



Birchmere Campsite

Risk Assessment

This is the statement of general policy and arrangements for:	Woking District Scouts – Birchmere Campsite
Overall and final responsibility for health and safety is that of:	Richard Mackie - Chairperson
Day-to-day responsibility for ensuring this policy is put into practice is delegated to:	Steve Valiant – Warden

Statement of general policy	Responsibility of: Name/Title	Action/Arrangements (customise to meet your own situation)
To prevent accidents and cases of ill health and provide adequate control of health and safety risks arising from campsite activities.	Richard Mackie (Chairperson)	Relevant risk assessments are completed and actions arising out of those assessments implemented. The risk assessments are reviewed every year or earlier if conditions change or there are improvements as a result of an incident.
To engage and consult with campsite users on day-to-day health and safety conditions and provide advice and assistance if issues require resolution.	Richard Mackie (Chairperson) Steve Valiant (Warden) All	Service crew routinely consulted on health and safety matters as they arise but also formally consulted at campsite committee review meetings or sooner. Effective and proportional response to any EHS issues raised by campsite users or members of the service crew.
Ensure emergency procedures are in place including evacuation from the buildings in case of fire or another significant incident.	Richard Mackie (Chairperson)	Escape routes will always signed and kept clear. Evacuation plans are assessed on an annual basis and updated, as necessary.
To maintain safe, healthy and hygienic campsite conditions. Ensure equipment and machinery available for campsite users are maintained and kept in good working condition. Maintain safe storage/use of substances.	Steve Valiant (Warden)	Toilets, washing facilities and drinking water provided for campsite users. System in place for routine inspections and testing of equipment, machinery and campsite grounds. Any gaps identified during inspections and testing resolved in a timely manner.
NOTE: All users are required to have their own risk assessments in place to cover their intended use of the campsite and surrounding area and the activities they intend to organise and run..		

Health and safety law poster is displayed:	Displayed on the notice board outside the toilet block		
First-aid box and accident book are located:	Warden's Hut – Note that campsite hirees are also required to have their own first aid kits with in date contents.		
Accidents and ill health are reported to the Scout Association and appropriate insurance paperwork completed. The Scout Association provides guidance on whether an incident requires reporting to the Health and Safety Executive under RIDDOR – Reporting of Injuries, Diseases and Dangerous Occurrences Regulations.			
Signed: (Chairperson)	Richard Mackie	Date:	15 June 2025
Subject to review, monitoring and revision by:	Simon Evenden	Every:	12 months or sooner if work activity changes

Document Revision History

Date	Version	Summary of Changes Made
15 June 2024	3.0	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Due to ongoing M25/A3 infrastructure works the risk from vehicles on the Common has been updated to reflect the potential absence of the padlocked gate at the entrance to the Common next to the A3 slip road. The absence of this gate means there is uncontrolled access the Common by the public. Additional information added to the site access via footbridge hazard as the ongoing M25/A3 infrastructure works have led to the temporary removal of these bridges. Slip/trip/fall risk updated with respect to installation of a new covered area next to the cabins and upgrade of steps to the pedestrian access slope along with new lighting.

What are the hazards?	Who might be harmed and how?	What are you already doing?	What further action is necessary?	Action by whom?	Action by when?	Done
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<p>Because the entrance to the Common track is via a dual carriageway slip road there is a risk of a motor vehicle accident resulting in serious injury or fatalities</p>	<p>All visitors</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All users should be informed of the risk and the importance of early signalling. • Children are to stay in vehicles until at the top car park or the main campsite • All campsite users are provided with the number for the gate lock to ensure there is no build-up of cars onto the main road • Depending on the number of campsite attendees organisers will adjust their coordination to include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Traffic stewards with radios to coordinate entering and departing vehicles ○ Organisers to encourage attendees to car share where possible ○ Use other locations e.g. Ockham Bites, Wrens Nest and walk to the campsite ○ Collect the young people in advance and use a minibus ○ Staggered arrival and departure times to reduce to number of people arriving at the same time. 		<p>Camp / Activity Leader</p>		
<p>Because of vehicles including those for motorway construction on the Common there is a risk of a motor vehicle accident resulting in serious injury or fatalities</p>	<p>All visitors</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • As the condition of the Common entrance and the presence of the construction vehicles is liable to change on a daily basis the activity leader will need to assess the situation in advance and adjust their plans if necessary e.g. the Top Car Park may not be accessible, the access gate at the A3 slip road may be absent. • All users should be informed of the presence of motorway construction vehicles and take extra care around the Top Car Park. • Young people are not to be allowed access to track and woods near the Top Car Park 		<p>Camp / Activity Leader</p>		

<p>Because access to the campsite parking is via a single carriageway track there is a risk of a motor vehicle accident resulting serious injury or fatalities</p>	<p>All visitors</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Young people are not to be allowed access to track and woods outside the campsite whilst vehicles are arriving and departing. • Speed advisory signs (10mph) placed on exit from Birchmere Campsite. • Depending on the number of campsite attendees organisers will adjust their track usage to include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Adults/leaders running and supporting the event will be instructed to arrive at the campsite at a specific time before the young people. After this time no more vehicles will be allowed to use the track. ○ Young people will be dropped-off at the Top Car Park or other agreed location and met by leaders who will escort them down the track to the campsite. ○ Traffic stewards with radios to coordinate the top car park and ensure no vehicles are allowed down the track after the agreed time. 		<p>Camp / Activity Leader.</p>		
<p>Because pedestrian access to the campsite may be via footbridges over the M25 or A3 there is a risk of falls resulting in serious injury or fatalities</p>	<p>Young people</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Leaders to ensure appropriate supervision for the footbridge users is in place. • Leaders to consider the time of the day and potential available light when the footbridge may be used. • Young People instructed not to wave at drivers as it may distract them and cause an accident. • Leaders will need to assess if the footbridge is present as it may have been removed as a result of the M25/A3 infrastructure works and adjustment of activity may be necessary on the day. 		<p>Camp / Activity Leader</p>		

<p>Because of uneven surfaces, trailing cables, guy ropes, ditches, change in gradient and debris there is a risk of slips, trips and falls resulting in bruising, skin abrasion or broken bones</p>	<p>All visitors</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • General good housekeeping. All areas well lit. No trailing leads or cables. • Steps surrounding toilet block and wardens hut painted along the edge to make them more visible. • Leaders will need to make note of the metal poles supporting the covered area outside of the huts and instruct the campsite users not to run in this area. Poles have been covered with fake turf to reduce the potential for a slip. • Leaders to pre-walk the locations of the campsite they are using and remove any potential sources of slip/trip/fall or mark them in some way to make them more visible. • Leaders to provide safety instruction at the start of an event identifying which locations are higher risk of slips/trips/falls and are out of bounds including the ditches around the campsite boundary, ditches between the main field and the woodland, and the small access bridges. • Exterior lights on the main gate, outside the toilets and the hut must be kept on after dark to ensure campsite users have clear visibility of potential sources of slip, trip, and fall. • Flood lights are provided on the gate to the car park (between toilets and The Retreat / Birch Lodge) if visibility is required for events that take place after dark. • Steps at the pedestrian entrance slope and solar powered step lighting in place. 		<p>All to monitor</p>		
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Because the Common is used by cattle for grazing there is a risk of cattle entering the campsite resulting in damage to the facilities and injuries to users	All visitors	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> All visitors are to ensure that gates are always closed when not in use. Visitors to ensure they check if the cattle are in close proximity of the campsite gates before using them The smaller pedestrian entry gates are fitted with automatic closers to ensure they remain closed. Signs on gate to reminder users to close them after use 		All		
Because campsite has its own woodland there is a risk of slips/trips/falls, trees or branches falling resulting in bruising, skin abrasion or broken bones	All Visitors	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Camp / Activity Leader to complete their own Risk Assessment for their use of the woodland. Young people should be supervised in the woodlands Young people should be informed of the boundaries and that climbing trees is prohibited. The trees surrounding and Woolgars Wood are inspected monthly and after high wind events. 	Camp/Activity leader to inform the warden of any trees of concern so that any issues can be resolved in a timely manner. Monthly tree inspection to be scheduled by the warden.	Camp / Activity Leader, Warden.		
Because the campsite sits within land open to the public there is a risk of unauthorised access resulting in items loss and damage to facilities and equipment.	All Visitors	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Campsite access is controlled by a four-foot boundary fence on all sites apart from the bottom end which is bounded by a ditch. Gates and buildings should always be locked when the campsite is not in use. Leaders are recommended not to leave the campsite unattended when doing activities on the common or further afield. 	Camp/Activity leaders to perform a final check at the end of their event to ensure all doors and gates are locked.	Camp / Activity Leader. Warden		
Because there is an equipment store with higher hazard contents there is a risk of young people entering the store resulting in cuts and abrasions	All visitors	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Strictly out of bounds to all by authorised persons. It is out of bounds to young people; over 14s may access this area under supervision. The equipment store must always be kept locked. No naked flames in the equipment store. Temporary plastic / metal barriers must be used to fence off the area. 	Area to be fenced off with visible no-entry warning signs.	All		

Because the site maintenance team use a tractor there is a risk of unauthorised access and use of the machinery resulting significant injuries and infrastructure damage	All visitors	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Tractor Store is strictly out of bounds to all except for authorised persons from the campsite service crew. The Tractor Store will be kept locked at all times. 		Warden		
Because of the use of barb wire fences there is risk of contact with the fencing resulting in cuts	All visitors	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Participants briefed not to touch or climb over fences as they may have barb wire. Information is included in the welcome pack. 		Camp / Activity Leader		
Because harsh cleaning materials are required to clean some areas there is a risk of young people being exposed resulting in chemical burns	Young people	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> All cleaning materials must be locked within the cleaning cupboard by Birch Lodge. Cleaning should be done by those aged 10 ½ upwards. 	Continually monitor that cleaning materials are not left in the toilet block.	Warden		
Because of faulty equipment there is a risk of electric shock resulting in burns	All visitors	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Campsite electrics and appliances are checked annually. The main power switch in the warden's hut should only be operated by a responsible adult. The Warden's hut should always be kept locked and no young people allowed to enter. The Retreat's electrical feed is labelled with an electrical hazard warning sign to ensure users are aware of the hazard. Camp / Activity Leader to be the key holder for the Warden's Hut for the duration of the campsite use. Portable Appliance Testing is completed annually. 	Electrical appliances annual Portable Appliance Testing to be scheduled by the warden.	Warden		

Because equipment trolleys are provided enable easier transportation of camp equipment there is a risk of children playing with them resulting in fall	Young People	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Handling instruction provided and supervised by Camp / Activity Leader • Young people are informed that they are not allowed to sit on the trolleys • Leaders are not allowed to transport young people on the trolleys • When the trolleys are not in use they must be returned to their storage area. 	Camp/Activity leader to inform the warden of any faulty trolleys so that any issues can be resolved in a timely manner.	Camp / Activity Leader		
Because the toilet sinks use hot water there is a risk of contact with excessively hot water resulting in scalds	All visitors	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Users are reminded to take care when using hot water and to mix with cold water to reduce the likelihood of injury. 		Camp / Activity Leader		
Because of poor hand hygiene in the toilets there is a risk of infection resulting in poor health	All visitors	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reminder to follow good handwashing practice via “Wash your hands” stickers in the toilets. • Soap dispensers are provided for campsite users • Leaders and warden to regularly check that there are sufficient soap dispensers available 	Warden to ensure handwashing facilities are sufficiently stocked with required consumables.	Camp / Activity Leader. Warden		
Because The Retreat / Birch Lodge contain potential sources of ignition and combustible materials there is a risk of fire resulting in burns and smoke inhalation.	All visitors	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Users are reminded to not to allow a build-up of potential combustible materials in the buildings during their event. • Users to take all waste from the campsite and the lodges at the end of an event. • Leaders to familiarise themselves of the location of firefighting equipment and fire exits. • Emergency Fire exits are clearly signed. Emergency Exit signs also present above the main exit doors to ensure building users are aware of the options in the event of a fire. • Fire extinguishers and fire blankets are annually checked. 	Warden to ensure annual fire extinguishers and fire blankets check completed.	Camp / Activity Leader, Warden		

Because The Retreat / Birch Lodge has a Kitchen there is a risk of contact with sharp edges and hot surfaces resulting in cuts and burns	All visitors	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> It is recommended young people do not use The Retreat / Birch Lodge Kitchens as there is limited space and access If the Camp / Activity Leader chooses to allow young people to use the kitchens an assessment of age, complexity of you and the available space must be taken into consideration. The Camp / Activity Leader will ensure any use is appropriately supervised. 		Camp / Activity Leader		
The Retreat / Birch Lodge Gas Supply	All visitors	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Only the warden or designated authorised persons are allowed to perform any repairs of the gas supply. Gas connections, regulators, and hoses correctly installed and materials meet correct safety standards. Hoses periodically checked annually to assess that the materials are not showing signs of degradation or failure. Hoses replaced every 5 years as per date on hose. 	<p>Key access to the gas store for The Retreat / Birch Lodge to be provided to the Camp / Activity Leader.</p> <p>Gas hose to be periodically checked – gas hoses and regulator identified with date greater than 5years to be replaced.</p>	Warden		
Because of a dedicated wood pile contains a mixture of wood including pallets there is a risk of slips/trips/falls resulting in puncture wounds including nails from pallet wood	All visitors	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Young people are strictly prohibited from entering the wood. Instruction to young people provided by leaders at the start of the event to ensure they are aware of the restrictions The pile is surrounded by high fencing on three sides to restrict access Wood pile users must wear closed toe sturdy shoes when access the would pile Wood pile users must not climb over material to get to out of reach parts of the pile as it may be unstable and/or have sharp points. 		Camp / Activity Leader,		

<p>Because the oil barrels, BBQs and Pioneering poles are higher risk activities resulting in musculoskeletal injuries and burns</p>	<p>All visitors</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • These items must only be used under adult supervision. • An awareness of the physical capability of the participants must be understood before handling and moving these items from their store. • When moving these items good manual handling techniques must be used. • Camp / Activity Leader must inspect the items before use to ensure they are in an acceptable condition e.g. excessively rusty oil barrels that will not retain the coals; split pioneering poles that could fail during use or lead to splinters; rusted oil barrel supports that could fail under the weight of contents. • Individual Risk Assessment to be carried out by Camp / Activity Leader for the use of these items 	<p>Camp / Activity Leader to ensure faulty items are set aside and the warden is informed.</p>	<p>Camp / Activity Leader, Warden</p>		
<p>Because there is waste storage facility there is a risk of rubbish being left behind resulting in increased vermin and spilt waste and environmental damage</p>	<p>All visitors</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Camp / Activity Leader must ensure all waste is removed at the end of each camp / activity. • Guidance is provided in the welcome pack 	<p>Camp/Activity leaders to perform a final check at the end of their event to ensure all waste has been removed.</p>	<p>Camp / Activity Leader</p>		

Because of excessively dry conditions or the use of sources of ignition at individual camping pitches there is a risk of site fires resulting in burns, fatalities and environmental damage.	All visitors	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tents must be pitched at least two meters apart to avoid fires spreading. • Camp / Activity Leaders are required to have appropriate fire-fighting equipment when using sources of open flame at their own pitch e.g. Tilley Lamps, Camping gas lanterns, gas hobs, BBQs, Trangia etc. • The fire assembly point must be made known to all visitors. • Camp / Activity Leaders must have an emergency response plan (ERP) including a means of notifying all visitors of an incident e.g. whistle, bell, and air-horn. • Camp / Activity Leaders must share their ERP with the attendees at the start of the event. 		Camp / Activity Leader, warden		
Because of dirty toilets and surrounding surfaces there is a risk poor toilet hygiene resulting in sickness and diarrhoea	All Visitors	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The campsite welcome pack instructs user to ensure the toilets are fully cleaned at the end of each camp and left in a hygienic state for the next visitor. • Camp / Activity Leaders are should ensure regular toilet condition checks are in place throughout the event and interim cleaning is performed if necessary. 	Camp/Activity leaders to perform a final check at the end of their event to ensure that the toilets are fully cleaned.	Camp / Activity Leader		
Because of incorrect external water tap use there is a risk of contamination resulting in sickness	All visitors	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The water taps should only be used for collecting water and not for washing food or utensils. • Signage at the water taps is in place to make it clear the water taps are for collecting drinking water only. • Users are to are to wash food and utensils either in the kitchen sinks, the external washi-up sink next to The Lodge or at the own campsite set-up. • Users must not use the toilet sins to wash food or utensils. 		Camp / Activity Leader, Warden		

<p>Because the water valve cover may deteriorate when exposed to the environment there is a risk of valve failure resulting in excessive water loss.</p>	<p>All visitors</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Users must replace the water valve cover securely after access. • The water valve cover status will be monitored when open. 		<p>Warden</p>		
<p>Because the campsite has a campfire circle there is a risk of poor behaviour resulting in burns and fire spreading beyond the circle</p>	<p>All visitors</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The campfire is a purpose built facility with wooden seating around three quarters of the fire base at an appropriate distance to reduce the likelihood of injury. • Campfires may only be lit in the campfire circle. It must not be left unattended and the size of the fire kept at a suitable size for the space. • Camp / Activity Leader must ensure buckets of water and fire blankets are available when the campfire circle is in use. • When the fire is no longer in use it must be doused to reduce the heat and potential spread of fire. • Access to the campfire circle must be supervised and is restricted to use of the brick bridge crossing the drainage ditch at the edge of the woodland. • Chopping/splitting/sawing of any wood for supplying the fire must be performed by competent individuals behind a roped-off area. 	<p>The warden will ensure that ash from the campfire circle is periodically removed.</p>	<p>Camp / Activity Leader, Warden</p>		