This risk assessment relates only to the *generic* features of a common activity; it does not cover those *specific* to a location or group. It therefore must not be used without completing the local review, making additions as necessary to take account of local circumstances. However, such a local review need not be timeconsuming. Use the box at the bottom to create the local review, or add extra pages as necessary. **SEE ACCOMPANYING SAFETY NOTES**

ACTIVITY ASSESSED 1. GENERAL SAFETY ON SITE FOR CONSERVATION ACTIVITIES	**ASSESSOR** STEPHEN BOLSOVER	**ASSESSMENT DATE** 12th September 2026
HAZARD potential for harm	RISK LEVEL	PRECAUTIONS to remove hazard or reduce risk level. One precaution may tackle several hazards.
Inclement weather: Sun, Cold, Wet, Hot	L	Avoid exposing skin for extended periods to even seemingly overcast sun and on bright days use high factor sunblock. Do not visit site unprepared for possible downpours or great heat/cold or strong sunshine. Stop work if people are clearly ill attired for conditions, in discomfort or weather is significantly raising the risks.
Uneven ground and obstacles on ground	M	Many of our sites have uneven ground and fallen tree limbs on the ground. These can be a trip hazard and a fall could cause injury especially to old or infirm people. The warden or other volunteer in charge of the activity will usually be familiar with the site, but if they are not they should inspect the site for hazards before the planned activity, pointing out and if necessary marking these. At the start of an activity the warden or other volunteer in charge will judge the membership of the group and warn as necessary; in an extreme case (such as a elderly person turning up for a guided walk whose planned route was through uneven ground) the activity will be modified to reflect the abilities of the membership of the party. At all working parties, the site and tools should be kept tidy. Participants at working parties should wear sturdy footwear with a firm ground grip.
Underground services: Electricity/Gas/Water	H	Wardens should be aware of the location of any underground services on their sites. If any digging or other ground penetration is planned near the services then Harrow Council and the relevant utility companies must be consulted. The meaning of “near” in this context depends on how accurately the position of the utility is known: if its position is known precisely, then any ground more than 20m away can be considered distant. However, if there is a greater degree of uncertainly, then the region considered to be near the utility increases accordingly.
Manual handling, lifting and back strain	L	Have materials/tools delivered to site, or as close to site as possible. Use wheelbarrows to transport materials/tools. Use tool bags to carry small tools. Plan in advance any

		unavoidable lifting/carrying of heavy items. Check whether volunteers are familiar with the techniques of safe lifting, carrying, digging and work techniques using arms/legs rather than the back to exert force and instruct any volunteers who are not familiar with these techniques. Don't rush and take regular breaks. Monitor activity and state of participants to prevent individuals being in prolonged single activity i.e. digging, lifting etc or getting dangerously tired.
Operating hand tools	M	Volunteers must know how to use each type of tool correctly and safely. Instruct any who are not. Inspect all tools before use for loose handles, damage and bluntness. Faulty tools should not be used but marked for repair/disposal. Ensure stout footwear is worn. Ensure nobody wears gloves on the hand holding the tool as this weakens the grip. Ensure adequate working distances are maintained.
Chemical hazards and treated timber	L	When using chemicals appropriate protective clothing must be worn, open wounds must be covered and hands must be washed straight after work and before eating, drinking or smoking. Wear gloves when handling timber and use pre-treated timber whenever possible. Follow instructions supplied with timber and other materials: this may require, during drilling or sawing, the operator to wear gloves and may require the operator and those nearby to wear respiratory marks. Do not burn treated waste but plan safe disposal. Any hazardous substances in use or likely to be encountered must be considered according to COSHH procedures.
Tetanus	M	This disease may not be very common but can have severe effects, in rarer cases death. If earth gets into cuts, open wounds or sores tetanus can be contracted. Clean all cuts and penetrating wounds immediately with clean water or a wet wipe and cover adequately. Advise the volunteer that they should see their doctor as soon as possible. The doctor may recommend a booster inoculation.
Leptospirosis	M	This disease may not be very common but can have severe effects, in rarer cases death. If water contaminated with rats or cows urine gets into cuts, open wounds or sores the Weills or Hardjo varieties of Leptospirosis can result. All workers in areas likely to be soiled by rat/cow urine, eg. urban stream banks/ farms should avoid water contact and wash thoroughly as soon as possible after visiting the site. They must not eat, drink or smoke until they have washed.
Lyme disease from ticks	M	The risk of contracting Lyme disease from ticks on our reserves is low. Nevertheless visitors and workers on the sites should always be aware of the possibility of ticks

		when back home after time on a reserve: ticks prefer warm, moist places on the body, especially the groin area, waist, arm pits, behind the knee and along hair lines, so look out for anything as tiny as a freckle or a speck of dirt. In particular note unusual rashes since a characteristic expanding rash, *erythema migrans*, follows most but not all cases of tick bite. If a tick is detected, either while on site or afterwards, it can be removed with tick tweezers - all HNCF first aid kits should include one. Contact your GP if you feel unwell and tell the all history of tick bites / working in nature reserves, raising the possibility of Lyme disease. When working in areas where the risk of ticks is especially high - grassland areas where deer are known to be present - wear long trousers and long socks.
Bee/wasp stings	L	Check if any member of work team has allergy to stings. Inspect vegetation before cutting or removing for presence of bee or wasp nests. Ensure foodstuffs are kept in sealed containers to limit attractiveness to wasps.
Personal attack	L	General advice is to leave no-one isolated on site. During guided walks and other activities this will be the case. During working parties it may be appropriate for some volunteers to work alone; if they are confident doing so and know the site's geography this is fine. However, people working alone should only perform tasks of low risk ("L" in the central column").
Falling trees or tree limbs	L	The woods on our reserves contain old and veteran trees with limbs that may fall unexpectedly injuring those underneath. These trees enhance the biodiversity and attractiveness of the sites and we will preserve them as is unless they pose a significant danger. Experienced members of volunteer working parties will recognize dangerous trees and tree limbs and avoid walking or working underneath them. Nevertheless when we work in areas with old trees the volunteers will be warned to keep a look out for potential problems. When new volunteers who have not worked with us before join a working party the warden or other volunteer in charge of the working party will survey the site beforehand and mark dangerous tree limbs with warning tape. In the safety talk at the start of the working party volunteers will be told not to walk or work under marked trees, and to keep a look out for other potential dangerous tree limbs.
RISKS AND PRECAUTIONS SPECIFIC TO THE SITE OR DAY		

ASSESSOR

ASSESSMENT DATE

APPLICABLE DATES
(This is likely either to be one specific day, or “until further notice”.)

Risk level: L = Low, M = Medium, H = High

ACTIVITY ASSESSED	ASSESSOR	ASSESSMENT DATE
1. GENERAL SAFETY ON SITE FOR CONSERVATION ACTIVITIES	STEPHEN BOLSOVER	11th May 2016

RESTRICTIONS

Do not begin any work on site unless fully stocked first aid kits are readily available. Do not use faulty tools. Do not unload/load passengers or materials from vehicles in the path of traffic, cordon off if necessary. Do not allow to participate in work or to drive anyone under the influence of drink or mind-altering drugs.

PREVENTATIVE MEASURES

Keep the site and in particular tools safe and tidy. When working in water or using chemicals or treated timbers, open wounds should be covered and hands must be washed before smoking, drinking or eating.

PERSONAL PROTECTIVE EQUIPMENT

Stout boots such as walking boots or safety boots are recommended for all activities and required for any task where tools could bruise or pierce the foot such as digging with spade or fork or using Lazy Dog tools.

Wear gloves when handling timber or handling sharp or abrasive materials. Follow instructions supplied with timber and other materials: this may require, during drilling or sawing, the operator to wear gloves and may require the operator and those nearby to wear respiratory marks.

When using chemicals appropriate protective clothing must be worn.

TRAINING

Wardens must confirm that volunteers are familiar with, and follow, the protocols laid out in the risk assessments and safety plans. This will require instruction the first time a tool or procedure is performed by the volunteer. At succeeding working parties wardens should keep an eye on volunteers to confirm that they are continuing to observe good practise.

MONITORING

Anticipate and monitor weather conditions and don't go on site unprepared if downpours, strong sunshine, freezing cold etc, are possible. Inspect the site for hazards, pointing out or marking these as appropriate to warn participants and/or the public. Include in this hazards resulting from your work like uneven surfaces, falling timber, debris. Regularly inspect equipment and check its condition before each use. Ask if all have had Tetanus injections in the last decade; ensure all cuts have waterproof dressing and if soil/pondwater etc, touches skin emphasize to volunteers thet they must wash thoroughly on returning home and before any food or drink is consumed.

Warn everyone of the dangers of Lyme disease. Advise them to check for ticks when they get home and to raise the possibility of Lyme disease with their GP if they fall ill in the days after the event.

INFORMATION

Keep this Safety Plan, its associated Risk Assessment Record and those for the intended task(s) on site and inform all they are there for them to be read and assimilated. Inform all who the first aiders are, where the first aid kit is and the location of the nearest phone. If appropriate erect safety signs to warn passers by of hazard areas.

Risk level: L = Low, M = Medium, H = High