

TREE FELLING — GROUND-BASED

Straight felling of whole trees by chainsaw from the ground

ACTIVITY RAMS — ADAPT TO SITE BEFORE USE

KD-RAMS-AB-001 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

Ground-based felling of trees — assessment of each tree, directional felling with hinge and wedge control, snedding and cross-cutting the stem — where there is room to fell whole.

This document does not cover: lone felling — a minimum crew of two applies to every felling task, with help always within reach; climbing and sectional dismantling (KD-RAMS-AB-002); felling within two tree lengths of live overhead lines (the DNO's arrangements and KD-PTW-OH-031 first); and windblown or storm-damaged trees under tension, which get their own assessment per tree.

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. The public, occupiers and traffic around tree work

At risk: Public, road users

Controls: Work areas closed with barriers and signage before the saws start; banksmen on footpaths and accesses that cannot be closed; highway works only under the traffic management the permission requires; arisings never left across paths or sightlines at breaks.

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

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6. Manual handling of boards, materials and components

At risk: Operatives

Controls: Mechanical aids first — trolleys, board lifters, hoists. Two-person lifts for boards and long components; order materials in manageable sizes; plan storage close to the workforce; keep carrying routes clear and lit.

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

7. Overhead and underground services in the fell zone

At risk: Operators, public, the network

Controls: Overhead lines identified before the day and the two-tree-length rule applied — felling near lines only under the network operator's arrangements; underground services located before winching anchors or machine positions are set.

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 H/...	RESIDUAL...	ACTION OWNER	BY WHEN

4 METHOD — SEQUENCE OF WORK

- Each tree assessed before work — species, lean, crown weight, decay, cavities, wind — and the felling direction and escape routes chosen and cleared.
- Drop zone at two tree lengths established and held; banksman posted where the zone cannot be seen end to end.
- Felling cuts to the plan — sink cut, back cut, hinge retained; wedges driven as the back cut opens; the operator retreats on the escape route as the tree commits.
- Hung-up trees brought down mechanically the same day; the area stays closed until they are.
- Snedding and cross-cutting with the stem on the ground, working the safe side, timber stacked as it is cut.
- Arisings processed or removed; the site left with nothing standing part-cut.

SITE-SPECIFIC AMENDMENTS TO THE SEQUENCE

5 PLANT, EQUIPMENT AND MATERIALS

Chainsaws — maintained, guarded, started per the manufacturer

Barriers and signage for the drop zone

Felling wedges, breaking bars, hand winch

INSPECTION / THOROUGH EXAMINATION REFS

COSHH ASSESSMENT REFS

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

Head protection

Gloves — task-rated

Full chainsaw PPE — trousers, boots, helmet system with visor and ear defence, gloves

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

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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.