

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	ASSESSOR	ASSESSMENT DATE
20. WORK IN GRASSLAND AND HEATHLAND	STEPHEN BOLSOVER	11 th May 2016
HAZARD potential for harm	RISK LEVEL	PRECAUTIONS to remove hazard or reduce risk level. One precaution may tackle several hazards.
Fire	H	If any form of fire is intended see Generic RA <i>Fires on Site</i> .
Uneven ground	L	Inspect site for hazards, pointing out and if necessary marking these. Wear sturdy footwear with a firm grip.
Operating hand tools	M	Ensure adequate working distances are maintained. All tools must be in good condition and used safely. If necessary place hazard warning signs for the public and/or post a lookout to prevent public access.
Spores from bracken or associated fungi when working near or cutting bracken	M	Bracken spores are toxic. However spore generation by bracken is a rare occurrence – we have never observed this on sites in Harrow. Until further notice we will not carry out any work in or around bracken that is bearing spores. If climate change causes bracken sporing to become more frequent, we may need to revise this rule.
Inclement weather: sun, cold, wet, hot	M	Work on heathland/grassland can be exposed and the leader must monitor the conditions. Do not visit site unprepared for possible downpours, great heat/cold or strong sunshine. Avoid exposing skin to even seemingly overcast sun and on bright days use a high factor sunblock. Stop work promptly if people are clearly ill-attired for conditions, in discomfort or the weather is significantly raising the risks from the work.
Adder bite	M	Adders have not been seen on Harrow Nature Conservation Forum sites for a number of years while adder toxin is less dangerous than that of bees and wasps. Nevertheless, any person bitten by a snake should be accompanied to a hospital emergency room.
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

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RESTRICTIONS Restrict access to work site if heavy felling is being done. No burning if site is dry. Machinery such as brush cutters not to be used by those not trained/competent in its use: also separate specific risk assessment needed if clearing bracken with machinery. Do not visit site unprepared - suitable clothing, shelter, drinking water, etc. - for inclement and exposed conditions. No work to be carried out in or around bracken that is bearing spores.		
PREVENTATIVE MEASURES Keep cut stumps low and flat to prevent tripping and/or causing injury. Remove or otherwise leave safe all waste materials. If necessary place hazard warning signs for the public and/or post a lookout to prevent public access.		
PERSONAL PROTECTIVE EQUIPMENT Waterproof clothing for wet weather. Stout footwear with good grip. Gloves for handling cut materials and pulling bracken, also long sleeves/trousers for bracken work. If much disturbance of bracken is likely, wear a fine pore mask.		
TRAINING Ensure that all participants are aware of good practise in use of hand tools. This will likely require training on the volunteer's first time with the Forum and regular monitoring at subsequent working parties to ensure that the volunteer continues to follow safe practise.		
MONITORING Inspect all tools before and regularly during work for good condition, not using any failures. Monitor site/weather conditions and welfare of each participant. Maintain safe working distances amongst those at work twice the length of arm plus tool is a good minimum if actively swinging a tool like a grasshook.		
INFORMATION <i>Hand Tools - a guide to safe use and care, Generic RA General Site Safety.</i>		

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