

Risk Assessment Form					
Activity : hill walking, lowland walking		Venues : Rural Scotland all year round including mountains			
Assessed by : RR Scotland committee		Date : February 2026		Review Due : February 2028	
	Slightly Harmful	Harmful		Extremely Harmful	
Highly Unlikely	Trivial Risk	Tolerable Risk		Moderate Risk	
Unlikely	Tolerable Risk	Moderate Risk		Substantial Risk	
Likely	Moderate Risk	Substantial Risk		Intolerable Risk	
Red Rope Scotland's approach to risk assessment					
Red Rope Scotland organises monthly weekend trips across Scotland. The safety of our members is taken seriously and we aim to reduce or mitigate risks as far as possible while also recognising the inherent element of risk in all our activities. Examples of good practice of hill and mountaineering skills and their application are given in <i>Hill Walking: The Official Handbook of the Mountain Training Walking Schemes</i> by Steve Long and should be referred to in relation to this Risk Assessment Red Rope welcomes people of all levels of ability and experience to join us in our activities. We recognise that those who join may range from having little or no experience to having extensive expertise. We do, however, strongly encourage everyone to become as safe and independent as they can manage and therefore commend the sharing of skills and knowledge and the various opportunities to attend skills and first aid courses offered through MS and others. Funding for these courses may be subsidised by the club. The club strongly recommends members complete a Route Card prior to any day's outing. The information on the card includes a description of the route, including any alternatives/escape routes, contact details of all group members, the equipment they are carrying and their expected time of departure/arrival. While there is no leader for any activity, often a decision is made jointly by a number of members as to what route they will take on that day and one person completes the route details on the card. We encourage all group members to be aware of the contents of the route card, the weather forecast, and experience level of those on that activity. Individual members are also encouraged to carry Red Rope In Case of Emergency (ICE) cards with information on emergency contacts and health/medication issues. The group will continue to interact during the activity and assess any risks in terms of navigation, route finding, change in the weather and so on. Flexibility is key, especially in winter months. The club strongly recommends a final reactive stage from each activity whereby the learning from the activity is discussed and feeds back into what members knew before and potentially would do differently in future. This is particularly important in cases where there has been an incident on the day, such as mis-navigation, lack of the right equipment or a fall. But even when the activity has been successful there can be useful learnings.					
Hazard Description	Potential Injury/Damage	Persons at Risk	Control Measures	Risk Rating	Further action Required
Weather	Lightning strike. Heightened risk due to weather, such as strong winds, thick mist.	Group members	Specialist mountain weather forecasts consulted where available. Local weather reports obtained where available. Avalanche	Moderate	none

	In summer: heat exhaustion, thirst, sunburn. In winter: hypothermia and/or exhaustion, particularly if delayed/lost due to poor weather including whiteouts, blizzards. Cold injuries (frost nip, frostbite) in bad weather. Snow blindness. Changes in forecast weather leading to change in avalanche hazard; snow/ice conditions, etc. See relevant sections below.		forecasts consulted in winter. Ensure the group as a whole has group shelters, first aid kits, and appropriate equipment for the conditions. Take weather into account when route planning and ensure options for amending route are considered if faced with deteriorating weather. Complete Red Rope route card before setting out.		
Poor navigation Over-reliance on mobile phones for navigation	Getting lost or taking a route not planned for could lead to serious injury or death. It might also mean a longer outing in poor conditions which could lead to exhaustion, hypothermia, etc.	Group members	Club members should be able to use OS map and compass, even if also using GPS or digital maps on mobile phones. Group should have navigation skills & equipment appropriate to the conditions. Encourage club members to learn and practise navigation skills through MS courses, working with other group members, etc. All members should be able to identify their location using grid ref/ What Three Words apps.	Tolerable	None
Separation of party	Death, Serious Injury	Group members	Good communication within group before and during the activity.	Moderate	None
Water hazards – burns, rivers, marshy ground	Burns/rivers in spate may result in lengthy detours leading to risk of exhaustion and hypothermia. Possibility of slipping or falling into water or bogs, resulting in	Group members	Specialist mountain weather forecasts consulted where available. Local weather reports obtained where available. Take implications of river crossings/spate conditions into account in route planning and plan alternatives if possible.	Moderate	None

	immersion hypothermia. Risk of drowning. Risk of physical trauma		Encourage club members to be trained in river crossing techniques and procedures.		
Lyme Disease	Risk of contracting Lyme disease from a tick bite	Group members	Ensure group aware of risks arising from tick bites, and symptoms of Lyme disease. Group members to carry tick removers	Tolerable	None
Suffering from known illness/injury	Death; further injury		Medication carried on person. Each member carries ICE card with details of next of kin and any medical conditions & medication	Tolerable	None
Lack of communication in the event of an emergency	Delay in rescue, further injury or hypothermia if part of the group isn't aware of what's happened.		Group members to carry mobile phones and share numbers in advance. Register phones for the Emergency SMS texting service. Purchase of Personal Locator Beacons could be considered by all individual club members.	Moderate	None
Steep broken terrain. Slippery rock (inc. verglas), snow on grass or wet grass, muddy, icy or loose paths. Steep snow and ice slopes. Cornices.	Possibility of injury due to slips, stumbles or falls in ascent/ descent (incl tripping over crampons). Also risk of injury due to stone fall and/or icefall, either natural or caused by participants or other walkers.		Route chosen is appropriate to members' abilities and prevailing conditions. Be aware of other walkers in the area, above or below the group. The element of risk is understood and accepted by all.	Moderate	None
Avalanche All types	Risk of burial/trauma injuries; being swept over broken ground and resulting injuries. Avalanches being triggered by group members, other walkers or environmental influences.		Specialist mountain weather and avalanche forecasts consulted as appropriate. Local weather forecasts obtained where available. Club members encouraged to learn about avalanche risk and techniques. Everyone to understand and accept a certain level of risk.	Moderate	None

Useful information:

Weather forecasts: www.mwis.org.uk / <https://weather.metoffice.gov.uk/specialist-forecasts/mountain>

Avalanche check: <https://www.sais.gov.uk/>

TEXT 999: <https://www.scottishmountainrescue.org/registering-for-999-text-services/>