

UNIVERSITY of OXFORD SPORTS DEPARTMENT				
OXFORD UNIVERSITY RISK ASSESSMENT -- OU Walking Club				DATE: - 12 Oct 2010
Weekend and Minibus Day-trips, Michaelmas Term 2010				
Who might be harmed	HAZARD	Risk	Control Measure in place	Further Risk reduction required Y / N
Participants	Drugs and Alcohol	Minor / major injury	The Consumption of alcohol and non prescribed drugs is prohibited during sporting activities.	
Participants	None qualified / insured instructors / coaches	Unsafe practice	Club Committee to ensure that the coach / instructor is qualified and insured and where applicable a CRB is completed.	
Participants	Equipment failure	Minor / major injuries	Club Committee to ensure necessary equipment checks and servicing has been completed and documented.	
Participants	Fire	Burns / fatality	Club Committee to ensure a safety brief at the beginning of sessions includes what to do in the event of a fire, location of nearest exits, fire assembly points.	
Participants Public	Travel	Major incident / accident, Fatality	<p>Club Committee to check the insurance of car drivers. Drivers to comply with current Road Safety laws and have a full driving licence.</p> <p>Hire vehicles drivers MUST have passed the University accredited driving course. Drivers must be 21 or over. Trip registration forms to be sent to the Sport Federation no later than 5pm on the Thursday before the fixture. Sports Fed will forward the form to security services.</p> <p>The registration form for trips abroad MUST be sent a minimum of 1 month prior to the trip departing. Club Committee to supply Safety officer with travel insurance details and trip Risk Assessment.</p>	

			In the event of a major accident security services must be contacted 01865 289999	
Participants	Being struck by a vehicle	Minor / major injury / fatality	<p>Trip Leaders should avoid taking a group along busy roads. Trip leaders should encourage the group to walk in single file on the right hand side of the road, if that is the safest option. If this situation arises in the dark (e.g. in the search for a public house in the evening) then the Trip Leaders should encourage Participants to use torches.</p> <p>When crossing roads: Trip Leaders should stop at a chosen crossing point, and pause to allow everyone to gather together in a tight group, then cross the road together when safe to do so.</p>	
Participants	Being struck by a train	Minor / major injury / fatality	<p>Trip Leaders should avoid taking a group across a railway at an unprotected level crossing, where a reasonable alternative is available. If it is unavoidable with the planned route, then Trip Leaders should open the gates on both sides of the crossing before allowing the group to cross. All gates must be shut again after use, with the last person to cross the line shutting the gates.</p>	
Participants	Food poisoning	Minor / major injury	<p>Trip Leaders to ensure good hygiene practice including food storage, washing hands before handling food, and especially after being in contact with raw meat. Participants are encouraged to bring plenty of water on walks so that there is no need to drink water from streams.</p> <p>When wild camping, any water from streams should be purified, preferably by boiling, before drinking. Particular attention should also be paid to toilet hygiene. Trip Leaders on Trips involving wild camping will have taken either a Mountain Leader or a Walking</p>	

			Group Leader training courses which include such topics,	
Participants	Hypothermia	Minor / major injury / fatality	<p>For each trip, Participants are given the Club's Equipment List, and the Participation Statement. Participants sign to say that they have read the equipment list and have appropriate equipment, including effective waterproofs and sufficient warm clothing for the likely conditions.</p> <p>If Participants fail to do this, then the Trip Leaders have the right to refuse them participation in the walks.</p> <p>All Trip Leaders have taken part in a suitable First Aid course as part of the leader-training program. This means that they will be better equipped to recognise the signs of hypothermia and treat a casualty in the event of a severe case. Survival bags and/or Survival Shelters are taken on all Trips, to provide shelter in the event of a case of hypothermia. For walking in remote areas, Trip Leaders should plan some escape routes so that a group can go and raise the alarm to get assistance from Mountain Rescue: dial 999 and ask for the Police.</p> <p>There is an increased risk of hypothermia when wild camping. Trip Leaders will be aware of this and select the camp location to minimise this risk. Trip Leaders on Trips involving wild camping will have taken appropriate training courses which include the topic of camp site selection.</p>	
Participants	Heat exhaustion and heat stroke	Minor / major injury / fatality	<p>Participants are encouraged to bring plenty of water (at least one litre, preferably two) to drink on a warm day. They are told this via the Club's Equipment List and Participation Statement, which is distributed to all Participants before the walk. Trip Leaders should allow plenty of rests if Participants appear to be exhausted in warm weather. If the rests are restraining the rest of</p>	

			<p>the group then it is good practice to split into two groups if there are enough Trip Leaders to do so. All Trip Leaders have taken part in a suitable First Aid course. This means that they will be better equipped to recognise and treat the symptoms of heat exhaustion and heat stroke.</p>	
Participants	Sunburn	Minor injury	<p>Trip Leaders should get an accurate weather forecast on the morning of the walk, including details of the Sun Index in summer if possible. The Club distributes a list of required equipment to all Participants before the trip, and walkers are obliged to sign an agreement to show that they have read the equipment list. This ensures that all Participants will have their own supply of sun cream if leaders consider it a suitable precaution to take. Trip Leaders should carry spare sun-cream in case someone forgets to bring some. In cases of severe sunburn, medical attention should be sought.</p>	
Participants	Other burns and scalds (e.g. from cooking)	Minor / major injury	<p>Trip Leaders should try to ensure that cooking areas do not become overly crowded. When camping particular care should be taken. For example, cooking should not be done in a tent. An integral part of the Club's leader-training program is a suitable First Aid training course, meaning leaders will be better equipped for dealing with burns, and knowing when medical attention should be sought.</p>	
Participants	Struck by lightning	Minor / major injury / fatality	<p>Leaders of Trips in exposed areas will have taken part in appropriate training courses, the syllabuses of which include appropriate course of action during thunderstorms, for example: not sheltering under trees. Participants should have sufficient waterproofs to carry out the walk or else the Trip Leaders should arrange a shelter situation for those who cannot cope.</p> <p>When wild camping the camp location should be selected to minimise the risk of a lightning strike. Trip Leaders on Trips involving wild camping will have</p>	

			taken appropriate training courses which include the topic of camp site selection.	
Participants	Falls from high places	Minor / major injury / fatality	Before the start of a walk Trip Leaders should brief the whole group of the walk in question, trying to explain the terrain as vividly as possible. Trip Leaders should describe the specific risks involved in a chosen walk (e.g. inform Participants to stay on the paths for coastal walks, because going near the cliff-edge could result in the land giving way, resulting in a fall) as well as pointing out the fun aspects of the walks. Ridges must be avoided in winter conditions and in strong winds. Ropes are available to take on higher risk walks, for use by leaders who have appropriate training. For walking in remote areas, a Trip Leader should plan some escape routes so that an injured Participant can be escorted back to the minibus, or so that a group can go, raise the alarm and get assistance from Mountain Rescue: dial 999 and ask for the Police. Trip Leaders should get an accurate weather forecast on the morning of a walk, especially if it involves ridges or cliffs.	
Participants	Slips, trips, falls	Minor injury	While walking along any path it is possible that people will lose their balance and trip over. This becomes more of a concern when the path is close to a ledge or it occurs in a high place (see Falls from high places). The chances of tripping or slipping over are increased when the path is uneven, polished or wet and Trip Leaders should warn Participants of uneven or slippery sections encountered during the walk. Trip Leaders should aim to assist with the crossing of obstacles (e.g. small streams) when appropriate.	
Participants	Bone and joint injuries: fractures, sprains, strains, etc.	Major injury	Participants are told via the Club's Equipment List and Participation Statement to bring worn-in walking boots, which will greatly lessen the chances of slipping and of ankle injuries. Trip Leaders have the right to refuse members participation if they fail to do this. All Trip	

			Leaders have taken part in a suitable First Aid Course, and First Aid kits are taken on walks; therefore Trip Leaders will be better equipped to deal such injuries. For walking in remote areas, Trip Leaders should plan some escape routes so that (s)he can escort an injured Participant back to the minibus, or so that a group can go and raise the alarm to get assistance from Mountain Rescue: dial 999 and ask for the Police.	
Participants	Blisters	Minor injury	Participants are told via the Club's Equipment List and Participation Statement to bring worn-in walking boots, which will greatly lessen the chances of blisters forming. Trip Leaders have the right to refuse members to participate in walks if they fail to do this. First Aid kits are taken on walks so that plasters can be given out if blisters occur. The hazard from blisters arises because they cause the Participant to walk slowly, increasing the risk of hypothermia among all Participants. For walking in remote areas, Trip Leaders should plan some escape routes so that (s)he can escort an injured Participant can be escorted back to the minibus.	
Participants	Tick Bites Insect bites	Minor / major injury / ongoing complications	A small, but increasing risk in recent years, is the possibility of the contraction of Lyme Disease from a sheep- or deer tick bite, which in a small number of cases can have severe health implications. Trip Leaders should ask Participants to check their skin at the end of a day's walk for the presence of feeding ticks, especially after walking through bracken uplands. If a tick bite has been sustained, Trip Leaders should warn the Participant to be vigilant of any rash that develops, in which case medical attention should be sought. Whilst most stings from a bee, wasp or hornet are usually painful as opposed to dangerous, there is the possibility of an allergic reaction. Participants are told to and agree to declare known allergies on the participation statement. All Trip Leaders have taken	

			part in a suitable first aid course, which should better equip leaders to deal with cases of severe allergic reaction, and the safe removal of feeding ticks.	
Participants	Cow attack	Minor / major injury / fatality	<p>The British Mountaineering Council has issued an advisory that an increasing number of walkers have been attacked by cows, often when acting protectively of their calves. Although the risk is seen as highest when walking with dogs, walkers without dogs have also been injured by charging cattle. While cattle may be viewed as docile, they are often curious about walkers, and can be aggressive and unpredictable and are capable of outrunning people. Considering their weight and strength, it is best to err on the side of caution.</p> <p>If a group of cows is encountered during a walk, particularly if calves or a bull are also present, Trip Leaders should adjust the group's route to avoid the cattle, finding another way around and later rejoining the footpath or intended route.</p> <p>If already in a field with cows, Trip Leaders should:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure the group does not get between cows and any calves. • Encourage the group to move away calmly and quietly, not panicking or running. <p>Exit the field as soon as practical.</p>	
Participants	Poorly planned walk	Inconvenience / increased risk of other problems	<p>(See also "Becoming benighted" and "Becoming trapped by tides" below)</p> <p>Leaders on trips to an exposed area are obliged to take an appropriate training course which coaches all trainees in a wide range of hill-walking skills, such as good Trip planning. The Club aims to provide 2 leaders per 13 or 17 Participants, depending on the terrain, so that there is one leader for roughly every 6 to 8 non-leaders. A similar ratio is enforced on larger trips. This</p>	

			<p>ensures that each Participant is able to communicate with a Trip Leader. Each leader is given a copy of the Club's Trip Leader's Notes which advises them that "The Trip Leaders for each trip should meet before the Free Tea to discuss details of some walks that may be carried out on the trip, so that they are prepared to describe the nature of the walking that will be experienced to potential Participants.</p>	
Participants	Becoming benighted	Inconvenience / increased risk of other problems	<p>For a number of reasons, a group might complete a walk more slowly than expected and be overtaken by darkness while still out walking. Although not necessarily hazardous in itself, the poor visibility tends to lead to slower group progress, and the risk of trips, slips and hypothermia are increased.</p> <p>In planning walks, Trip Leaders should verify the length of daylight available for that place and day, and plan walks which will fit within the day, taking into account the experience and fitness of the group as far as possible. Local sunrise and sunset times can be retrieved from websites such as www.thetimeandplace.info/suntimes/uk and www.earthtools.org.</p> <p>Trip Leaders should monitor group progress during the course of the walk. If progress is slower than foreseen, putting into doubt the completion of the planned walk during daylight, the walk should be adapted and shortened by Trip Leaders.</p> <p>Trip leaders are expected to have and carry their own torches. It is a good idea for Trip Organisers to encourage Participants to bring their own torches. The Club has some which can be borrowed by Participants. It is also a good idea for Trip Leaders to verify how many of the Participants have headtorches before starting out on walks.</p>	

Participants	Becoming trapped by tides	Minor / major injury / fatality	<p>On coastal Trips, if the group walks along the shoreline, depending on the terrain, there may be a serious risk of being trapped by rising tides, below cliffs for example.</p> <p>Before undertaking any shoreline walk, Trip Leaders must have the tide timetables for the day in hand, and must consider the points where access to the shoreline is feasible, to foresee possible escape routes. Where access points are few and the shoreline route between them is therefore committing, Trip Leaders need to consider the available time with low water and factor in the likelihood that progress along the shore will be slower than on paths. If in doubt, either the shoreline should be avoided, or a short stroll, returning to the initial access point, could perhaps be undertaken.</p> <p>Tide times can be obtained from http://easytide.ukho.gov.uk up to 7 days before the Trip.</p>	
Participants	Injury while Scrambling	Minor / major injury / fatality	<p>(See also “Falls from high places” and “Tripping or slipping over” above.)</p> <p>Trip Leaders are responsible to ensure that they are aware of which routes involve graded scrambles. Only Trip Leaders of Level Four or Five experience may lead Grade 1 scrambles. One Trip Leader may lead up to four Participants. The Trip Leader(s) must be aware of the serious nature of this activity. Guidelines for Trip Leaders and details of their responsibilities are given in the Trip Leader Safety Document. Information on the scramble to be undertaken should be sought from relevant guide books.</p> <p>Scrambles of grade two or three must only be undertaken on Club Trips as a Group of Equals. In</p>	

			these circumstances there is no leader and each individual takes responsibility for his/her actions.	
Participants	Being struck by rockfall	Minor / major injury / fatality	<p>On steep ground, such as on scrambles, or on scree slopes, there is a risk of Participants being struck by falling rocks dislodged by other Participants or other groups out on the hill.</p> <p>Trip Leaders should minimise the group's exposure to loose rock or scree by route choice if possible. If travel on scree or areas with loose rock is unavoidable, Trip Leaders on Trips involving steep ground will have taken appropriate training courses which include techniques for group movement on scree. Leaders should brief Participants on the techniques before entering the area of scree or loose rock.</p> <p>For scrambles, Trip Leaders can lessen the risk of rockfall by choosing well-travelled routes. Trip Leaders should consider before the Trip whether the use of helmets would be advisable for the intended route.</p>	

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR RISK REDUCTION

Action	By When?	By Whom?	Completed

Club President Date

Club Secretary Date

Trip and Safety Co-ordinator Date

RISK ASSESSMENT REVIEW

Date	Comments	Actions	Completed

Club President Date

Club Secretary Date

Trip and Safety Co-ordinator ...Jaya John John. Date ...12 October 2010.