

Homersfield Parish Council

CHAINSAW AND STRIMMER POLICY

Chainsaw Policy

No chain sawing is permitted by volunteers without having first obtained NPTC Level 2 award in Chainsaw and Related Operations, CS31 – Fell and Process Small Trees (pre-requisite CS30). This allows them to fell small trees up to a diameter of 380mm, remove branches from small trees using a chainsaw, crosscut felled trees and to take down hung-up trees using hand tools.

The names of Volunteers who hold these qualifications will be recorded by the Parish Clerk on this policy document with the date their qualification was obtained and when it will need to be renewed. All work needs to be authorised by the Parish Council or Tree Warden before commencement. The felling of trees having a greater girth than 380mm and any chainsaw work not carried out from the ground must be undertaken by contractors who are certificated to carry out such operations.

When using a chainsaw, the operator must wear the following level of PPE (personal protective equipment) at all times: 1) Safety helmet to EN 397. 2) Hearing protection to EN 352-1. 3) Eye protection: Mesh visors to EN 1731 or safety glasses to EN 166. 4) Upper body protection: Chainsaw jackets to EN 381-11. 5) Leg protection to EN 381-5. 6) Gloves to EN 381-7. 7) Chainsaw boots to EN ISO 20345:2004 and compliant with EN381-3.

In addition to the above it is essential that no chainsaw work is carried out alone and it is recommended that at least one other qualified chainsaw user is in attendance when chainsaws are in use.

Strimmer Policy

1. Purpose

1.1 The following policy has been agreed by Homersfield Parish Council on 1st March 2022. The vegetation by the pathways in the Community Wood needs to be kept short to allow access by the community and other areas (e.g., Village Green) need to be maintained in accordance with Parish Council aims.

2. Pre-Task

2.1 The areas to be strimmed must be agreed in advance with the Parish Council or Tree Warden.

2.3 If strimming is carried out under Parish Council or Tree Warden supervision, then the Parish Council or Tree Warden is responsible for carrying out a risk assessment for the activity to include: -

- a. Assess the type of vegetation that needs strimming to select the correct cutters.
- b. Look for obvious slip and trip issues and for hidden hazards.
- c. To plot out individual work areas. The work should be planned so that all other persons, volunteers, or other visitors, should remain at least 50 feet (15 metres) from the operator, to minimise the risk from flying stones/twigs etc.
- d. To select a suitable refuelling site at a safe distance from where strimmers are started and operated.

3. Selection of volunteers

Chainsaw & Strimmer Policy

Adopted: 1st March 2022

Reviewed: 5th March 2024

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3.1 Volunteers must be aged over 18.

3.2 This task can only be performed by volunteers whom the Parish Council or Tree Warden have nominated as experienced and competent users of their own petrol driven strimmer. A list of such nominees must be supplied to the Parish Clerk and updated, as necessary.

3.3 A volunteer should never work alone. Another person should be there to help ensure the safety of other people/members of the public and be in possession of a working mobile phone in case of emergencies.

4. Personal Protective Equipment

4.1 The strimmer operator MUST wear

- a. Eye protection, either goggles, or a full-face shield. Spectacles are NOT sufficient protection.
- b. Solid boots, preferably steel toe capped.
- c. Trousers or overalls, preferably thick. Shorts are not permitted.
- d. A high visibility vest or jacket.

4.2 It is recommended that the strimmer operator wear:

- a. Ear protection, preferably full ear "muffs".
- b. Gloves for grip.
- c. Full harness or shoulder strap, to avoid muscle strain.

5. Strimmers

5.1 Strimmers fitted with nylon cord or plastic blades may be used to tackle grass and weeds in accordance with the manufacturer specifications for each machine.

5.2 Under no circumstances should any strimmer be fitted with:

- a. non-standard cutters or cutters that do not conform with manufacturer specifications.
- b. solid metal blades. If the vegetation is too tough for a strimmer with a nylon cord or plastic blade then please refer to Homersfield Parish Council for a solution as a contractor may be needed to undertake brush cutting with a solid metal blade.
- c. **metal chain links or similar flail types. Strimmers or brush cutters with cutters made of metal chain links or flails must not be used by any volunteer or contractor as these are now banned for sale following various accidents, including fatalities.**

5.3 Volunteers must be experienced in the type of strimmer being used. If unsure of any aspect of use, refer to the Operator Manual before checking and using the strimmer.

5.4 Volunteers must carry out a full safety check on the strimmer prior to use and during work at convenient intervals. If faulty or damaged, the machine should be fully repaired or not used.

5.5 Safety checks should be in accordance with manufacturer instructions and should include:

- a. Cleaning the outside of the machine.
- b. Making sure the harness is not damaged.
- c. Cleaning the air filter and replacing if necessary.
- d. Checking that:
 1. the throttle trigger lock and the throttle function correctly and safely
 2. the stop switch functions correctly.
 3. the cutting head does not rotate when idle.
 4. the guard is undamaged and not cracked and replacing the guard if it has been exposed to impact or is cracked.
 5. all nuts and screws are in place and tightened.
 6. the strimmer head guard is undamaged and not cracked and replacing the strimmer head guard if necessary.

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6. Volunteers on the day

6.1 In addition to safety checks on the strimmer and donning PPE, the strimmer operator MUST:

- a. Undertake their own visual Risk Assessment of their designated work area. Move or clearly mark slip or trip hazards and clear away any stones and twigs prior to undertaking work. If the designated work area is slippery, or too hazardous to access or work in for any other reason, the volunteer should not proceed.
- b. Work within their own restricted work area in which other volunteers or public are not allowed.
- c. Work in such a way that, as far as possible, any possible risk to themselves or others is minimised.
- d. Keep alert to possible dangers (i.e., look up regularly!).
- e. Avoid stepping back whilst strimming, always work sideways or forwards.
- f. Refuel only at the designated filling point and ensure that the petrol can is resealed after use. Machines must be switched off and left to cool before refuelling.
- g. Stop work immediately if another person issues a warning and/or if volunteers or public enter the "restricted" area. Only recommence strimming when any danger is passed.
- h. Take regular rest breaks to avoid the effects of vibration and fatigue.
- i. Follow any social distancing and hygiene requirements in force at the time.
- j. If a fire breaks out, do not try to tackle it themselves but retreat a safe distance and call 999.

The following people have been authorised by the Parish Council or Tree Warden to use a strimmer in accordance with this policy. They have been issued with a copy of the policy.

Name	Date Added