

Midhurst Green Volunteers

Power tool safe handling/training notes

The MGV power tools are all Stihl battery powered. They include a mower, two hedge trimmers, a strimmer, a cut off saw and a leaf blower.

Although battery powered the tools can still cause injury and the following guidelines should be followed. They are divided into generic and tool-specific.

Generic:

- Do not use a power tool if you have not received training
- Before use undertake a visible inspection for obvious problems, such as cracked casings or loose handles
- Always lock a machine when not in use
- Always remove the battery after use
- If a machine doesn't work do not try and fix it yourself
- Wear appropriate clothing when using power tools

Specific:

Mower

- The mower is heavy and awkward to lift. Ask for help if necessary
- You must wear stout shoes or boots. You must not be barefoot, in flip-flops or sandals
- Ensure the handle is extended and locked in place
- Check that the cutting blade is secure
- Set the cutting height. Do not use the mower on long grass as it will overload it
- Only then insert the battery
- To start press the button on the handle and pull the black lever towards you. This is a dead man's handle and the mower will stop when it is released
- After use brush off any grass cuttings from the body

Hedge-trimmer

- Check that the cutting blades look straight and that they are no obvious items jammed in them
- Do not wear loose clothing such as scarves that might get caught in the blades
- Insert the battery
- Liberally lubricate the blades with WD40
- Unlock the trimmer by moving the switch on the handle
- To start pull the lever switch on the guard/loop handle and press the trigger
- The speed of the blades depends on how much you press the trigger
- Release the lever switch or trigger to stop the machine
- Lock the trimmer by moving the switch on the handle
- Always use the trimmer with two hands
- Only use the trimmer when you are standing on level or solid ground
- Be aware of people around you and do not swing the trimmer around, even when not running
- After use give the blades another lubrication with WD40

Strimmer

- Check that there is cutting line and the cutting head moves freely
- Ensure that the deflector guard is securely fitted
- Insert the battery
- Always use the shoulder harness
- You must wear stout shoes or boots. You must not be barefoot, in flip-flops or sandals
- Unlock the strimmer by moving the switch on the handle
- To start press and hold the trigger lockout under the handle and press the trigger on the top of the handle
- The speed of the cutter head depends on how much you press the trigger
- Release the lever switch or trigger to stop the machine
- Lock the trimmer by moving the switch on the handle
- Always use the trimmer with two hands
- Only use the strimmer when you are standing on level or solid ground
- Be aware of people around you and do not swing the strimmer around, even when not running

Cut off saw (also known as the edger)

- Check that the blade turns freely and is not damaged
- Insert the battery
- You must wear stout shoes or boots. You must not be barefoot, in flip-flops or sandals
- Unlock the edger by moving the switch
- To start press and hold the trigger lockout on the side of the handle and press the trigger on the bottom of the handle
- Release the lever switch or trigger to stop the machine
- Unlike the other machines the blade will spin on for a while due to its momentum
- Lock the edger by moving the switch on the handle
- Always use the edger with two hands. This is essential to avoid injury in the case of kick-back. It also prevents overload on the machine if you are relying on its weight to cut
- Only use the edger when you are standing on level or solid ground
- Be aware of people around you and do not swing the edger around, even when not running

Blower

- Check that the blower tube is not blocked
- Insert the battery
- To start grip the handle and push the release slide at the front of the handle. You can then pull the trigger on the underside of the handle
- The speed of the blower depends on how much you press the trigger
- Release the trigger to stop the machine
- The blower is designed to be used one handed

Personal Protective Equipment

All volunteers are required to use their own gloves and will always be provided with Hi-viz bibs and, in some cases, jackets. In the MGV van there are at least two pairs of goggles and two sets of ear defenders which are available for all and any volunteers to use if they wish. In the case of two volunteers using trimmers quite near to each other it is strongly suggested that each wears a pair of "wrap round" eye protectors (goggles). Regarding footwear please see the Volunteer Summary notes.