# Risk Assessment

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| **Contract:** | East Sussex Count Council |
| **Operation/Activity:** | Volunteer Weed Maintenance  |
| **Risk Assessment No.** | ESCC-HSI-002L or H |
| **Part A - Introductory Information** |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |
| **Operation** | *This work involves volunteers removing weeds from East Sussex County Council footways using hand tools to overcome the necessity to administer environmentally harmful herbicides. This work is to be undertaken all year round in various locations across the County.* |
| *Briefly describe the Job, Location, Scope & Duration* |
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| **Associated Method Statements & Risk Assessments** | HSI MS 002 Volunteer Weed Maintenance  |  |
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| ***Note - Specific Risk Assessment Templates are available within the SHE Management System for dealing with specific risks such as COSHH, Noise, HAVS, Fire, Young Persons, Manual Handling, Legionella etc. Where relevent complete a specific risk assessment, reference above and include within the overall RAMS documentation*** |  |
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| **Part B - Integrated Risk Assessment** |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
|  |  |  |  |  | Initial Potential for Harm |  | Residual Potential for Harm |
| No | Hazards (potential for harm) | Who may be harmed | Initial Risk: likely result if hazard is realised | Severity (S) | Likelihood (L) | Risk Rating | Control Measures ***Can the hazard be removed?*** | Severity (S) | Likelihood (L) | Risk Rating |
| 1 | Extreme allergic reaction to stings or bites,  | Volunteers | Anaphylactic Shock, death | 5 | 2 | 10 | Volunteers with known conditions should be assigned to monitoring tasks. Any known conditions and antidotes 'EpiPens' should be declared to the duty supervisor prior to starting work.  | 5 | 1 | 5 |
| 2 | Extremes of cold & hot weather | Volunteers | Hypothermia, heat stroke, dehydration, sunburn, fatigue | 3 | 3 | 9 | Appropriate clothing must be provided for the prevailing weather conditions, if temperatures fall below freezing, gale force winds or thunderstorms develop then work must stop. In extreme heat, water & sun cream must be provided. If at any time a volunteer feels unwell, work must stop until temperatures normalise. | 3 | 1 | 3 |
| 3 | Contact with contaminated soil, hazardous waste, animal faeces and water-borne diseases | Volunteers | Lyme’s Disease, Weil’s Disease, Tetanus, Hepatitis B | 4 | 2 | 8 | Scan the area for potential risks and remove these in a safe manner prior to commencing work. If the volunteers do not have the equipment or knowledge to do this, raise the matter with East Sussex Highways and do not commence work until the risk has been removed. | 4 | 1 | 4 |
| 4 | Contact with needles or other sgharp objects | Volunteers | Cuts or even Infectious disease | 4 | 2 | 8 | Scan the area for potential risks and remove these in a safe manner prior to commencing work. PPE of the type recommended in the Method Statement should be worn at all times. If the volunteers do not have the equipment to safely remove any dangerous objects, raise the matter with East Sussex Highways and do not commence work until the risk has been removed. | 4 | 1 | 4 |
| 5 | Stepping off the pavement | Volunteers & Public | Struck by passing vehicle | 4 | 2 | 8 | Volunteers to work towards the carriageway edge whilst standing centrally in the footway. Work to stop and footway to be left clear for passing pedestrians.  | 2 | 1 | 2 |
| 6 | Crossing the road | Volunteers | Struck by passing vehicle | 4 | 2 | 8 | The road should only be crossed at a location where traffic approaching from either direction can be clearly seen. | 4 | 1 | 4 |
| 7 | Manual Handling | Volunteers | Muscle sprains & Strains | 3 | 2 | 6 | All manual lifting to be done in accordance with the Method Statement | 3 | 1 | 3 |
| 8 | Tripping over tools | Volunteers & Public | Potential for trips and falls | 3 | 2 | 6 | All tools to be stored in a safe place away from the work area when not in use. | 3 | 1 | 3 |
| 9 | Hand tool use | Volunteers & Public | Abrasions and bruising | 2 | 2 | 4 | Tool handles to be pulled to the side of the body not directly towards the user. Spotter to ensure tool are not in use when pedestrians are passing | 2 | 1 | 2 |
| 10 | Injured by broken tools | Volunteers & Public | Possible cuts and bruises | 2 | 2 | 4 | All tools to be checked and in good condition at the start and at least once during the shift. Any damaged or broken tools should be removed from the work area, disposed of as soon as practicable and replaced as soon as possible. If no useable tools are available, work should stop until new equipment has been sourced. | 3 | 1 | 3 |
| 11 | Insects and stinging plants | Volunteers | Bites & Stings | 1 | 3 | 3 | PPE to be worn at all times, insect repellent is recommended for all volunteers | 1 | 1 | 1 |





# Method Statement

During the weed removal process, volunteers will be required to remove weeds from gaps between the footway and adjacent property and or the footway and the curb or other edge of carriageway. Where the footway comprises slabs or other block materials joints between individual footway components may need to be cleared.

After preliminary investigations, the most effective and safe form of removal will be applied. Physical removal of the plant and disposal will be required. This should take the form of hand-held tools; long handle hoes or similar are the recommended implement.

After removal it is the volunteer’s responsibility to ensure all recovered material is disposed of in suitable, safe way and in accordance with the relevant legislation.

# Method.

Only work in agreed areas must be carried out.

Appropriate PPE must be worn at all times.

Sturdy footwear ideally with a reinforced soul and steel toe cap should be worn.

All work should be undertaken in pairs with one volunteer maintaining a safety observation role ensuring neither a volunteer or the public are put at unnecessary risk by the weeding activity. If a member of the public approaches the work area, work must stop and the resident allowed to pass in safety and then continue once it is safe to do so.

All tools should be checked for safety at the start of every shift and at least once, ideally more times during the day. Any tools not in a safe condition should be removed from the work area, disposed of and replaced as soon as possible. Any tools not in use must be stored away from the work area so as not to present a risk to volunteers and the public.

All arisings must be bagged at regular intervals and the bags moved to a safe location away from the work area so as not to become a trip hazard to volunteers or the public. Care should be taken when lifting any bags of waste, follow the guidance below for the safe lifting of heavy loads, never lift more weight than you can comfortably carry:

# Manual Handling

Planning – Can I handle the load? Can a lifting aid be used? Do I need help? What are the hazards?

Posture – Keep your feet apart. Slightly bend your back, hips and knees. Keep shoulders level and facing forwards. Keep the load close to the body. Don’t over stretch your back.

The Lift – Raise the load whilst straitening your legs. Keep the load close to your waist. Keep your head up. Move smoothly. Do not twist or turn.

# Conclusion.

The work will be carried out with consideration of the general public and wildlife. With the precautions being taken, there will be minimal risk to the general public or E.S.C.C volunteers during this work.