

CLIMBING OPERATIONS AND SECTIONAL DISMANTLING

ACTIVITY RAMS — ADAPT TO SITE BEFORE USE

Rope-and-harness climbing, and taking trees down in pieces over what must not be hit

KD-RAMS-AB-002 Rev A0

Statutory basis: HSWA 1974 s.2(2)(a) and MHSWR 1999 regs 3 and 5 — this document is the recorded safe system of work. PUWER 1998 governs the chainsaws, chippers and stump grinders: reg 4 suitability, reg 5 maintenance, regs 8 and 9 information and training — chainsaw operators hold current certificates of competence for the operations they carry out, and a chainsaw is never operated by, or within reach of, anyone untrained. The Work at Height Regulations 2005 govern climbing operations and LOLER 1998 the climbing and rigging equipment, thoroughly examined at the statutory intervals and inspected before each use. Noise and vibration are assessed under the Control of Noise at Work Regulations 2005 and the Control of Vibration at Work Regulations 2005 — tree gangs run chronic doses of both — and the Manual Handling Operations Regulations 1992 govern the timber the trade moves by hand. Felling and works to protected trees observe TPO and conservation-area consents as a condition of the work. Prepared against legislation current at 10/08/2026.

1 DOCUMENT AND PROJECT IDENTIFICATION

RAMS REFERENCE	PROJECT / SITE REF	SITE NAME AND ADDRESS	DATE PREPARED	NEXT REVIEW DATE
CLIENT / PRINCIPAL CONTRACTOR	PLANNED START	DURATION	OPERATIVES	SUPERVISING THE WORK

2 SCOPE OF WORKS

Tree climbing on rope and harness for pruning and sectional dismantling — rigging, lowering and controlled dismantling of trees that cannot be felled whole because of buildings, services or the public below.

This document does not cover: works requiring a crane (engineered lift plan and the KD-RAMS-PL series), and any climbing on storm-damaged stems assessed as unsafe to climb. Aerial rescue is not an exclusion — it is planned, crewed and rigged for every climb, per the controls below.

SITE-SPECIFIC SCOPE, LOCATIONS AND LIMITATIONS

3 RISK ASSESSMENT — SCORE EACH RISK FOR THIS SITE, THEN ADD WHAT IS MISSING

The hazards and controls below are the starting point for this activity, written by a working main contractor. They are not complete for your site until a competent person has scored each risk, added the site-specific hazards, and struck out anything that does not apply. Rate risks High / Medium / Low before and after controls.

1. Chainsaw contact — the cut that does not stop at clothing

At risk: Operators, anyone in reach

Controls: Operators hold current chainsaw competence certificates for the operation in hand; full chainsaw PPE — protective trousers, boots, gloves, helmet with visor and ear defence; two-handed grip, chain brake used, no cutting above shoulder height from the ground; a proven safe distance — at least two tree lengths for felling, two metres of exclusion around any running ground saw; saws maintained sharp with the chain tension and brake checked daily; every operator carries a large-wound (trauma) dressing on the person; a forestry (+F) trained first aider in the gang whenever saws run, with the emergency evacuation plan — including a location fix for remote sites — agreed before the first cut.

INITIAL (H/M/L)	RESIDUAL (H/M/L)	SITE-SPECIFIC ADDITIONAL CONTROLS, OR N/A	ACTION OWNER	BY WHEN

2. Falling and swinging timber — the branch, the hinge that fails, the barber-chair

At risk: Operators, groundworkers, public

Controls: A felling plan per tree — species, lean, decay, wind and escape routes assessed before the first cut; drop and exclusion zones enforced at two tree lengths with a banksman where sightlines fail; hung-up trees never left, never climbed, and brought down by winch or machine — not by cutting the supporting stem blind; no one works beneath a climber.

INITIAL (H/M/L)	RESIDUAL (H/M/L)	SITE-SPECIFIC ADDITIONAL CONTROLS, OR N/A	ACTION OWNER	BY WHEN

3. Work at height from steps, podiums, towers or MEWPs

At risk: Operatives, and anyone below

Controls: Select access by the Work at Height hierarchy — podium or tower before steps; MEWPs by trained (IPAF) operators only. Inspect access equipment before use, establish an exclusion below overhead work, and secure tools and materials against dropping.

INITIAL (H/M/L)	RESIDUAL (H/M/L)	SITE-SPECIFIC ADDITIONAL CONTROLS, OR N/A	ACTION OWNER	BY WHEN

4. Hand-arm vibration from power tools

At risk: Operatives

Controls: Select low-vibration tools, keep cutting edges sharp, rotate operatives to keep exposure below the action value, and record trigger time where the assessment requires it.

INITIAL (H/M/L)	RESIDUAL (H/M/L)	SITE-SPECIFIC ADDITIONAL CONTROLS, OR N/A	ACTION OWNER	BY WHEN

5. Noise from cutting, fixing and plant

At risk: Operatives, others in the area

Controls: Select quieter methods and tools where practicable; hearing protection in designated zones and for noisy operations; agree noisy-works windows with the occupier in occupied buildings.

INITIAL (H/M/L)	RESIDUAL (H/M/L)	SITE-SPECIFIC ADDITIONAL CONTROLS, OR N/A	ACTION OWNER	BY WHEN

6. Climber falls — anchor, rope or judgement failing at height

At risk: Climbers

Controls: Two-rope working as the default per the Work at Height Regulations hierarchy; anchors selected and assessed by the climber and backed up as the system requires; climbing kit LOLER-examined at the statutory interval and inspected before every climb; climbers hold current climbing and aerial-cutting certificates; a second competent climber on site, rescue-capable, whenever anyone is aloft — with the rescue kit rigged and the plan rehearsed.

INITIAL (H/M/L)	RESIDUAL (H/M/L)	SITE-SPECIFIC ADDITIONAL CONTROLS, OR N/A	ACTION OWNER	BY WHEN

7. Rigged sections — shock-loading the tree, the rigging or the climber

At risk: Climbers, groundworkers

Controls: Rigging designed for the section weights — pieces sized to the gear and the anchor's condition, never to the saw's appetite; lowering under control by a trained groundworker on friction; the climber positioned clear of the swing before the piece commits; rigging kit examined and retired to the log.

INITIAL (H/M/L)	RESIDUAL (H/M/L)	SITE-SPECIFIC ADDITIONAL CONTROLS, OR N/A	ACTION OWNER	BY WHEN

Site-specific hazards not listed above — every site has at least one:

HAZARD	WHO IS AT RISK	CONTROLS	INITIAL HI...	RESIDUAL...	ACTION OWNER	BY WHEN

4 METHOD — SEQUENCE OF WORK

- 01 Tree and rigging assessment before the climb — structure, decay, anchors, section sizes, what is below each drop.
- 02 Exclusion below established; groundworker briefed on the lowering plan and the communications agreed.
- 03 Climber ascends on the assessed system; work positioning set before each cut; saw on a stop.
- 04 Sections rigged, cut and lowered under friction control — each piece landed, unclipped and cleared before the next.
- 05 The stem taken down in lifts to a height the ground saw can finish; kit inspected and logged on the way out.
- 06 Aerial rescue plan proved current — kit rigged at the base for the whole climb.

SITE-SPECIFIC AMENDMENTS TO THE SEQUENCE**5 PLANT, EQUIPMENT AND MATERIALS**

- Climbing systems, harnesses and strops — LOLER-examined
- Top-handled chainsaw for aerial use — certificated operators only
- Rigging ropes, blocks, slings and friction device

INSPECTION / THOROUGH EXAMINATION REFS	COSHH ASSESSMENT REFS

6 PPE — THE LAST LINE OF CONTROL, NOT THE FIRST

- Head protection
- Gloves — task-rated
- Climbing helmet to the mountaineering standard the kit requires
- Safety footwear
- Eye protection
- High visibility
- Hearing protection

RPE TYPE, FACE-FIT STATUS, AND ANY OTHER PPE REQUIRED**7 PERMITS REQUIRED BEFORE THIS WORK STARTS**

No permit is normally required for this activity. The site's own rules may still require one — check before starting, and record any permit issued below.

PERMITS ISSUED FOR THIS WORK (OR NONE)**8 EMERGENCY ARRANGEMENTS — COMPLETE FOR THIS SITE**

FIRST AIDER AND LOCATION	NEAREST A&E	ASSEMBLY POINT
HOW THE ALARM IS RAISED	EMERGENCY ACCESS FOR THIS WORK AREA	SPILL / ENVIRONMENTAL RESPONSE

9 BRIEFING RECORD — EVERYONE WORKING UNDER THIS RAMS SIGNS BEFORE STARTING

By signing you confirm the contents of this RAMS have been explained to you, you understand the hazards and controls, and you will work to the sequence stated. Tell the supervisor if the work or the site does not match this document — work stops until it does.

NAME	COMPANY	SIGNATURE	DATE

10 PREPARED AND ACCEPTED

Prepared / adapted for this site by — I confirm I have adapted this document to the site, scored the risks, and that it describes how the work will actually be done.

PRINTED NAME	ROLE / COMPETENCE	COMPANY	SIGNATURE	DATE	TIME

Accepted for the site by — principal contractor or site manager review.

PRINTED NAME	ROLE	COMPANY	SIGNATURE	DATE	TIME

Review this RAMS if the work, the site or the law changes, and at least before each new phase of the works. Flatten the completed PDF before filing so the record cannot be silently edited.

R REVISION HISTORY

Every revision of this document, and every review that found nothing to change. The revision on the front of this sheet is the one you are holding — check kubitdocs.com for the current one before use.

Rev	Date	Class	What changed	Authorised by
D0	2026-08-31	first-issue	First issue.	— not yet approved —
D1	2026-08-31	material	Actions the internal H&S director review. Chainsaw controls gain the personal trauma dressing, the forestry (+F) first aider and the evacuation plan; lone felling prohibited with a minimum crew of two; AB-002 exclusions restated.	— not yet approved —
A0	2026-08-31	review	Approved for issue by the author. Content unchanged from the reviewed draft; the draft status strip is removed. No independent third-party review has been carried out.	Author — director, UK principal contractor, SMSTS. Not an independent review.

Class: first-issue · material (the law, a control, a field or the scope changed — past buyers are notified) · editorial (wording or layout only) · review (checked, nothing changed) · withdrawal. Revision prefix D = draft, not approved and not for sale; A = approved for issue by the person named, on the date shown.