



treehogs
Tree & Vegetation Management

Health and Safety Policy Statement, Procedures and Arrangements

Version 2

Note: This is a controlled document. Release to persons not employed by Treehogs Ltd must first be authorised by a Director.

Table of Amendments and Updates			
Version	Date	Detail	Author
1	18.03.2019		
2	25.02.2020	Amendments made following consultation with the Director to develop a policy that better reflects a small arboricultural business	CCA

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Treehogs Ltd Health and Safety Policy

Section One – General Policy Statement

It is the policy of Treehogs Ltd ('the Company') to foster a positive health and safety culture throughout the Company because we believe that high standards of health and safety are a moral and commercial prerequisite.

The Company is committed to:

- providing adequate control of the health and safety risks arising from our work activities by means of suitable and sufficient risk assessments;
- maintaining safe and healthy working conditions, and adequate welfare facilities;
- providing and maintaining safe plant and equipment, including all personal protective equipment where needed;
- ensuring safe handling and safe use of substances that may be harmful;
- ensuring all Employees are competent to do their tasks and are given adequate training, instruction and supervision;
- working to prevent accidents and cases of work-related ill health;
- consulting with our Employees on matters affecting their health and safety;
- reviewing and revising this policy.

Implementation, Maintenance and Review

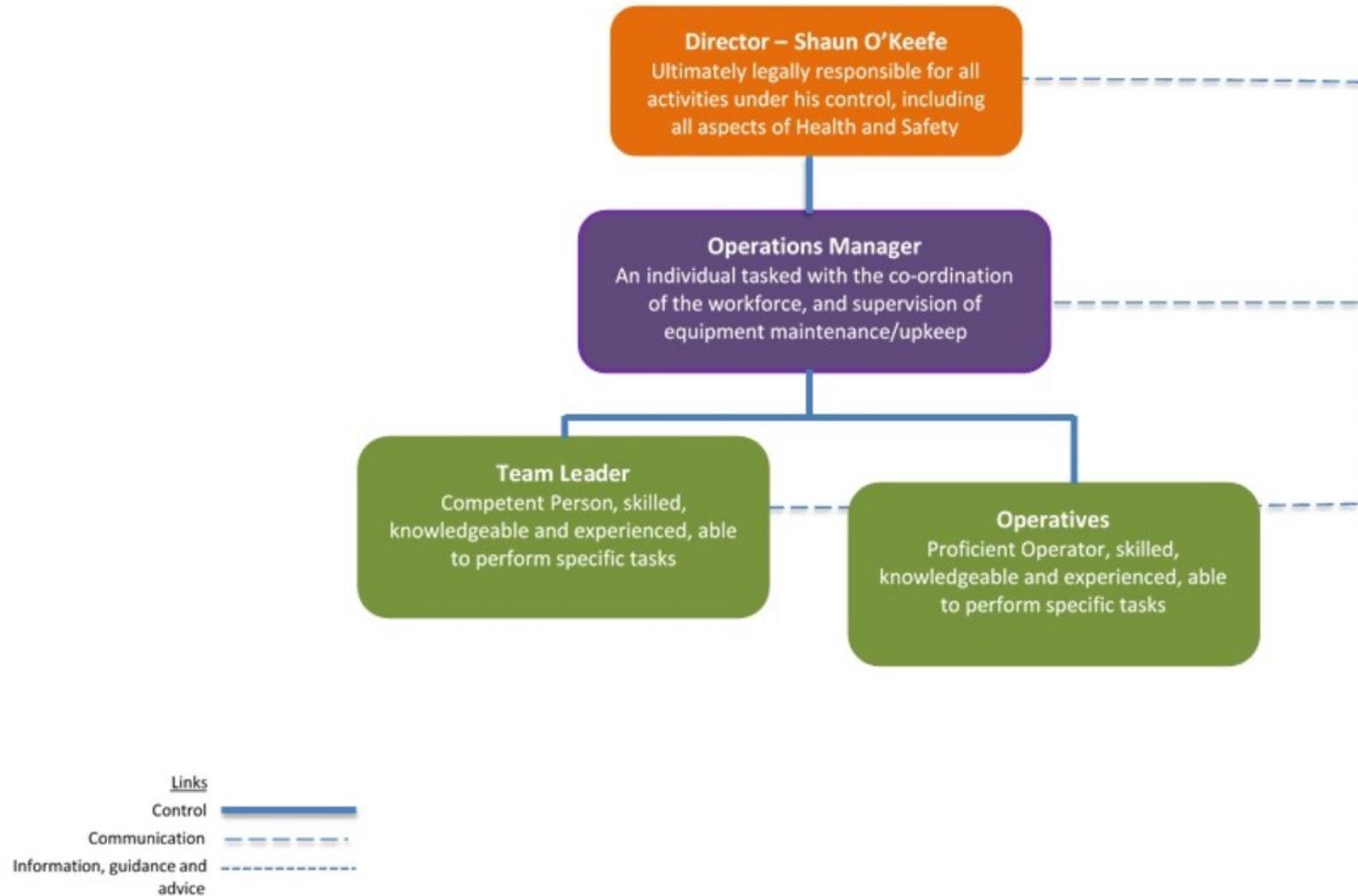
The Company (as the Employer) accepts overall responsibility for health and safety management. The Employer will appoint competent persons to assist with the implementation and maintenance of health and safety policies and arrangements.

As a broad principle, this policy will be reviewed annually. Further specific detail is contained within the section Health and Safety Review Procedures and Monitoring.

Signed by:	Shaun O'Keefe
Position:	Director
Signature:	
Date:	25 th February 2020
Due date for latest revision:	25 th February 2021

Section Two – Levels of Responsibility

The Treehogs Ltd structure chart below shows the arrangements and responsibilities in place across the organisation.



Introduction

Treehogs Ltd recognises and accepts its responsibilities under the Health and Safety at Work etc. Act 1974, including the responsibility to:

- Provide and maintain a safe and healthy place of work.
- Provide information, instruction, training and supervision.
- Provide and maintain plant and equipment and safe systems of work.
- Ensure safe access to and from places of work.
- Work to prevent accidents and work-related ill health.

General Health and Safety

To achieve the highest possible standards of health and safety within our workplace, the Company will adopt a process of proactive monitoring of performance and the development of a positive health and safety culture among our Employees.

The Employer will manage the Company in line with current legislation, guidance and accepted good practice to ensure that all foreseeable hazards are identified, arising risk is evaluated and suitable and sufficient controls are put in place to ensure and maintain a healthy and safe working environment.

The Company will always consult with the Employees on these matters. Our structure chart details the usual reporting lines within the Company. However, any employee at any time will be provided with the opportunity, if requested, to speak to senior management about any matter relating to health, safety, the environment or quality.

The Company will, so far as reasonably practicable, ensure that it provides satisfactory financial resources and the support needed to meet these objectives and that systems are in place which ensure the effective planning, control, monitoring and review of the measures and arrangements.

2.1 Duties of the Employer: Shaun O'Keefe (Director)

1. To oversee health and safety within the Company.
2. To seek generally to improve the record of the Company in respect of health, safety and welfare matters.
3. To review and approve the Company policy relating to the health, safety and welfare at work of the Company's Employees and others affected by its work.
4. To administer the Company policy relating to the health, safety and welfare at work of the Company's Employees and others affected by its work.
5. To advise and liaise with the external advisor on current or proposed legislation, safe working practices and any other matter relating to health and safety.
6. To produce clear and practical guidelines and work systems for Employees to follow, and to give advice and co-ordinate information exchange.
7. To investigate accidents and liaise with the external advisor regarding recommendations to reduce the potential for further accidents or recurrence.
8. To implement the disciplinary procedure where Employees fail to discharge satisfactorily the responsibilities allocated in respect of health, safety and welfare matters.
9. To make site visits to observe working practices.
10. To ensure that work is planned, supervised and resourced appropriately.
11. To set a personal example and maintain their knowledge of current industry good practice, equipment developments and current legislation by engaging in appropriate continuing professional development.
12. To ensure that someone involved in the work has the knowledge, training and experience necessary for a full understanding of all the issues involved in the work being considered.

2.2 Duties of the External H&S Advisor: Arb Matters Ltd

1. To review and advise on the Company policy relating to the health, safety and welfare at work of the Company's Employees and others affected by its work.

2. To give advice generally and to advise on current and proposed legislation.
3. To seek generally to improve the record of the Company in respect of health, safety and welfare matters.
4. To review and approve the guidelines and work systems for managers and staff to follow.
5. Where necessary, to complete further investigations into accidents and prepare reports with recommendations to reduce the potential for further accidents or recurrence.
6. To make site visits to observe working practices.
7. To set a personal example and maintain their knowledge of current industry good practice, equipment developments and current legislation by engaging in appropriate continuing professional development.

2.3 Duties of those Designated to Co-ordinate Workplace Activities: Operations Manager

1. To understand and implement the Company Health and Safety Policy.
2. To complete the relevant risk (and any other) assessments required before operations commence on any site and to ensure that all individuals on site are fully aware of the potential hazards.
3. To organise workplace activities so that they are carried out with the minimum risk to Employees, contractors and others, following the relevant risk and COSHH assessments.
4. To manage and control work effectively and safely as it is being undertaken.
5. To ensure that those individuals engaged for the purposes of work have the appropriate attitude, aptitude, physical capability, training and experience to carry out the work in hand.
6. To incorporate safety requirements in routine or site-specific work instructions and ensure that they are understood and followed.
7. To oversee correct and timely completion of records required by management.
8. To report any special health and safety requirements for their activities to the employer in order that the Company policy can be amended as appropriate.
9. To take a direct interest in all health and safety matters and to support publicly all persons carrying out the policy.
10. To set a personal example and maintain their knowledge of current industry good practice, equipment developments and current legislation by engaging in appropriate continuing professional development.
11. To be responsible to, and for reporting to, management.

2.4 Duties of Operatives

1. To support and co-operate with the Company always to achieve the objectives of this policy and the duties imposed on the Company by the Health and Safety at Work Act and associated legislation.
2. To work within the safe systems of work specified by the Employer, understanding the limitations of their proficiency and experience regarding work practices.
3. To correctly select, configure and use the appropriate plant, machinery, equipment and tools for the task in hand.
4. To inspect and maintain tools in good condition and complete necessary safety checks along with maintaining records as appropriate.
5. To report any defective plant, machinery, equipment and tools to the employer or other designated individual(s) immediately.
6. To ensure the correct return and storage of tools and equipment in use.
7. To wear safety equipment and protective clothing as appropriate to the site, task or machine.
8. All Sub-contractors will make relevant certificates of competence, training records and other documentation available for inspection by the Company at all reasonable times.
9. To set a personal example, work safely upon their own initiative and maintain their knowledge of current industry good practice, equipment developments and current legislation by engaging in appropriate continuing professional development.

Section Three – Scope of Operational Activities

3.1 Company Overview

Based in Wrexham, we are a small but growing business and with our fully qualified and insured staff we provide a friendly and professional service that we pride ourselves on. Whether clients have a small tree in their garden or have multiple large sites to manage, we have the tools to undertake any project

All work is carried out by City & Guilds NPTC certified arborists and to industry standards (BS3998:2010 the British Standard Recommendations for tree work). The Company carries full public and employer's liability insurance.

3.2 Private and Commercial Arboriculture

All forms of tree and hedge pruning, sectional dismantling, felling and stump grinding on private, commercial and local authority property.

3.3 Planting

All forms of tree, shrub and hedge planting in accordance with client specification.

3.4 Administration

All clerical and financial administration of the principal operational activities is completed from the Company Head Office, Lawson Road, Wrexham, LL12.

Section Four – Health and Safety Arrangements and Procedures

4.1 Overview

This section outlines the health and safety arrangements and procedures that relate to all Employees whilst at work. It is the responsibility of all Employees to ensure they are aware of specific workplace arrangements and to follow any procedures laid down by the Company to ensure safe working.

The persistent and deliberate flouting of legislative, Company and good practice requirements will be treated as a disciplinary matter. All Employees are reminded that legislative breaches (Acts and Regulations) are criminal offences and may therefore be treated as such by enforcing authorities such as the police, the Health and Safety Executive and/or the local authority.

Company management expects all Employees to both act in a sensible way and follow instructions provided to help create a healthy and safe working environment. It should be noted that, regardless of position within the Company, health and safety legislation imposes general duties on us all.

These duties include, but are not limited to:

- taking reasonable care of our own health and safety and that of others who may be affected by our acts or omissions;
- co-operating with the Employer (or any other person), so far as is necessary, to ensure the Employer can comply with his statutory obligations, e.g. report hazards, attend training;
- not interfering with or misusing anything provided to secure health and safety, e.g. removing or tampering with guards;
- only using the equipment, material or substance provided in accordance with training and instruction;
- working within the limits of our training and instruction with every Employee informing the Employer of any situation that represents a serious or immediate danger or any shortcoming in the Employer's protection arrangements.

Individuals found to be unsafe may be immediately suspended from any worksite until further notice.

4.2 Access to Information

Section 4 of this policy needs to be read with reference to the documents available as highlighted below. Access to this information and guidance for both the employer and Employees will help manage their undertakings in line with both legislative and industry requirements.

The following resources will be made available by the Company:

Electronic Company library	Electronic resource section containing both internal and external guidance material
Hard-copy Company library	Books Industry standards HSE guidance Industry guidance
Competent advice	Managers have access to industry-specific specialist health, safety, environmental and quality advice from Arb Matters Ltd
Sources of information and guidance via the web	www.hse.gov.uk www.legislation.gov.uk
Office/workshop	The Health and Safety Law Poster

4.3 Adverse Event Reporting

All accidents, incidents, near misses and dangerous occurrences must be recorded on a Company adverse event report form at the site where the event occurred, irrespective of whether any injury occurred.

Report forms are kept at the following locations:

1. Head Office
2. Workshop
3. Site File

Any reportable accidents, incidents, or dangerous occurrences when applicable will be reported to the enforcing authority by the Director as soon as is reasonably practicable.

Definitions of adverse events:

An **accident** is defined as, 'any unplanned event that resulted in injury or ill health of people'.

And **incident** is defined as, 'damage or loss to property, plant, materials or the environment'.

A **near miss** is defined as, 'any event which under slightly different circumstances may have resulted in injury or ill health of people or damage/loss to property, plant, materials or the environment'.

A **dangerous occurrence** is defined as, 'any incident that has a high potential to cause death or serious injury and is specified by the Reporting of Incidents, Diseases and Dangerous Occurrences Regulations (RIDDOR)'.

We will maintain an internal database of all events as defined above. The purpose of this system will be to allow:

1. The Company to learn from adverse events and whether we need to change any of our Company processes.
2. The Company to identify where we need to focus resources, such as training and finances.
3. The Company to measure our performance against our aims to reduce harm from adverse events. Appropriate data collection also allows us a Company to identify potential trends or problems.
4. The correct reporting of any workplace event in line with legislative requirements, e.g. RIDDOR.

4.4 Alcohol and Drugs

It is Company policy to have an alcohol- and drug-free workplace. This policy applies to all staff including sub-contractors and others working on behalf of the Company.

Alcohol is defined as drink that contains alcohol and includes 'low alcohol drinks'. Drugs are defined as any illegal substances, prescribed 'over-the-counter' drugs or the misuse of solvents.

Any worker, sub-contractor or other person working on behalf of the Company found to have consumed, or be under the influence of, any of the above during normal working hours, including meal breaks, will be excluded from work and subject to the Company's disciplinary procedure.

Any worker, sub-contractor or other person working on behalf of the Company found in possession of a banned substance on Company premises or during normal working hours will be reported to the police and dismissed immediately.

Any person taking prescribed medication must seek the advice of their doctor before working; written evidence of their fitness to work whilst taking medication may be required. This record will be held on the Employee's personnel file until the course of medication has finished.

4.5 Asbestos

In the unlikely event that any Company Employees or sub-contractors encounter any substance suspected to be or contain asbestos, all works in the area will cease until the substance has been identified and, if appropriate, made safe or removed by specialist contractors. All works carried out that may disturb suspect substances must follow the control measures as identified within Company risk assessments.

The Company will ensure that Employees will have received asbestos awareness training either as part of their induction or during the ongoing employment training programme. A record of this training will be maintained as part of the Company competency matrix.

4.6 Biosecurity

As a Company we are committed to promoting the implementation and understanding of good biosecurity practices to assist in safeguarding the future of our trees from the introduction and spread of harmful organisms. This statement outlines some basic biosecurity principles that will be adopted to reduce the unwanted introduction and spread of tree pests, diseases and invasive tree species:

1. As a Company undertaking work on or around trees we will consider the reasonably foreseeable consequences of our activities. Adopting biosecurity risk assessment processes and policy commitments we see as critical first steps.
2. As a Company we have a responsibility to implement routine biosecurity control measures for all sites and specific measures for higher risk sites highlighted by the biosecurity risk assessment process. This may include the cleaning and disinfection of clothing, PPE, tools, equipment and vehicles.
3. Arboricultural operations such as pruning, felling and planting will be planned, managed and supervised to minimise the movement of arisings and soil. All arisings will be appropriately disposed of.
4. We will ensure that our operatives understand biosecurity issues and how to comply with adopted biosecurity measures. Training, guidance and supervision will be provided when necessary.

We will ensure when planning, designing, or implementing planting projects that we will aspire to source home-grown and nursed specimens avoiding, where possible, directly imported stock to reduce the risk of introduction of pests and diseases.

We will ensure as a minimum:

Timescale	Action
Ongoing	All operators are issued with industry guidance relating to biosecurity
Ongoing	Online biosecurity training completed and recorded as part of the Company competency matrix

4.7 Certification and Competence

Where legislation or specific industry guidance requires, Employees will be trained and assessed to a national competence standard.

A record of all training received, and where applicable qualifications/licences to practise achieved, will be maintained for each Employee as part of the Company competency matrix. This record will identify when refresher/update or up-skill training will be required in accordance with specific industry guidance or:

- a. if the risks to which Employees are exposed change due to a change in their working tasks; or
- b. because new technology or equipment is introduced; or
- c. if the system of work changes.

A competency plan will be developed and maintained by the Company for each employee, identifying when refresher or update training will be due.

4.8 Communication and Induction Training

The Company will ensure every Employee is made aware of the Health and Safety Policy and procedures through a Company Induction Training Programme. Each employee will be made aware of and assisted in fulfilling their health and safety responsibilities through initial and ongoing consultation.

As part of the employment and induction process, all Employees will be asked to complete a medical declaration and next-of-kin questionnaire.

The Company will communicate changes to the health and safety policy and procedures to all Employees through direct briefing.

Employees will have access to all relevant industry safety guides and legislative information such as risk assessments, industry good practice, material safety data sheets etc., either in the office or in the workshop as appropriate.

All Company vehicles carry vehicle packs which contain a range of Company, industry and Health and Safety Executive information and guidance available for reference. These vehicle packs are reviewed on an annual basis to reflect any changes to legislation, good practice or Company operational procedures.

It is determined that as a minimum vehicle packs will contain:

1. common factor risk assessments
2. point of work assessments
3. COSHH assessments and material safety data sheets
4. emergency protocols
5. protected species disturbance/impact assessment
6. adverse event report form
7. hospital A&E lists and emergency contacts
8. Company insurance details
8. applicable legislative, industry and Company information relating to the control measures as defined within the Company risk assessments

It will be ensured that in at least one location to which all Employees have access a Company noticeboard will be maintained, as a minimum to display:

1. Company Health and Safety Policy
2. Employer's liability insurance certificate
3. common-factor risk assessments relating to office and/or workshop, stores and yard
4. Fire Evacuation Plan

4.9 Computer Screens

It will be ensured that suitable assessments are carried out for all persons who regularly use display screen equipment (DSE). The assessments will consider the amount of time a person uses a visual display unit and the work done, the usability of their workstation and the general working environment. Appropriate controls will be implemented and changes to workstations made, where deemed necessary, based on individual assessment.

4.10 Contractors and Sub-contractors

All contractors, sub-contractors, agency staff and consultants will be issued with a sub-contractors' agreement and this policy, which they are subject to unless they submit their own policy prior to working or the contract starting and the policy has been accepted by the Company.

Copies of a contractor's own safety policy may be required.

All parties as described above will be expected to complete an annual sub-contractors' questionnaire to help the Company determine their suitability, competency and proficiency to carry out their role.

Where contractors or other persons are present on Company premises or worksites controlled by the Company, they will be informed of any known hazards and made aware of emergency action plans.

4.11 Control of Substances Hazardous to Health

The Company will maintain a COSHH inventory and summary for all hazardous substances used or that Employees may encounter. This is to include biological hazards, e.g. Giant Hog Weed.

Assessments and all material safety data sheets (where applicable) of hazardous substances will be kept at the Company offices.

The Company will ensure COSHH risk assessments are carried out and regularly reviewed. From the risk assessments the management will instigate the principles of good practice for the control of exposure.

COSHH assessments will also be kept at the point of substance storage or provided at locations where substances hazardous to health may be encountered, e.g. in vehicle packs.

4.12 Construction (Design & Management) Regulations (CDM)

The HSE has advised that tree planting and general horticultural work includes top soiling, grading, amelioration, planting, grassing, agricultural fencing, tree work, soft landscape maintenance and associated preparation (including excavation and site clearance but excluding site clearance of 'construction work'). These works are therefore not 'construction work' and the CDM Regulations 2015 do not apply to them, even if they are part of a larger project which includes 'construction work'. The HSE has advised that where such works are carried out as part of a larger project including 'construction work', the tree planting and general horticultural work can be addressed separately.

Where 'construction work' to include construction design is undertaken by the Company, the Senior Management Team will ensure pre-tender documents, designs, construction plans, bills of quantities and method statements meet the CDM requirements for the site and that information requested by the 'Client', 'Principal Designer' and/or the 'Principal Contractor' is provided.

Furthermore, all Employees working on the construction site will be fully briefed about site safety issues and cooperating with the Site Health & Safety Plan by their line manager and/or job supervisor.

Construction Sites

Where the Company is working on a construction site or as part of a construction design project, it will comply fully with the requirements of the Construction (Design & Management) Regulations (CDM) as required. Reference will be made where applicable to the 'Managing Health & Safety in Construction ACOP' (L153 revised). In addition to the Company health and safety procedures, full cooperation will be given to the Client, Principal Designer in the pre-tender/design stages and/or the Principal Designer/Contractor during construction phases in providing accurate health and safety information. Where the Company has the role of Contractor it will fulfil its obligations in accordance with the CDM Regulations.

4.13 Consultation with Employees

The Company will consult with Employees on matters relating to health, safety and welfare and furnish them with the information which is deemed necessary. Such information is to be seen on the Company noticeboards as displayed in the workplace. The Company encourages Employees to join in with the spirit of the regulations by actively taking part in discussions with their managers.

4.14 Co-operation and Care

To build and maintain a healthy and safe working environment co-operation between workers at all levels is essential. To achieve this all Employees must co-operate with the employer or their representative in accepting and implementing their duties under this policy.

Disciplinary action will be taken in accordance with employment law against any Employee who breaks safety rules or who fails to perform their duties in accordance with this policy.

The employer has a duty to take all reasonable steps to preserve and protect the health and safety of themselves, their Employees and all other people affected by the operations of the Company.

4.15 Electrical Equipment

The Company will ensure that all fixed and portable electrical equipment is regularly inspected for both safety and structural integrity.

The following timescales and actions will apply.

Fixed electrical equipment	
Timescale	Action
Initial installation	The cabling is certified by an electrician following installation
5 years	The cabling will be inspected by a qualified electrician
10 years	The cabling will be inspected by a qualified electrician
The inspection routine will follow the 5-yearly inspection rota until the equipment is deemed to be beyond its safe useful life expectancy.	

Portable electrical equipment	
Timescale	Action
0–24 months	The appliance is new and will be used until the next scheduled inspection
24 months	The appliance will be tested and inspected
48 months	The appliance will be tested and inspected
The inspection routine will follow the 24-month rota until the equipment is deemed to be beyond its safe useful life expectancy.	
Every 4 years	IT equipment and other items which are seldom moved and not subject to high wear and tear will be tested and inspected

Records of testing and examination will be kept for reference.

4.16 Emergency Planning

Emergency details for all worksites will be recorded as part of a point of work assessment; these details will be communicated to all Employees as part of the pre-work briefing.

In general terms the following information may be recorded:

- location name;
- grid reference/ what3words;
- designated meeting place;
- site location name;
- nearest access point;
- type of access;
- suitable helicopter landing area;
- location of nearest accident and emergency hospital with phone number;
- Company contact details.

Where aerial tree work operations are to be conducted, additional emergency planning information will also be recorded to include:

- designated rescuer;
- rescue plan.

All Employees will have access to vehicle pack emergency response cards containing procedures relating to:

- environmental incident;
- accidents;
- fire;
- medical emergencies.

Emergency response cards also contain a range of useful contact numbers for services such as gas, electricity and the environment.

4.17 Environmental Considerations

We recognise that day-to-day operations can impact both directly and indirectly on the environment. We aim to protect and improve the environment through good management and by adopting good practice wherever possible. We will work to integrate environmental considerations into our business decisions and adopt greener alternatives wherever possible, throughout our operations. We will actively strive to enhance our local environment, improve the health and well-being of our local community and reduce the negative impact that we have on our environment year on year.

The Company fully recognises that acting now to ensure that we minimise our carbon footprint will protect the environment and in addition, will contribute to future economic sustainability.

All tree work operations will conform to the following:

Environmental Policy
Wildlife and Ecology Policy

4.18 Fire

All premises owned, leased, rented or occupied by the Company for the purposes of business will comply with fire regulations. A fire risk assessment will be carried out on premises such as offices and workshops and, where identified through that process, adequate warning devices, fire extinguishers, fire exits, escape routes and fire drill procedures will be in place.

The fire risk assessment, fire procedures and evacuation plan will be prominently displayed in all premises. As part of a Company vehicle pack, information is provided to Employees on what to do in the event of discovering a fire and the action to take. Industry-specific guidance is also provided to Employees on how to organise temporary worksites to minimise the risk from fire, e.g. safe working distances applied between fuelling location and machinery starting point.

All works vehicles will be equipped with fire extinguishers and defective equipment will be replaced immediately. Checks will be made on all Company fire extinguishers to ensure they remain in good condition and fit for purpose.

The following process will apply:

Timescale	Action
Quarterly	Workplace inspection completed, recording that extinguishers have been checked for correct placement, condition and pressure
Annually	Annual competent person extinguisher checks

4.19 First Aid and First Aid Kits

Individuals should not put themselves in unnecessary danger to administer first aid.

As part of the on-site pre-work briefing, Employees will be informed as to the location of the first aid kit and emergency information. First aid equipment is in all vehicles, business premises and by extension on all worksites.

All operational Employees must have as a minimum an emergency first aid at work qualification.

All Employees active on Company worksites must carry a personal first aid kit. It should contain at least one or more haemostatic dressings, a tourniquet, a pair of plastic gloves and a Resusciate (or similar device).

All accidents or incidents requiring the use of first aid equipment must be recorded on the Company adverse event form.

This information allows the Company to ensure materials are restocked and helps to identify patterns or trends and to ensure legislative requirements are met.

Checks will be made on all Company first aid kits to ensure they remain in good condition and fit for use.

The following process will apply:

Timescale	Action
Quarterly	Recorded competent person checks to ensure first aid kits' contents and their location are correct
Ad-hoc	Recorded operational audits to confirm first aid kits are correctly worn/carried and contents remains fit for use

4.20 General Work Equipment

It will be the responsibility of the Employer to ensure that the Company:

- provides suitable equipment for the tasks to be done;
- ensures that equipment is maintained in an efficient state, in efficient working order and in good repair;
- ensures that all equipment and plant is inspected;
- ensures that persons who are required to use work equipment receive adequate training, information, instruction and supervision as necessary.

The Employer's duties will include an assessment of risks and the implementation of preventative measures, guards etc. It will be the responsibility of the users/operators to ensure tools are checked prior to use and are maintained in good working order. Procedures will be implemented to ensure that all plant and tools owned by the Company are tested in accordance with recommended intervals.

On occasion the Company may need to hire in equipment due to either the specialised nature of the work or the quantity of work. The equipment will only be obtained from approved hire companies who supply the appropriate safety documentation and, where necessary, supply training to ensure all Employees and/or sub-contractors are suitably trained in the use of the equipment.

4.21 Guidance and Information

All persons – Employees and sub-contractors – working on behalf of the Company, in whatever capacity, will be expected to abide by industry good practice, approved codes of practice, Health and Safety Executive guidelines and Company procedures.

All tree work operations will conform to the following:

Arboricultural and Forestry Advisory Group (AFAG) and Forest Industry Safety Accord Guides (FISA)
A copy of relevant guidance material is held in both Head Office and Company vehicle packs
Arboricultural Association publications
Industry Code of Practice for Arboriculture: Tree Work at Height
AA/HSE Guide to Good Climbing Practice
AA/HSE Guide to the Safe Use of MEWPs within Arboriculture
Health and Safety Executive guidance
Copies of these are held at Head Office

4.22 Health and Safety Review Procedures and Monitoring

The Company recognises the importance of health and safety inspection and auditing as a means of assessing the effective performance of the health and safety management system. The Health and Safety Policy, procedures and arrangements will be amended in response to changes to legislation, good practice or following an accident or incident investigation. The employer or their representative will carry out a full review of the health and safety management system and Health and Safety Policy annually.

Periodic worksite and workplace safety inspections will be coordinated by the Employer or their representative and the findings recorded. Findings will be communicated to all management levels and action points completed within a timeframe specified on the audit report.

The employer will ensure that periodic inspections of the Company’s offices and workshops are undertaken and recorded.

Sub-contractors will be subject to an annual regime of health and safety auditing coordinated by the employer.

The following process will apply:

Timescale	Action
Quarterly	Recorded competent person inspection of workplace, i.e. offices and workshop
Annually	Each Employee shall be subject to a minimum of 3 x recorded competent person health, safety and quality operational inspections

4.23 Insurance and Licences

The Company recognises both its moral and legal responsibilities to ensure – regardless of how staff resources are engaged (direct Employees, sub-contractors etc.), and the operational activities conducted – that adequate and appropriate insurance cover is in place.

The following insurance cover will be maintained by the Company:

Insurance Type	Indemnity Limit
Employer’s liability	£10,000,000
Public liability	£5,000,000

In addition to adequate and appropriate insurance, the Company also holds the following licences in direct relation to our operational activities:

Licence	Issued By
Waste Carriers	Environment Agency (EA)
Waste Transfer or Registered Exemptions	Environment Agency

4.24 Lifting Operations

The Company, in compliance with the Lifting Operations & Lifting Equipment Regulations (LOLER), will ensure that all lifting operations involving lifting equipment are properly planned by a competent person, appropriately supervised and carried out in a safe manner. Only those trained and competent in lifting operations will undertake such tasks.

Lifting Equipment for Lifting Persons

In the case of lifting equipment for lifting persons, items will be individually marked and thoroughly examined by a competent person every 6 months. Further to a thorough examination, interim inspections will be completed and recorded.

Other Lifting Equipment

All other lifting equipment will be individually marked and thoroughly examined by a competent person every 12 months.

4.25 Lone Working

As a Company we identify that lone working is less than desirable. However, in some circumstances it cannot be reasonably avoided.

As a Company we have been determined that 'lone working' refers to situations where Employees, during their duties, work alone. They may be physically isolated from colleagues and without access to immediate assistance. Operational examples may include stump grinding and surveying/quoting.

Where Company undertakings and tasks require Employees to work alone, both the individual employee and us as the Employer have a duty to assess and reduce the risks which lone working presents.

With the above in mind, we have developed a specific Lone Working Policy. This policy is designed to alert Employees to the risks presented by lone working, to identify the responsibilities each person has in this situation, and to describe procedures which will minimise such risks. All Employees will be made aware of this policy during employee induction.

The Company is aware of the recent changes in relation to arboricultural guidance on sites where individuals who are cutting need to be out of direct sight of other team members for any time. An agreed check-in time between chainsaw operator and designated contact will be established every 20 minutes in addition to regular radio or phone contact. If communications are lost, then chainsaw work must stop until communications or visual contact is restored. This will be included as a vital part of the Point of Work Assessment.

4.26 Manual Handling

The Company will assess all manual handling operations within the workplace, to take an ergonomic approach and where possible change the nature of any task or provide mechanical aids to reduce or lighten the manual handling of loads. The Company will ensure that adequate risk assessments are carried out to identify hazards associated with manual handling and will ensure that suitable training and supervision are given, and where needed, lifting aids are provided.

It will be the responsibility of the Employer to ensure that the requirements outlined in the regulations are satisfactorily met.

4.27 Mobile Elevated Work Platforms (MEWP)

MEWPs should be used where reasonably practicable, considering cost, availability and site accessibility. All MEWPs, whether owned or hired by the Company, must be 'fit for the purpose' as defined under current regulations.

Only Employees trained in the use and inspection of a machine and who are familiar with the machine and its safety features may use MEWPs. Attention must be paid to the stability of the machine, its limitations and emergency procedures.

All Employees must be correctly attached to the bucket using a 'work restraint system'. All Employees must wear appropriate head protection when working at height.

Aerial tree work from a MEWP will be undertaken in accordance with the principles of AA/HSE 'A Guide to the Safe Use of MEWPs in Arboriculture'.

4.28 Mobile Telephones

Mobile telephones are a necessary and important communication tool within the business. Where a mobile phone is seen as an essential item for individual Employees to fulfil their responsibilities, a phone will be supplied. Whilst it is appreciated that personal calls may need to be both made and received, this should not become the norm during hours of work and should generally be limited to break and lunch times. Exceptions to this would include emergency situations.

Driving and Mobile Phones

It is currently illegal to hold and use a mobile phone whilst driving, even while stationary in traffic. It is also illegal to be using a mobile phone on hands-free where it affects your care or attention when driving. The general policy therefore is that mobile phones should not be used whilst driving and all those issued with a mobile phone are not obliged to use them whilst driving.

- If a call is received it must only be via a hands-free kit.
- The driver should find a safe place to stop the vehicle to make or receive a call.
- Attempt to keep any call as short as possible.
- Calls may be answered only when the driver feels the traffic and road conditions make it safe to do so.
- Under no circumstances may text or multimedia messages be read or written when driving.

Any driver found to be using a mobile phone without a hands-free kit whilst driving will be subject to disciplinary procedures.

4.29 Noise

The Company is committed to continually assessing noise levels within the context of our operational activities. Where needed, noise assessments will be carried out. If the noise levels exceed action levels the first aim will be to reduce noise at source. Where the plant, machinery or process cannot be reasonably silenced or enclosed, the Company will ensure that suitable ear protection is freely available. It is the Company policy to ensure that all new tools and equipment purchased and used by Employees have noise reduction built into the design.

An asset register showing noise outputs of chainsaws, hedge trimmers, pole pruners and other noise-generating hand-held equipment and machinery will be maintained.

All PPE and equipment will be maintained to ensure that noise levels are kept as low as possible. All new or replacement equipment purchased will be selected for low noise outputs to further reduce the risk.

Annual in-house assessments/screening of all operatives will be implemented.

The following process will apply:

Timescale	Action
Annually	Employees are requested to complete hearing tests and complete a medical declaration

4.30 Personal Hygiene

The nature of the Company's operation requires Employees to work in potentially dirty and dusty conditions on short-duration worksites which expose them to substances potentially harmful to health.

Where normal hand-washing facilities are not available, alternative facilities will be made available such as waterless skin cleanser, hand wipes or similar.

4.31 Personal Protective Equipment (PPE)

The Company recognises that the regulations clearly state PPE should only be used when risks cannot be avoided or sufficiently reduced by other preventive measures or through work re-organisation.

The Employer will ensure that there is sufficient supply of PPE when required and will ensure all Employees are suitably trained in the use and correct storage of PPE.

PPE issued to any Employee will be appropriately recorded, detailing what has been provided along with when it was issued. Employees will be asked to sign this record to confirm receipt of items.

All PPE issued is to be stored as per the manufacturer's specification.

It is the duty of each employee not to misuse or interfere with any health and safety equipment, including PPE, supplied for their safety.

The following process will apply regarding the inspection and recording of PPE checks:

Timescale	Action
Daily	Visual check by Employees to ensure PPE is serviceable and fit for use in accordance with both manufacturer's guidance and industry good practice
Quarterly	Recorded competent person checks to ensure PPE is fit for use
Ad-hoc	Recorded operational audits to confirm PPE is correctly worn/used and remains fit for use

Self-Purchasing Policy

In all cases where self-purchase of PPE takes place, the following guidance must be adhered to:

- a) Only equipment approved by us may be purchased for use on/at our worksites in accordance with the purchasing policy below.
- b) Operators are responsible for ensuring that they supply, where relevant, user instructions and maintenance equipment required.
- c) In all cases operators have primary responsibility for ensuring their equipment is maintained and safe for use. We reserve the right to quarantine or remove from a worksite any equipment deemed to compromise safety standards.

Purchasing Policy

PPE products are to be purchased only if they are supplied with appropriate evidence of conformity, are fit for purpose and are manufactured to, where applicable, BS EN standards.

4.32 Personnel Records

Planning can help our Company to remain competitive and provide a good service to our customers. Planning will depend on having accurate, up-to-date information. Personnel records are particularly important when it comes to getting the best out of our Employees.

Effective recruitment, training and staff development play a key part in achieving organisational goals.

Maintaining up-to-date records, compliant with data protection legislation, can help us as a Company:

- make decisions based on fact rather than guesswork;
- know what staff resources are available to meet service requirements;
- more accurately assess levels of performance and productivity;
- know what is happening with absence levels, employee turnover, sickness, accidents, lateness, discipline etc., and take appropriate and timely action.

Employees are made aware that the following information may be held on file relating to personnel issues, information which as an employee you have unrestricted access to:

- employment records and history;
- induction training/Health, Safety, Environmental, Quality (HSEQ) awareness training;
- certificates of competence/licence to practice;
- copy of driving licence;
- copy of passport;
- first aid training;
- fire-fighting training;
- PPE records;
- signing, lighting and guarding training;
- CV and continuing professional development (CPD) log;
- wildlife/protected species awareness training.

4.33 Protection of Young Persons

Definitions of young people and children by age:

- a young person is anyone under 18;
- a child is anyone who has yet to reach the official minimum school leaving age.

The Company will ensure that young persons (under 18 years of age) employed by it are protected at work from any risks to their health and safety which are a consequence of their lack of experience, or the fact that young people have not yet fully matured and may not comprehend some hazards in the workplace.

In addition, the Company fully recognises its responsibility to ensure that young people employed are not exposed to risk due to their lack of experience, being unaware of existing or potential risks due to lack of maturity or training.

During the induction process, the Company will complete a full induction record and checklist for the designated young person. This process will facilitate the identification of any potential risks to which the young person may be exposed during the course of their duties. These risks will then be appropriately addressed through the risk assessment process, documenting relevant controls, role and responsibilities.

Examples of the areas to be considered:

- the layout of the workplace;
- the physical, biological and chemical agents they will be exposed to;
- how they will handle work equipment;
- how the work and processes are organised;
- manual handling and lifting;
- risks from particular agents, processes and work;
- the extent of health and safety training needed;
- additional supervision and mentoring required.

4.34 Risk Assessments and Method Statements

All work activities will undergo a suitable and sufficient risk assessment. Upon the establishment of the risk, preventative measures will be identified which will then be introduced, maintained and periodically revised within our safe systems of work. It will be the duty of the employer to ensure risk assessments are carried out and reviewed periodically.

Company common-factor risk assessments are reviewed:

1. Annually.
2. Following any change to work equipment.
3. Following change or modification to a system of work.
4. In light of industry or sector developments, information or guidance.

A point of work assessment incorporating a risk assessment and emergency procedures must be completed before any work activity commences; common-factor risk assessment references must be included.

Method Statements

Where the risk assessment process has identified that certain hazards cannot be eliminated, and risk factors remain during the task, a safe system of work will be determined that all Employees are expected to observe and follow. A method statement may be utilised to formally define and record the system of work.

Principal considerations for information to be contained within a method statement will include:

- a sequence of procedures necessary for the safe carrying out of a task;
- the control measures that are being or have been introduced to ensure the safety of anyone who is affected by the task or process;

- provision for emergencies;
- health and safety management;
- noise monitoring;
- start and finish times;
- machinery to be utilised;
- changing the planned methodology and adding new tasks;
- method of authorising start of work;
- personal protective equipment (PPE);
- Control of Substances Hazardous to Health;
- resources;
- site layout;
- communication and contact details;
- emergency arrangements;
- welfare;
- public interface arrangements;
- environmental arrangements;
- briefing arrangements.

All parties affected by any work activity must sign the risk assessment, and where applicable the method statement, to confirm that they have read and understood it and have been briefed on relevant emergency procedures.

4.35 Services

Overhead Lines

Before any work commences, sites must be checked for all overhead lines. Where overhead lines have been identified, they should be recorded as part of the risk assessment and all Employees made aware of their location along with the control measures to avoid damage to the lines and danger to the Employees on site.

Over Head Power Lines (OHPL)

Where work is necessary in proximity to OHPLs, the method of work will be agreed with the Distribution Network Operator (DNO) and if required work permits received before any work commences.

Employees must be aware that safe working distances from OHPLs may vary depending upon the nature of work being undertaken and specific industry good practice. If Employees are in any doubt at all whether work can commence in proximity to OHPLs, they must stop work and make immediate contact with their supervisor.

Please note that no aerial tree work operation must take place within 10m of an OHPL, nor tree felling operations within two (2) times tree length, without first ensuring the control measures as identified through a risk assessment process have been implemented.

Underground Services

Manholes, chambers and underground pipes and cables can be damaged during operations, e.g. by felling trees, MEWP stabilisers, stumpgrinding, trenching and tree planting. The site must be thoroughly checked for any underground services and adequate control measures put in place.

Employees must inform the employer if they suspect underground services are present that would be damaged by the proposed operations, or the work cannot be carried out without the risk of harm to operators, or others affected by the work activity.

In the case of cables and pipelines it may be necessary to use a cable avoidance tool (CAT) and signal generator (Genny) to accurately locate these services.

Only those trained in the use of CAT and Genny are permitted to operate them.

4.36 Smoking

The Company operates a no smoking policy in all offices, workshops and vehicles. Smokers are required by law to refrain from smoking wherever non-smokers may be affected and within any enclosed spaces.

Smoking is strictly prohibited in all vehicles and appropriate signage will be clearly displayed within all vehicles and at the entrances to and within Company offices and workshops.

4.37 Stress

As a Company we recognise that, whilst a degree of pressure can be a positive force at work, excessive pressure can have a negative effect on health and performance at work.

We are committed to promoting good health at work and to providing suitable support mechanisms for Employees suffering from the effects of stress.

Senior management will identify stressful jobs and situations, through risk assessment, with the objective of reducing harm from stress, as far as is reasonably practicable.

The Company will make sure, so far as is reasonably practicable, that excessive pressure is eliminated from the work environment, and that the necessary risk assessments are completed and acted upon in the case of workplace stressors.

To assist in this process, we will:

- provide suitable support mechanisms for individuals suffering from the effects of stress;
- encourage a working environment where individuals who feel they are suffering from the effects of stress can approach their managers in confidence, in order that necessary support mechanisms can be put in place;
- encourage a culture where stress is not seen as a sign of weakness or incompetence;
- ensure adequate rehabilitation of individuals returning to work after periods of absence due to stress;
- offer suitable training to enable key individuals to recognise symptoms of stress, the effects of stress at work, effective communication, handling difficult situations, time management and employer/employee relations;

4.38 Vehicles and Driving

Drivers are responsible for completing pre-use checks and for the safe use of any vehicle they are driving, including the safety of loads carried or trailed. This includes their own vehicles, Company vehicles and hired vehicles.

Company Vehicles

Only authorised staff may drive Company vehicles and they must have an appropriate licence for the category and class of vehicle and combination under their control. A copy of their licence will be held at Head Office before they may drive a Company vehicle. If any changes to the licence occur, a new copy of the licence must be submitted to Head Office as soon as possible.

The following process will apply regarding driving licences:

Timescale	Action
Annually	Employees will be requested to complete a driving licence declaration, including consent for the employer to confirm driving licence details online

The employer must be informed of any driving offences resulting in penalty points being added to your licence as soon as possible. Failure to do so may result in disciplinary action.

Loading Vehicles

The driver is responsible for the safety of the load they are carrying.

All drivers must ensure they are aware of the vehicle's 'maximum authorised mass' (MAM = gross vehicle weight) and ensure that it is not exceeded at any time. Attention must be paid to the combination of vehicle and trailer weights when both or either are loaded.

All loads must be secured and at no time cause a nuisance to other road users or pedestrians. Loose loads liable to shed dust must be sheeted or netted down. Load (ratchet) straps and/or appropriately rated rope may be used to secure loads. Loads must be secured to restrain them in the event of sudden braking.

Private Vehicles

Where private vehicles are used for Company business or for travelling to and from work, adequate insurance cover must be in place, which covers business use if appropriate. Where vehicles are used for business purposes a copy of the insurance certificate will be required. The vehicle must be in a roadworthy condition and, where appropriate, have a valid MOT certificate and vehicle excise duty.

4.39 Vibration

To control the risks associated with noise and vibration in the workplace and to comply with the associated regulations the following arrangements will be implemented.

An asset register showing the vibration outputs of chainsaws, hedge trimmers, pole pruners and other vibrating hand-held equipment and machinery will be maintained.

Employees will be provided with information about vibration risks. A clear indication will be provided to operatives of the maximum daily 'trigger time' for each piece of machinery.

Staff rotation will be implemented if maximum trigger times are reached in order that these will not be exceeded. PPE and equipment will be maintained to ensure that vibration levels are kept as low as possible.

All new or replacement equipment purchased will be selected for low vibration outputs to further reduce the risk.

Annual in-house assessments/screening of all operatives will be implemented.

The following process will apply:

Timescale	Action
Annually	Employees are requested to complete a vibration screening questionnaire and medical declaration

4.40 Welfare

Offices and workshops will have suitable welfare facilities including toilets, wash facilities and an area to take breaks and lunch.

For short-duration work on site, local arrangements will be made, and these arrangements will be recorded and communicated as part of the point of work assessment.

For longer duration sites, facilities will be provided on site or arrangements will be made to share the facilities of the main contractor if applicable.

4.41 Working at Height

This section is based on the Arboricultural Association's *Industry Code of Practice – Tree Work at Height*.

Careful and detailed consideration will be given to the need to work at height. Where reasonably practicable, work at height should be avoided, and where it cannot be avoided justifiable evidence should be available to support that decision.

We will ensure that our general management approach to work at height is based upon objective decisions which are documented, and that specific arrangements (i.e. risk assessments for work at height) are in place for assessing and managing the risks on each occasion, across the broad range of worksites likely to be encountered.

The responsible person will ensure all work is: a) properly planned; b) appropriately supervised; and c) carried out in a safe manner.

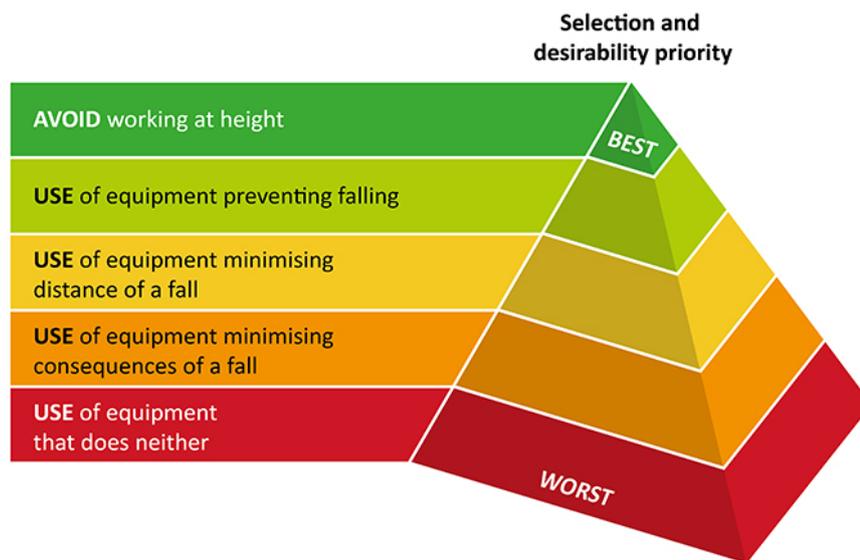
Planning will include the correct selection and use of equipment; the undertaking and effective communication of thorough and detailed risk assessments; and appropriate emergency procedures, including rescue provision.

Planning of any work at height operation will also include avoiding weather conditions that may jeopardise the health and safety of operatives.

It will be ensured that there are sufficient and robust systems in place to ensure that any changes are communicated to and supported by the responsible/competent person before work starts, or a suitable system of delegation of responsibility is in place.

It will be ensured that all tasks, from planning to implementation, will be undertaken by appropriately competent persons or others supervised by such persons.

We seek to work to a framework for the management of risks associated with working at height. The fundamental principles or risk hierarchy are:



When the most appropriate equipment, techniques or methods of working are being selected, the basic principles outlined within the 'Tree work at height – risk hierarchy' diagram above will be implemented.

When working through the hierarchy, the competent and/or responsible person will select any work method and/or equipment by considering the risks associated with its installation, use and/or removal once work is finished, including any rescue requirements for such a method and/or equipment.

It will also be ensured that for any work method chosen collective protection measures will have priority over personal measures.

Whilst working through the hierarchy, the responsible and/or competent person will determine the risks and reasonably practicable control measures associated with each level and justify why a work technique or method that sits higher in the hierarchy has not been selected.

Decisions on working at height methods will be based on the preliminary worksite assessment. A process undertaken by the responsible and/or competent person that considers the following key points will help determine whether methods or techniques are reasonably practicable:

- a. site constraints, parameters and surrounding use;
- b. legislative constraints;
- c. the ergonomic constraints associated with the method of work, including operator efficiency and task duration;
- d. the type and effectiveness of rescue provision;
- e. the impact on other site users;
- f. how to meet the arboricultural aims and objectives without causing significant harm to trees and the environment;
- g. the duration of exposure to site-specific risks;
- h. the duration of exposure to ergonomic-specific risks;
- i. the duration of exposure to weather-specific risks;
- j. equipment specification and availability;
- k. the risks associated with installation and removal of equipment;
- l. the costs and time associated with appropriate work methods and equipment.

The method of work at height (when applicable) is to be carried out in accordance with our Company work instructions/client quotations. Each document provided as part of a work pack will state the method by which tree work is to be completed, underpinned by a work at height assessment carried out by a competent person.

Regardless of an employee's position within the Company, every opportunity exists for those implementing any defined system of work at height to review the decision and where appropriate to make changes to it.

4.42 Worksafe

Working safely requires the establishment of safe systems of work, delivered by a competent workforce demonstrating the correct safety behaviours.

Our Employees or anyone working on our behalf, is not expected to carry out any task where the risk to themselves or any other person is unacceptable.

Under our Worksafe or Refusal to Work Policy, each Employee has the absolute right to refuse to carry out work if they feel it is not safe to do so.

Refusal to work on the grounds of health and safety is free from any disciplinary action and will not affect, in any way, an individual's prospects within the Company.

All refusals to work will be responded to positively and promptly and the employee raising the Worksafe procedure will be informed of decisions throughout the process.

All managers and staff are also encouraged to report any unsafe acts or conditions, which they have witnessed.

4.43 Workplace Safety

The Company will ensure that its workplace meets the health, safety and welfare needs of all its Employees, visitors, contractors, including wherever practicable people with disabilities. The employer will ensure that the working environment, whether at the Company premises or elsewhere, is adequate in respect of lighting, heating, ventilation, eating and drinking facilities, hygiene/toilet facilities and general cleanliness.

4.44 Work Equipment

The term 'equipment' will cover all tools, plant, vehicles and machinery used during Company business.

Equipment will only be used for the purpose it was designed for in accordance with the manufacturer's instructions. All guards must remain in place and be functioning correctly. No modifications will be carried out unless under the instructions of the manufacturer. Essential details and warning signs will be in place always.

Equipment will be checked, inspected, maintained and serviced in accordance with the manufacturers' instructions and the provisions of PUWER and LOLER. A register of all equipment kept will be maintained showing details of history, servicing and repair. All equipment will be clearly marked to be identifiable.

Pre-use checks will be carried out by Employees prior to using the equipment. Periodic maintenance checks will be carried out and recorded.

It is the responsibility of the Employee using any equipment to report any defects in the equipment as soon as they become apparent.

Arrangements will be put in place by the Employer to repair or withdraw the equipment. Withdrawn or faulty equipment will be clearly marked as such and will not be used until repaired, or the withdrawn equipment will be disposed of.

Rules in relation to plant and equipment:

- Employees will not operate any machine unless they have been trained and authorised to do so.
- Operators must not interfere with or remove guarding on any piece of equipment.
- Any faults, damage, defects or malfunctions must be reported to the employer as soon as they are discovered.
- Operators must not attempt any maintenance on any machine unless they are trained and authorised to do so.
- Cleaning or maintenance must not be undertaken unless the machine has been shut down and where applicable the power isolated. On self-powered equipment the key must be removed.
- Machinery must not be left unattended whilst it is in motion.