

Bridgnorth and District Rights of Way Association

Guidance for Members

The work we carry out on paths and bridleways is a relatively safe activity. However, there are a number of risks that can affect your enjoyment and may be hazardous to yourself and others.

Please prepare for each working group:

- Wear appropriate clothing footwear. Depending on the forecast, carry warm and water-proof clothing.
- Bring drink (and food) for longer working groups.
- In summer, bring a sun hat and sun cream. Bring extra liquids to help avoid heat stroke.
- You may not bring dogs to working groups for their safety.

On the day of the working group:

- Be aware of traffic, at the meeting point and when working close to highways. We provide high visibility jackets for use when appropriate.
- Do NOT use any power tools unless you have been trained to use them. People who have not taken the approved courses are not covered by our insurance.
- Power tools are dangerous. In particular, brush cutters (strimmers) can throw stones and other objects a considerable distance with sufficient force to cause injury, such as damaging an eye. You must:
 - Keep at least **15m** away from anyone operating a brush cutter. Keep well back and clear any cuttings only when they have moved well ahead.
 - Wear eye protection when working near an operating brush cutter.
 - Remember that power tool operators usually use ear defenders and will not be able to hear you easily.
- Hedge cutters and sharp hand tools can easily cause injury. Keep clear of people using them and work with those that you are using with care.
- Be careful when handling branches and other cuttings. Don't swing them around or release uncut branches suddenly. They can easily hit the other people, possibly in their eye. We recommend that you wear eye protection whenever you are cutting and clearing branches and whenever you are close to people doing so.
- Trips and falls can cause injury – take care of your footing at all times.
- On construction working groups, do not lift anything heavy unless you have been trained to do so. Someone on the group will often be able to provide guidance.
- Be aware that the risk of Lyme's disease, caught from ticks, is spreading across the UK. Wearing trousers, rather than shorts, reduces the risk. If you find a tick then it should be removed with a tick remover, not with your hands.
- If you think the working group leader should be aware of any medical condition or any medication you carry then have a private chat with them before work starts.

Insurance cover

Shropshire Council provides insurance for our work. The Association, its officers and working group leaders are insured and you can claim for any incident arising due to their negligence. In addition, personal accident insurance is usually provided, so that you have some cover for injuries that are your own (or others) fault. You will be informed if personal accident insurance is not in force, which may occur when a policy is being renegotiated.