

SCPC	RISK ASSESSMENT	HIMALAYAN BALSAM CLEARANCE.
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Assessment date		Review date	
Work Area	Banks of the River Taw that run from New Inn Bridge to Frankland Bridge Honeychurch.		

**Brief description of Assessment: Himalayan Balsam Removal.**

Regular annual volunteer task for Himalayan balsam removal by hand. Requires some hand tools such as slashers, loppers and saws to gain access to the river bank and areas of balsam. By removing the invasive non-native species, we are helping to reduce the spread and domination of this fast-growing shallow rooted plant creating space to encourage the regeneration of native riparian aquatics along the river which will in turn stabilise the banks and encouraging greater diversity. Hand pulling is the environmentally sensitive management method due to site conditions and sensitivity of river system; chemical treatment is avoided.



<b>Assessors</b>		<b>Emergency Contact number</b>	
<p>Additional notes. COVID GUIDANCE CURRENT AT THE TIME WILL ALSO BE OBSERVED.</p> <p>Permission to access the lands adjacent to the river has been obtained from Land owners.</p> <p>Environment Agency have been notified of the event</p>			
<b>Assessment of risks.</b>			
<b>Persons that could be affected</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Volunteers</li> <li>• Members of the public</li> </ul>		
<b>Hazard</b>	<b>Existing control measures</b>	<b>Risk Rating</b>	<b>Action to reduce/control risk</b>
Slips, Trips and Falls	<p>There may be uneven ground. Work area along the river bank can become very muddy and slippery once balsam has started to be removed. Site briefing to warn participants of such hazards and remind safe storage of tools, equipment and materials to avoid trip hazards.</p> <p>Volunteers to be wearing suitable sturdy boots.</p>	<p>4 MEDIUM</p>	<p>During the task TASK LEADER will managing any developing issues and keep the work area clear and tidy.</p>

Plant and Fungi allergies and stings	<p>All participants will be wearing PPE gloves to protect from plants when handling cut grass material.</p> <p>Advise participants in advance to wear long sleeved tops and long trousers to reduce nettle stings and grass rashes and cuts.</p> <p>Hay fever sufferers to carry antihistamine medication.</p>	2 LOW	During the task TASK LEADER will managing any developing issues and reminding participants to wear gloves.
Insect sting/bites Ticks and associated Lyme disease	<p>Leader to check for known allergies at beginning of task.</p> <p>Warn participants of potential insects and stings and bites, move away from stinging insects slowly.</p> <p>Advise participants to wear long sleeves and trousers, tucking trousers into socks to cover all exposed skin.</p> <p>Advise participants to avoid using beauty products with strong perfumes prior to task to minimize attraction.</p> <p>Carry insect repellent to reduce attraction potential bites/stings</p> <p>First aid sting relief available</p> <p>Advise all participants to check at the end of the day for any bites, stings and unwanted visitors on their skin</p>	2 LOW	<p>TASK LEADER responsible for reminding participants to check for ticks at the end of the session and on arrival home. Refer Volunteers to online guidance on safe removal of ticks</p> <p><a href="https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/lymedisease/">https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/lymedisease/</a></p>
Heat Exhaustion	<p>Volunteers are advised to wear sturdy footwear and suitable clothing and sun hat.</p> <p>In periods of hot weather, taking plenty of drinking water and applying sun cream is essential.</p>	2 LOW	<p>TASK LEADER responsible for reminding participants to drink water and apply sun cream in hot weather.</p> <p>TASK LEADER responsible for checking the weather conditions prior to and during the task to make the decision to cancel or finished the session early</p>

Hypothermia	In the event of heavy rain during a task, the task will be finished early. In extreme weathers- heat, cold, storms task is avoided. Any participant failing in water, who will be sent home to get changed and dry.	2 LOW	TASK LEADER responsible for checking the weather conditions prior to and during the task to make the decision to cancel or finished the session early. Task can only take place in low river water levels
Cuts, lacerations and abrasions	All participants will be wearing PPE gloves when using and sharpening tools. Check all tool heads are secure and share and handles are free from splinters and cracks prior to use. Eye protection provided if required	2 LOW	TASK LEADER responsible for removing any damaged tools from the work area as they arise. TASK LEADER to ensure participants are not working too close together. TASK LEADER will carry First aid kit and report any incident.
Dangers from vegetation	Advise participants to wear long sleeves/trousers to minimize cuts and scratches from vegetation. First Aid Kit to be carried and notify participants of location at pre-task briefing.	2 LOW	

Muscular – skeletal injuries	<p>Briefing to include safe use of tools briefing to include standard kinetic approach to manual handling (feet comfortably apart, bend at the knee, keeping back “naturally” straight, avoid stooping/twisting/turning while carrying, keeping head up and a “relaxed” grip. Advise anyone with back pain to stop immediately. Work posture should avoid stooping, bending from knees if required. Rotate tasks so that individuals are not repeatedly bending to remove low vegetation or over reaching/straining with repetitive tool use. Suitable footwear is required- no open toes, preferably a flat with robust sole and ankle support.</p> <p>Work site to be kept clear of debris and access routes maintained.</p> <p>Working in teams to help clear the balsam, remind participants to reduce their loads on pitch forks and tubs.</p>	2 LOW	<p>TASK LEADER responsible for reminding participants to use the correct lifting/tool techniques and to take regular breaks and swapping tool tasks to reduce likelihood of injury. During the task TASK LEADER will managing any developing issues and keep the work area clear and tidy. Kneeling pads provided if required</p> <p>Attention should be given to correct footing to avoid slips/trips/falls</p>
Water hazards	<p>Pre task brief including Weils and blue/green algae advice.</p> <p>. Work team consists of 2 or more persons on bankside.</p> <p>Steep banks and deep, fast flowing waters avoided</p>	3 LOW	

<p>Biological toxins/pathogens (Weils disease)</p>	<p>Pre-task briefing to include advise on Weils disease/Leptospirosis &amp; Blue/green Algae          No eating or drinking is permitted during the task except for scheduled breaks          Anti-bacterial hand gel to be used prior to eating, drinking or smoking.          Volunteer Co-ordinator to observe injuries and any new cuts or scratches are covered by waterproof dressings and gloves</p>	<p>2 LOW</p>	<p>Medical advice on Weils disease  <a href="https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/leptospirosis/">https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/leptospirosis/</a>          This is only for lakes and still bodies of water right?            Blue-green Algae (cyanobacteria) advice    <a href="http://www.nhshighland.scot.nhs.uk/Publications/Documents/Leaflets/Health%20Protection%20Leaflets/Blue%20Green%20Algae%202018.pdf">www.nhshighland.scot.nhs.uk/Publications/Documents/Leaflets/Health%20Protection%20Leaflets/Blue%20Green%20Algae%202018.pdf</a></p>
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**RISK ASSESSMENT BRIEFING GIVEN BY:**

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