in our work and activities to introduce them to the natural world and community service. When children are present you need to be very careful not to place yourself in a position that might cause doubts as to your actions or intentions.

Full details of the commitment of the Group to your safety is embodied in its Health and Safety Policy Statement which is available on the website.

Sample Warning Letter to Residents



Dear Resident,

WORK ON PUBLIC RIGHTS OF WAY

The purpose of this note is to inform you that volunteers from The Bourne Conservation Group will be carrying out some minor work on footpaths in your area on *Sunday 3rd December 2013*. This is on the basis of working for the community to help maintain our network of paths in a serviceable and attractive state for the benefit of all. The tasks to be undertaken have been agreed with the responsible authority, Surrey County Council, Countryside Access Department.

The Bourne Conservation Group volunteers are experienced in this type of work and it is not anticipated that any inconvenience will be caused. Branches that obstruct or overhang the paths will be trimmed back and the cuttings disposed of at a suitable point in the hedgerow.

Should you have any concerns about this activity please contact the Surrey County Council:

Nicky Scott (Volunteer co-ordinator) on 01483 518415 or
James Browne (Senior Countryside Access Officer) on 01483 517538 or
The Bourne Conservation leader, Noel Moss, on 01252 711800.

Thank you for your assistance and support.

Task and Attendance Sheet

Date: *Sunday 9th January 2013, commencing 10.00am*

Site: *Paradise Wood. Grid 852457, Post Code GU9 8AZ
Entrance for vehicles off Packway/Leigh Lane.
Pedestrians from Greenhill Road (opposite turn to Little Austins Road)*

Weather Conditions: *Dry but with chance of showers. Forecast "Good"*

Tasks: *Woodland Management for Surrey CC
Including clearance of holly and other unwanted vegetation .*

Safety:

Mobiles: *Charles Fearnley: 07253 788311
Noel Moss: 07625 428138*

First Aiders: *Martin Angel, Richard Sandars. Also Dr Karen Redman present.*

Frimley Park Hospital: 01276 604110, 01276 604289

Risks: *Use of hand tools - M
Likelihood of falling branches - L
Disposal of rubbish sacks (lifting) - L*

Note: *Cooperation with residents unfamiliar with BCG procedures*

Participants

Name	Present	Emergency Contact	Telephone
<i>Fred Snirk</i>		<i>Betty</i>	<i>01252 712948</i>

The Bourne Conservation Group

Health and Safety Guide for Team Leaders

There are occasions during the practical work of the Group when it is necessary to split the volunteer work force into two or more separate teams. An example is when there are isolated tasks to be carried out during a footpath maintenance session. On these occasions each team will have a nominated leader who has a duty of care towards members of the team.

This document, based on the Arrangements given in the BCG Health and Safety Manual, is an aide memoire to help Team Leaders perform their task effectively and safely.

Prior to the Work Session

Understand the allotted task, carry out reconnaissance and make plan

Check mobile phone coverage

Check that landowners and neighbours have been warned that work is to take place

Request any special tools or equipment

Agree Risk Assessment with Project Manager or Session Leader

At Start of Session

Obtain copy of Task and Attendance Sheet (**ANNEX C**)

Switch on your mobile phone (or ensure there is one in the team)

Pick up tools, stores and safety equipment including First Aid Kit

Note any vulnerable or inexperienced team members

Conduct of Work

Brief team on the task, the risks involved and their mitigation

Supervise the work paying particular attention to inexperienced or vulnerable members


Deal with any questions from the public and any incidents that occur

Ensure tools are not left lying around

Leave the site or sites in a clean, tidy and safe condition

After the Work

Report any incidents or outstanding tasks to Session Leader

SCC use only:	Task completed?	Yes	No	Notes:
	Duration of task	Full day	Half day	Number of volunteers present:
SURREY COUNTY COUNCIL – COUNTRYSIDE ACCESS VOLUNTEER WORKERS' RISK ASSESSMENT				

PROJECT LOCATION: Farnham	OFFICER CONTACT: Nicky West
AREA: Waverley	OFFICE TEL. N^o: Mon - Fri 01483 518415
ROW N^o & STATUS: Footpaths 37, 39, 43 and Bridleway 41 Farnham	MOBILE TEL. N^o: Mon - Fri 07968 832610 Weekends also 07979 966484
FILE N^o: Various	GROUP NAME: Bourne Conservation Volunteers
TASK DATE: 09.03.08	TASK LEADER: Noel Moss

DATE ASSESSED	03.03.08	C.A.T. SCANNED	Yes	ASSESSED BY	N West
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HAZARD	RISK RATE*	DETAILS/CONTROL OF RISK
Work adjacent to traffic	L	Be aware that some work areas are by roads and most paths run to/from such roads. Roads are generally low use with slow traffic. Take care crossing paths carrying tools.
Work adjacent to water	L	Be aware that some of the paths run alongside The Bourne Stream.
Work adjacent to railway	N/A	
Underground cables	N/A	No digging.
Overhead cables	L	No overhead cables observed but always high prune with care.
Lone working	N/A	No lone working.
Ground conditions	L	Be aware that some paths are unlevel under foot.
Weather	L	
Access/Parking	L	Bat and Ball pub.
Lifting/Manual handling	L	Use correct techniques when lifting.
Diseases e.g. Weil's, Lyme	L	Keep all cuts & grazes covered.
Tool Safety	L	Store & use tools in a safe manner.
Power Tools	N/A	No power tools to be used.
Other Path Users	L	Stop work to allow other users to pass
Mobile signal Y/N	Y	Varying signal strength. Paths have residential properties nearby.

*Risk Rate: H=High, M=Medium, L=Low, N/A=Not Applicable.

SUITABLE PERSONAL PROTECTIVE EQUIPMENT SHOULD BE WORN WHERE APPROPRIATE

MOBILE PHONE TO BE ON SITE AT ALL TIMES

TASK DETAILS

JOB DESCRIPTION AND LOCATION

Instructions, please: Prune side and overhead growth (as agreed during site visit), disposing of cuttings carefully and neatly at the side of the path from which they have grown.

Tools: Tools loaned from SCC to BCV, including loppers, shears, bow saws.

Safetywear: gloves, glasses, hard hats, First aid kits, High visibility vests, all held by BCV.

Location: Meeting point is the Bat and Ball Pub, 15 Bat & Ball Lane, Upper Bourne Lane, Farnham, GU10 4SA

Grid ref: The Bat & Ball: 483328 : 144433

COUNTRYSIDE ACCESS VOLUNTEER GROUP TASK LEADER'S CHECK-LIST

Volunteer task leaders must ensure all of the following criteria are satisfied/addressed when leading tasks:

CRITERIA	TICK WHEN FULFILLED
PRIOR TO THE TASK:	
Are you familiar with the task aims and details?	
Have you arranged for an appropriate number of Volunteers to participate in the task?	
Have you arranged for tools to be delivered to site, collected afterwards and stored safely between tasks?	
AT THE BEGINNING OF THE TASK:	
Do you know the site location and emergency vehicular access options?	
Have you ensured other volunteers are aware of any particular task risks and are you able to ensure safe tool use during work?	
Is a qualified first-aid-er present and able to be on site at all times during the task? (Basic level 1-day training is suitable).	
Is the first aid kit (supplied by SCC) in good condition, replenished and on site for the duration of the task? It should be checked on a monthly basis and if items are used, they must be replaced before the next task.	
Is a working mobile phone on site for the duration of the task and if the signal is poor are you aware of the location of nearby landlines?	
Have you recorded the names of all Volunteers present along with an emergency contact number? For insurance purposes, the name and date of birth of any new Volunteer aged 75 or over must be reported back to SCC. Anyone aged under 18 must be accompanied by a parent/guardian.	
DURING THE TASK:	
Are the group using tools correctly and carrying out the work safely and in accordance with SCC instructions?	
Report any accidents/incidents promptly back to SCC. In the first instance this should be done by phone to the relevant SCC contact as soon as possible.	
AT THE END OF THE TASK:	
Is the site being left in a safe condition? i.e. Public rights of way must be open and safe for public use, stock fencing must be secure and all tools and materials must be removed from the site.	
Have you arranged for tools to be collected and stored safely between tasks?	
Have you sent the register of attending Volunteers back to the SCC contact detailed overleaf?	

Summary of Safe Use and Care of Hand Tools

General. When briefing on tools, cover:

- Name of tool
- Uses and what used for
- How to check it is safe to use
- How to use safely
- How to carry
- How to leave it
- Safety equipment to be used with it

1. Bow Saws

- Right size saw for job
- Hold at lever end with sawing hand and keep other hand clear of blade. Saw blades can jump!
- Wear gloves
- Carry by side, blade down
- Safety helmet when felling trees
- Check for overhead services
- Let saw do the work

2. Billhook

- Keep blades sharp (prevents bouncing)
- Handle needs to be secure
- Never a glove on the hand holding the tool
- Clear working area (don't get tangled)
- Safe working distance (2 x length of arm + tool)
- Carry at point of balance (don't swing and walk)
- Never lift double edged blade towards or over your head

3. Picks and Mattocks

- Wear safety boots
- Wear safety goggles on stony ground
- Never wear a glove with wooden handled swinging tool
- Blade must be secure at all times
- Haft should be at least 3 cm proud
- Haft should be in good repair (no cracks or splits)
- Safe working distance = 2 x length of arm + tool

4. Slasher

- Never wear a glove with wooden handled swinging tool
- Keep blade sharp

- Safe working distance = at least 5 metres
- Make sure handle is in good repair
- Do not approach slasher user – call out instead
- Carry by side at point of balance, blade down

5. Spades and Forks

- Digging over 30cm – check for underground utilities
- Wear strong footwear
- Position feet carefully to avoid cutting or stabbing them
- Carry at side point of balance
- Use heel or ball of foot when digging to avoid damaging the arch
- Press – don't kick
- Ensure handle is secure
- Lay tools flat on ground, blade/prongs down

6. Shovel – Holer

- Digging over 30cm – check for underground utilities
- Keep head well clear of handles
- Carry at side point of balance
- Bend knees – keep back straight

7. Post Driver

- Always wear safety helmet
- Do not support by hand – keep hands clear
- When lifting or lowering, bend knees, back straight
- Do not lift tool past post top during use
- Should be carried between 2 people by their sides
- Needs 2 people to operate

8. Loppers

- Very safe tools compared with slashers
- Be careful of branches and debris falling on face or in the eyes
- Do not exceed cutting capacity (approx 2-3 cm – thickness of a thumb!)

Hand Tool Use by Children and Young Persons

Below are recommendations and guidelines in the event of no other assessment being available. Individual maturity and ability may require some of the age limits to be lowered or raised to ensure the individual is not put at risk.

<i>Tool</i>	<i>Recommended age range</i>	<i>Activities recommended</i>
Hand trowel or fork	5 upwards	Bulb & wild flower planting
Bulb planter	8 upwards	As above
Junior garden spade	8 upwards	Tree & shrub planting, bulb planting
Secateurs	11 upwards	Pruning plants & shrubs
Claw hammer	11 upwards	Small carpentry construction e.g. bird boxes, nailing tree ties
Bowsaw	14 upwards	Brush clearing, sawing logs, preparing cut timber for carpentry, sawing tops off stakes, cutting scrub & small trees up to 4" diameter (or 4m high)
	16 upwards	Felling trees above 4" diameter, or above 4 m.
Garden spade	11 upwards	Planting, ditch digging & clearance, step & path construction
Trenching shovel	11 upwards	Moving light materials (11-14) such as bark, sawdust, heavier materials (14 upwards) such as earth, limestone surfacing, gravel etc.
Loppers	11 upwards	Trimming branches from standing and felled trees
Grasshooks	14 upwards	Clearing grass & weeds around planted trees, path edges etc.
Hedge clippers	11 upwards	Hedge & grass trimming
Mall	14 upwards (if strong enough)	Fence posts, stakes on wooden steps
Sledge hammer	14 upwards	Breaking small stone for hearting
Tamper	14 upwards	Path surfacing compaction
Billhooks	14 upwards (very close supervision up to 16)	Hedge laying, snedding (coppicing from 16)
Mattocks	14 upwards	Breaking stony ground, trench digging etc.