



Birchmere Campsite – Wisley Common

Risk Assessment

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Introduction

Wisley Common Introduction:

- Birchmere Campsite is located within Wisley Common, which provides opportunity for youth groups to run a range of activities outside of the main campsite.
- These activities can include navigation exercises, wide games, spotting local flora and fauna or a starting point for an expedition hike to other locations in Surrey.
- Wisley Common, along with Okham Common and Chatley Heath are a rare heathland habitat by the side of the M25 motoway and are managed by Surrey Wildlife Trust on behalf of Surrey County Council. Public access is managed by Surrey County Council.
- Wisley Common is a public space and used by many people including horse riders, dog walkers, cyclists and runners. It also provides grazing to cattle.
- A long term motorway infrastructure project is ongoing at the junction of the A3 and M25, which presents additional risks to Wisley Common users.
- Youth group leaders must ensure they have their own risk assessments in place, but the following provides guidance of the typical hazards and controls may be required to reduce the risk.

Signed: (Chairperson)	Richard Mackie	Date:	31 January 2023	
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
31 January 2023	V 2.0	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Statement of General Policy and Arrangements for Birchmere Campsite have been removed as they are not applicable to Wisley Common, which is managed by Surrey Wildlife Trust • The Statement of General Policy and Arrangements have been replaced with an introduction to Wisley Common • The hazards have been updated to incorporate the new A3/M25 junction road works; contact with other users; contact with animals;

What are the hazards?	Who might be harmed and how?	What are you already doing?	What further action is necessary?	Action by whom?
Because of uneven surfaces, water sources, change in gradient and debris there is a risk of slips, trips and falls resulting in bruising, skin abrasion, broken bones or drowning.	All visitors	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A leader experienced with walking in variable terrain and with leading groups to plan the activity. • Activity leader provides a pre-activity talk to participants to ensure they are familiar with the activity hazards and the expected behaviour. • Kit list to be provided in advance to participants to specify suitable footwear requirements of the activity. • Appropriate adult to child ratios will be maintained based on the age of the participants. In some cases this may allow for non-leader led groups. • Non-leader led walking groups to be made up of four to six participants. Participants are to be trained appropriately and ability assessed by a leader before the activity takes place. • Where indirect supervision is allowed it must be flexible enough to become tighter or looser as the situation dictates. • The route is researched and pre-walked to identify significant hazards (e.g. water hazards etc.) and either avoided or carefully managed. • The weather forecast is obtained and conditions monitored. The route is changed if necessary. 	Inform Surrey County Council, Surrey Wildlife Trust of events on common land and request local advice on terrain and activity.	Camp / Activity Leader

Because of the presence of vehicles including heavy plant machinery there is a risk of being struck resulting in injury, impairment or potential fatality	All visitors	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pre-activity briefing given to participants making them aware of the risks from vehicles in Wisley Common. In particular, the presence of heavy plant machinery working on the M25/A3 junction. • Leaders escorting the participants to be continually aware of vehicles & heavy plant machinery. Clear communication is provided for everyone to move off the road and wait for the vehicle to pass. • Leaders and participants to be aware that the narrow, windy road from the campsite can disguise oncoming vehicles and be vigilant to the sound of oncoming traffic. • Vehicles are restricted 10MPH based on road signs. 		Camp / Activity Leader
Because the Common is open to the public there is a risk of collision with runners and cyclists resulting in bruising, skin abrasion, broken bones	All visitors	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pre-activity briefing given to participants making them aware of the risks from other users of Wisley Common. • Leaders escorting the participants to be aware of cyclists and runners and if one is observed make sure the participants all move to one side of the path to allow the cyclist/runner to pass by. 		Camp / Activity Leader

Because of a lack of training or experience there is a risk of participants becoming lost resulting in panic and anxiety	All visitors	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Leaders must have sufficient navigational skills to lead the activity • Young people will have received instruction in navigation, which leaders will have verified via practice events. • Training will include instruction on techniques to employ if they become uncertain of their route or become lost. • Young people will have been involved in route planning and preparation for the event. • Participants are instructed to stay together and no split up from their allocated group • Leaders will remain in regular contact via mobile phone or radios if necessary • Leaders to maintain accurate records of participants including, emergency contact information, group allocations and the number in each group. • Leader led groups will perform regular head counts to ensure all participants can be accounted for. • Leader led groups will have leaders evenly dispersed throughout including leaders at the front and the rear to ensure no one drops behind or goes ahead. 	Ensure leaders and participants have charged mobile phones so that contact can be maintained.	Camp / Activity Leader
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Because activity participants are away from immediate sources of help there is an increased risk of injury, illness or emergency resulting in severe health issues.	All visitors	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • First aid trained leaders present • Non-leader led groups will receive some First Aid training • First aid kit carried by leaders and each group as appropriate. • Information about pre-existing medical conditions and medication carried with leader kit and shared with other leaders. • Any specific medication required by participants is brought along. • Leaders and participants are briefed and have planned emergency procedures. • Leaders and participants will have means of communication e.g. mobile phone or radios. • If the overall event leader is not taking part in the activity they will remain in touch with the activity leader. 	Parents/guardians must provide clear medication usage instructions to leaders	Camp / Activity Leader
Because of extreme weather there is a risk of exposure cold, wet, heat and sun resulting in hypothermia or heat stroke	All visitors	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Daily weather forecast obtained, on-day conditions assessed and plans adjusted as necessary. • Kit list will be provided to participants in advance of the event to ensure materials appropriate to the event have been specified e.g. day sack, water, sun cream etc. • All participants to have suitable footwear, clothing and equipment for expected conditions. • Emergency equipment carried by leaders or non-leader led group's e.g. emergency shelter. 	Kit list to be shared in advance of the event.	Camp / Activity Leader

Because of the use of barb wire and electric fences there is risk of contact with the fencing resulting in electric shocks or cuts	All visitors	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Participants briefed not to touch or climb over fences as they may have barb wire or are electrified. • Participants instructed not to cut corners and to use correct boundary crossings such as gates or stiles. 		Camp / Activity Leader
Because of flora and fauna in the Common there is a risk of contact resulting in infection and illness	All visitors	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Briefing at the start of the activity informing participants not to touch or feed wild or domesticated animals. • Participants also instructed not to touch or eat items that may appear to be edible unless there is clear instruction from suitably knowledgeable leaders. • All participants to follow basic hygiene rules at all times and avoid transmission of infection from hand to mouth. • Hand washing before and after activities. • Wash hands thoroughly before eating. • If walking through undergrowth full length trousers are recommended to avoid ticks bites. • Participants instructed not to remove insects embedded in their skin and to use a suitable tick removing tool. 	Carry out post check for tick bites, be aware of the tick removal technique. Ensure first aid kits have a tick removing tool.	Camp / Activity Leader