

Document Title:	Hedge Cutting
Officer:	
Review Date:	

Method Statement	
Title	Hedge Cutting
Resources for Activity	Hedgecutter, correct fuel in an appropriate container for transportation

1. Staff or volunteers employed in these tasks on behalf of the local council need to apply their training, manufacturers instructions and the outcome of any risk assessment before undertaking work. The following method statement is to be seen as general advice only.
2. West Berkshire operates a street works permit scheme and anyone carrying out works in the road will legally need to apply to West Berkshire Council for permission, in advance of the works. These forms can be obtained at our website at <http://info.westberks.gov.uk/index.aspx?articleid=31032> and should be sent to the Street Works Team at streetworks@westberks.gov.uk.
3. All works on the public highway must comply with the signing, lighting and guarding requirements of Section 65 of the [New Roads and Street Works Act 1991](#).
4. Any traffic management requirements, including any Portable Light Signals, must be applied for with the permit for the works, giving at least seven days notice, unless of an emergency nature, and including a legible plan depicting each layout and sent to the Street Works email address above.

Recommended Work Sequence	
1.	All operatives must be trained in the use of all equipment and in risk assessment.
2.	All operatives to wear appropriate Personal Protective Equipment.
3.	Read all manufacturer's instructions before using a Hedgecutter.
4.	Upon arrival at the site, carry out a site specific risk assessment (SSRA). Amend the SSRA as required during the day's activities.
5.	Implement the outcomes from the risk assessment document. This should include the following general recommendations as well as any other specific obligations.
6.	Petrol is highly flammable. Take care not to cause a fire or explosion.
7.	The Hedgecutter is designed to cut wood based shrubbery and small branches only. DO NOT USE IT FOR ANYTHING ELSE. Carelessness or misuse could cause a serious or fatal accident.
8.	Plan your work and think ahead to make sure you will always be working safely.
9.	You must have (which must be risk assessed): <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Full Face Visor - Safety Helmet - Safety Boots - Hearing Protection - Gloves
10.	Do not exceed the recommended operating time for this piece of equipment. Always follow the manufacturer's instructions. Ensure you take regular breaks from using the hedge trimmer after every 10 minutes of use. This is to help reduce your hand/arm vibration exposure.

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Recommended Work Sequence

11. Check your machine, engine and all equipment. Do not use equipment which is damaged.
12. Use only in open outside areas to ensure good ventilation.
13. You must wear the recommended protective clothing and equipment recommended for the Hedgecutter you are using. Follow the manufacturer's instructions.
14. Anybody who is working near to you will need to wear ear protection and face protection.
15. Protect other people from the noise and dust. Warn others to keep away while the Hedgecutter is in use. Additional safeguards such as barriers may be required when working in the vicinity of members of the public.
16. Make sure the area is clear and safe and that no-one is near to you or could distract you.
17. Carry out any maintenance to the Hedgecutter with the engine switched off.
18. Make sure you carry out a regular visual inspection of the cutting blades for any imperfections. If there are any, report the damage. **DO NOT CONTINUE TO USE.**
19. Replace blades according to the manufacturer's recommendations.
20. Always grip the Hedgecutter correctly with two hands while using.
21. Make sure that you understand all of the controls. Before you start the machine, you must know how to stop it.
22. Ensure good footing when operating Hedgecutter and do not overstretch.
23. Ensure that the area is cordoned off to prevent the public gaining access to the area being cut.

Refuelling

24. Do not smoke when refuelling. Petrol is highly flammable. Take care not to cause a fire or explosion.
25. Fuel used is to be according to the manufacturer's instructions.
26. Stop the engine and let it cool down.
27. If possible move the machine away from your work area.
28. Use a funnel. Do not spill any fuel on yourself or the machine.
29. Wipe any fuel off the machine. Dispose of fuel soaked cloth carefully.
30. If you spill any fuel on your clothes, change them straight away.
31. Put all fuel caps back on properly, and move your fuel can to a safe, cool place.