



1st Kesgrave Scout Group

Twelve Acre Approach, Kesgrave, Suffolk IP5 1JF

Name of activity, section, event, and location	1 st Kesgrave Scout Group - Walks, Hikes, Hill Walking, Expeditions	Date of risk assessment	1 Mar 2025	Name of person who undertook this risk assessment	Alan Comber (working with others)
		Date of next review	1 Apr 2026		

This document covers walks, hikes, hill walking and expeditions from simple walks around the community on pavements, to hikes in the countryside or urban area, to expeditions carrying full kit and a tent. Depending on the type of event being undertaken some of the elements in this risk assessment won't be required. It should be read in conjunction with the Section meeting and events risk assessment which covers generic items.

Hazard identified? Risks from it?	Who is at risk?	How are the risks already controlled? What extra controls are needed?	What has changed that needs to be thought about and controlled?
A hazard is something that may cause harm or damage. The risk is the harm may occur from the hazard.	For example: young people, adult volunteers, visitors	Controls are ways of making the activity safer by removing or reducing the risk from it. For example, you may use a different piece of equipment, or you might change the way you do the activity.	Keep checking throughout the activity in case you need to change what you are doing or even stop the activity. This is a great place to add comments which will be used as part of the review.
Lone working – People on their own - risk of a medical or other incident occurring that cannot be dealt with adequately	Leaders and helpers	No one should be left / walking alone unless in an emergency when no other option is available.	
Traffic / dropping off / picking up measures - injuries from collisions between vehicles and people	All present	The route chosen should minimise walking on / crossing roads. Where crossing is necessary endeavour to cross at managed crossing points ie zebra/pelican crossings etc, underpasses or bridges. Any stops along the route, either pre-planned (eg refreshment breaks) or ad-hoc (eg to fix an issue etc) should be assessed wrt being safe and convenient before being used ie away from traffic and other users and does not cause an obstruction to other people. Young people should be briefed specifically of the dangers of walking on and crossing roads.	

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		When walking on public highways: - Walk in single file, on the right-hand side if at all possible, and sensible to do so, ideally with an adult at the front and back, operating a corraling system. - listen for traffic and inform rest of group if they hear any vehicles approaching. - In bad weather the person at the front and back should carry a lit torch. If considered appropriate, all walking group members to wear Hi-Viz vests ie if there are a lot of road crossings or significant stretches walking on roads or beside busy roads. Hi-Viz vests/backpack covers should always be worn for expeditions.	
Terrain / Route - Unsuitable terrain, steep descents	All present	The planned route should: - Keep to rights of way, permissive paths, open access land, public open space, pavements, pedestrian only areas etc. - avoid high-risk areas such as steep, rocky descents, paths besides steep drops, crossing major roads, crossing rivers other than by bridge or underpass, boggy/marshy areas etc. - take account of the permit levels available for the event. There are four levels of permit available for Hillwalking. These are: Terrain 1 Summer conditions, Terrain 1 Winter conditions, Terrain 2 Summer conditions, Terrain 2 Winter conditions. You must not plan a hike in these areas if you don't have a valid permit holder to take them. See POR for definitions.	
Clothing / Personal kit - footwear and clothing. Cuts, stings etc	All present	Ensure suitable footwear is always worn commensurate with the type of terrain you are walking on and the weather conditions ie good quality walking boots / shoes for hiking, trainers for pavements etc Walking sticks to be considered and used as appropriate. Leaders to assess the need to take spare clothing (coats, gloves, hats, etc) and kit (survival bags, ropes etc) to cater for weather conditions, the terrain and possible health issues.	
Food – health and hygiene issues etc	All present	Ensure food is planned for the hike that takes account of the facilities available, that is nutritionally healthy and provides sufficient calories to cover the expected energy levels required.	
Preparation - Unsuitable route, inexperience etc	All present	The route should be planned before undertaking the event. Identify any alternative routes, rest / check points required, emergency access points and hazards along the way. The route should take account of the amount of daylight and weather conditions for the time of year. The route should take account of the need for toilets during the event. Mark up routes with potential hazard spots ie places to be avoided. Consider a recce beforehand especially for unfamiliar routes or to check out hazards, road walking routes, poor mobile signal availability etc. The use of OS Maps or other electrical devices/applications (eg google maps / street view) should be considered to plan and check the route. When walking in terrain 1 or 2 you must create a route plan with escape routes. You should also consider doing the same for terrain 0 where it would be sensible to do so.	Supported by Leaders as required

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		Parents will be informed of the outline details of the hike – where, duration, likely weather conditions, clothing and kit required to ensure those taking part know what they are taking on and all parties are happy the participants are qualified / capable enough to undertake the activity safely. For inexperienced participants or to refresh more knowledgeable members consider providing map, compass, and route plan training before the event.	
Event - injury and harm to participants		Before setting off all kit, food, and clothing to be checked to ensure: • All participants are appropriately dressed for the anticipated weather, terrain etc, with no loose clothing likely to get caught in objects, laces are tied etc, pockets emptied of inappropriate items eg smartphones, glasses, pens, medicines etc, that may cause injury or get broken during the activity • With any jewellery, hair etc appropriately worn for the activity – hair tied back, hair bands used, jewellery removed etc. • There are no defects, loose items on the outside of day sacks or rucksacks (walking poles, coats etc) or items that protrude unnecessarily so they can hurt people passing by or catch in things. • Individuals have everything they need (inc food, drink, spare kit / clothes, waterproofs first aid kit and emergency provisions). Before setting off, the walking group will be briefed appropriately about: • The need for the group to keep together and wait for people to catch up. • Understanding where they are at all times, using maps, gps units, smart phones etc as appropriate. • Not to go off the pre-planned route and what to do if they do: - o Teams to retrace their steps until they get back on the route at a known point and not to continue onwards in the hope it will work out. - o or if they can't achieve that, to find a suitable known point to get to where they can contact the support group for advice / assistance. • General hiking etiquette and consideration needed towards other users. - o Not to climb on ruins, buildings, or walls. - o Not to jump between boulders. - o Not to wander off. - o Not to get too near the edge of steep inclines or water. - o Not to throw objects especially over cliffs/edges where people might be walking down below. - o Abide by The Countryside Code. - o To stay clear of farm dogs, not to touch any dog and keep clear of all livestock. • What to do if they need a toilet. • What to do if they are lost, off the route or separated. • What to do in bad weather / an emergency.	Support group as required - have route plans and maps; consider carrying spare kit, clothing, and food in case of issues.

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		Ensure sufficient maps and route cards are provided. These should be laminated or enclosed in map cases or equivalent if there is any change of them getting wet. When the hike is in terrain 1 or 2 always: • leave a route plan with someone responsible. • Provide all walking party members with an emergency card. • Also consider doing the same for terrain 0 where it would be helpful to do so. Groups should be split up into smaller manageable parties. • Where possible (except peer led events) as a minimum at least two adults should be allocated per walking group or one adult and one young leader. • For Terrain 0 there must be at least 3 in each group. • For Terrain 1 and 2 there must be a minimum of 4 and a maximum of 8 in each walking group. If walking on the road or an area where visibility is important, all group members to wear Hi-Viz vests / ruck sack covers / reflective clothing. Walking Groups will be overseen/led by the most experienced leader in the walking group. NB This person is not necessarily undertaking the map reading and leading the walking. However, they do have overall responsibility for the safety and well-being of the walking group. A designated leader (not necessarily an adult or young leader) should be at the front and rear of each walking group at all times. The front person will ensure the route is followed and doesn't go too fast and the rear person will avoid stragglers. When on the event steep inclines and descents to be strictly controlled by leaders. Where walls, gates or fences have to be crossed due care is taken. Also bear in mind that crossing open agricultural fields after its ploughed or heavy rain may result in muddy conditions and getting stuck. Do not enter any Military zones or Private Property. If a crossing of a stream is planned, a Plan B will be in place to avoid crossing if the stream is in flood. The leader must also be suitably competent/have a permit, to lead the party across the river. The leader of any party on a scrambling route must be fully conversant with the use of a confidence rope and be able to offer sound help and advice to a nervous participant. If the route is blocked, then an assessment of the map should be made to consider an alternative route. Any support group should then be informed of changes. No lighting fires unless safe to do so. Use of gas burners, Trangia's etc to be supervised. Leaders to assess the need to take spare clothing (coats, gloves, hats, etc) and kit to cater for weather conditions and possible health issues. Consider a support group required to carry spare clothing etc and provide food, cakes, hot/cold drinks etc.	
Manual Handling – back injuries, strains, etc	All present	All kit carried should be within the capability of the individual carrying it and take account of weather conditions. As a rule, for expeditions on foot, rucksacks shouldn't weigh more than 25% of your body weight. For expeditions, rucksacks should be weighed before departure. Rucksacks should be checked to ensure heavier objects, such as a tent, are closer to	

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		peoples backs to help balance and reduce the chances of strains.	
Personal Hygiene and Well Being – exhaustion, sunburn, Hyperthermia, eye strain, hypothermia, bites etc	All present	Ensure participants: • Drink enough and take adequate drinks with them (hot and/or cold) – dehydration. • Have sufficient food and a balanced diet with a appropriate calorie level for the type of event being undertaken. ie expeditions will require more energy than a walk around town. • Eat at regular intervals - energy levels. • Have Emergency rations if required. • Wear correct clothing at all times – it is harder to warm up once you are cold. • Wear appropriate footwear and socks and lace up boots etc - blisters. • Keeping things dry – once things are wet, they can take a long time to dry. • Stop for breaks – reorientation, rest. • Apply sun cream / wear hats in hot / sunny weather – sunburn. • Wear sunglasses if needed - eye strain. • Wear glasses if they need them. • Apply lip balm in cold/windy conditions. • Consider taking clothing and ointments etc for lymes disease/ticks, midge bites etc. • Do not drink water from streams etc unless purified. • Have tissues / toilet paper and trowel available. • Particular caution needed on wet, icy or loose surfaces. • Have a torch if the event is at night. • Have any injuries looked at and dealt with appropriately and in a timely fashion Consider a separate briefing for girls to deal with feminine hygiene and ideally allocate a suitable point of contact ie someone who is competent to deal with any issues that might arise. During the hike shorten, arrange to get people picked up, or abandon the event to suit any changing health conditions ie risk of heatstroke, exhaustion, dehydration, twisted ankle etc Take into consideration new scouts who may never have hiked/walked before and consider buddying up with an older scout, young leader or nominate an adult leader to keep an eye on them.	Support group as required - If appropriate, water and food will be available at staging points and via support group in emergencies. Leaders may also take some additional provisions on the walk as well.
Leadership - Inappropriate Leadership	Leaders and Helpers	Leaders will be briefed on their role before they start. Walking group leaders should have experience of walking in the terrain the event is being held in, the use of route maps, be competent at navigating and know what to do in an emergency. For routes that cover terrain T1 and T2 areas the leader in charge of a walking group must have an appropriate Hill Walking Permit for the time of year (summer or winter). For Terrain T0 and T1 at least one member of the party must have a basic first aid qualification. For T2 one member must have a full first aid certificate.	

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		Leaders to consider carrying suitable navigational aids for the planned walk eg gps units etc.	
Peer Led Activities – unsuitable route, inadequate training		For peer led activities (typical scouts and explorers), ensure: • Leaders help with the planning, preparation and any training required. • Put in place a supervision plan to ensure that the group is monitored and supported and there are systems in place to make contact. The supervision plan should include: • Number of members taking part, so you know how many to count when you meet up. • Contact arrangements – checkpoints, shadowing sweeping, use of technology. • Hazards / areas of risk. • Nights Away Passport - If a group of Scouts or Explorers are to be remotely supervised overnight. • Emergency plans. Further guidance can be found from Fact sheet FS120339.	Supported by Leaders and support group as required
Emergencies / Incident	All present	Leaders have mobile 'phones – signal checked beforehand on pre-visit. Consider approaching local shops, homes, the public for help if appropriate. Consider a support group to help with issues. All walking groups will be equipped to cope with emergencies (first aid kit, storm shelters, survival bags, whistle, ropes, torches, survival bags, emergency foil blankets etc) as appropriate to the type of walk and time of year.	
Emergency access routes – delays in emergency services arriving and gaining access causing more harm	All present	Consider identifying emergency exit routes to get back to a more accessible place.	
First Aid / Injuries that need treatment	All present	As a minimum a first aid qualified person should be present in each walking group to deal with first aid incidents. The first aid qualification should be appropriate to the Terrain ie 0-3 you are walking in. Ensure there are sufficient qualified first aiders to deal with the overall numbers taking part. Consider having a dedicated first aider in the support group. Each walking group should have a basic first aid kit and ensure there are sufficient first aid kits for the overall numbers taking part. Depending on the terrain, weather and time of year first aid kits should enhanced to cater for these factors eg tick's, stings, bites, blisters etc. If appropriate to the type of walk individual participants will be asked to bring a personal first aid kit. Any support group should have a more extensive first aid kit. If there is an incident (injury) on route the walking group will stop. Group to move to a safe location, young people / adult requiring treatment assessed. Support Group or emergency services called for backup as required.	

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Safeguarding / Lost – physical / mental harm, abduction	All present	Sufficient route maps should be carried by the leaders. Leaders to maintain awareness of their location at all times using maps, gps units, smart phones etc as appropriate. Headcounts or roll calls should be carried out periodically to check all participants are present. Any support group to maintain a list of who is in each walking group and track any changes. Group stops at regular intervals and waits for everyone to regroup before continuing. Group members are briefed regarding procedure if lost/separated. Young people will be briefed regarding their response if approached inappropriately by a stranger, or if they are offered anything by a stranger. Consider providing all participants with an 'In Case of Emergency' (ICE) form which lists key leaders and facility contact details. Young people must be accompanied/visible by another person at all times (inc. visits to public toilets).	Support group as required - have route plans and maps
Weather	All present	Monitor the weather forecast in advance of the hike and adjust accordingly - timings, kit taken, route etc. If the weather is looking too severe consider cancelling the hike. Weather forecasts should be checked before setting out on the hike and monitored throughout. The route, timings and event should be adjusted beforehand or during the journey if weather conditions dictate. Consider cancelling the event or abandoning during the event if the weather becomes too extreme or the participants are too cold or wet to continue safely or visibility makes navigating very difficult. Alternative routes prepared for weather changes during the event including emergency exit routes. Any support group informed of any route changes at the first opportunity. Find shelter if required. If visibility is likely to be restricted due to the weather (dark, drizzle etc) then ensure torches are taken and used.	All group leaders will be appropriately equipped to cope with the weather as appropriate (storm shelters, survival bags, spare clothing etc.) Support group as required - have route plans, maps, spare clothing / kit/ food