

British Bryological Society Spring meeting 2024 Lincs and Notts

Health and Safety Risk Assessment

It is the policy of the BBS to do all that is reasonably possible to ensure the safety of members and guests attending meetings and of third parties who might be affected by BBS activities. This Health and Safety document outlines the main risks that might be encountered during the field meeting and actions that should be taken to reduce and avoid these risks.

Whilst every care has been taken to identify all potential significant risks, this is a guidance document only and you should be aware that you may encounter unexpected risks that are not outlined below. Before heading out to sites each day you should check whether there are any particular health and safety risks for the site(s) you are visiting that day.

Please ensure that you have read the BBS Safety Code (attached at the end of this document) and are aware of the actions you should take to be responsible for your own safety. It is the duty of all participants to practice extreme care and common sense and not to take risks.

Please read the following risk assessment and safe working practices carefully. If any points are unclear then seek clarification from the local secretary (or Health and Safety Officer if appropriate).

Contact details in emergency (as appropriate):

- Local Meetings Secretary: **Philippa Thompson 0786 664 7377**
- Leader: **Steven Heathcote 0784 396 0165 Mags Crittenden 0789 136 5488**
- Health & Safety Officer: **Steven Heathcote 0784 396 0165 Mags Crittenden 0789 136 5488**

Site-specific risks not covered in the Risk Assessment below:

Leader, Local Secretary, or Health and Safety Officer

Declaration: I confirm that the adopted controls allow the work to be undertaken safely with all reasonable practicable steps taken to ensure the safety of all parties and that this assessment will be reviewed and revised on-site and/or as situations and circumstances change.

Name:

Signed:

Date:

Risk assessment				
Hazard	Hazard without control measure		Hazard with control measure*	
	Severity of hazard	Likelihood of hazard occurring	Severity of hazard	Likelihood of hazard occurring
Abuse or assault	High	Low to medium (site dependent)	High	Low
Accident or injury	High	Medium	High	Low
Bites, stings and cuts	Moderate	Medium	Moderate	Low
Diseases such as Leptospirosis, Lyme disease, Tetanus and Cryptosporidium	High	Medium	Medium	Low
Domestic animals or livestock	High	Medium	Medium	Low
Drowning	High	Medium	High	Low
Electrocution from appliances	High	Medium	High	Low
Fatigue	Medium	Medium	Low	Low
Fire (smoke, heat)	High	Low	High	Low
Illness or injury due to exposure to adverse weather conditions	High	Medium	High	Low
Illness or injury from contaminated land or buildings	High	Medium	High	Low
Injury from hidden obstacles/ material	High	Medium	Moderate	Low
Injury from slips and falls	High	Medium	High	Low
Injury from unstable structures	High	Medium	High	Low
Losing direction	Medium	Low to medium (site dependent)	Low	Low
Scratches/ splinters from vegetation	Moderate	Medium	Moderate	Low

*Safe working practice measures listed below

Safe working practices
<p>Recommended equipment:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • First aid kit • Antiseptic wipes or gel • Mobile phone (fully charged) • Waterproof clothing • Warm clothing • Drinking water • Suitable footwear with correct level of support for terrain • Survival bag (when working in exposed upland areas)
<p>Pre-site checks:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Check with the leader, local meetings secretary and/or Health and Safety officer before visiting site as to any specific hazards at the site. • Ensure that you are aware of any parking restrictions at the site you are visiting. • Ensure that your mobile phone is in working order and that a signal can be received at the site. • Ensure you have suitable physical fitness for the site . • Tetanus vaccination should be up to date. • Ensure you are familiar with prevention measures and symptoms of Leptospirosis (Weil's disease), Lyme disease and Cryptosporidium. • Check weather forecasts, especially when visiting exposed sites. • Make sure the group you are working with are aware of any health issues/ allergies that you may suffer from.
<p>On-site safe practice:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Work in pairs or larger groups and do not work alone. • Select appropriate footpaths/route with care. • Take care/ avoid working near the edge of cliffs, quarries or ledges and steep slopes. These edges may be unstable and/ or undercut. • Take care/ avoid unstable substrates, edges of water-bodies, soft mud/ sand etc. • Take care when walking across site and check for hazards such as rabbit holes and debris. • Wear gloves on sites where broken glass or metal fragments are likely and in areas of bramble or other overgrown vegetation. • Use gates where possible. If this is not possible, take care when climbing fences or walls. • Take care of eyes/ wear goggles when working in undergrowth to prevent scratches to eyes. • Keep away from wasp's nests, or similar natural hazards. If allergic to stings do not enter the area. • Take care on uneven slopes, especially where vegetation is dense. • Wear suitable warm or waterproof clothing in cold or wet conditions. • Wear sun protection where necessary, particularly in the summer and drink sufficient fluids to prevent dehydration. • To reduce the potential to pick up ticks, avoid exposing bare skin to vegetation by tucking trousers into socks, tucking tops into trousers and wearing long sleeves; avoid sitting or lying on vegetation. • Check body carefully for ticks the night following fieldwork and carefully remove any ticks found. • Stay out of fields with bulls or other unpredictable animals.

Safe working practices
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Take care in fields with livestock and don't bring dogs. Avoid getting between cows and their calves. Avoid livestock that behave aggressively, nervously or erratically. Move away slowly if livestock behave aggressively but keep the animals in your line of sight. • If working in upland areas then participants should be competent at navigation in poor visibility. • Do not go underground. • Retreat from fires and report them to appropriate authorities. Do not attempt to tackle fires. • Retreat from exposed conditions and dangerous sites in high winds. • Check weather forecast and avoid working thundery conditions where this is a possibility of lightning. Do not shelter under lone trees.
<p>Working in or near water:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Do not enter fast flowing or deep water. If you are unsure of water conditions, do not enter the waterbody. • Do not work alone when in and around water. • Carry compass and map and/or GPS device and know how to use them. • Choose a route to avoid crossing waterbodies where possible. • Assess whether access points to water are safe to use. Check bank condition and slope and any additional hazards. • Assess bank conditions and determine whether safety line required or if not safe to access water. • Check water depth (e.g. using depth gauge, pole or plumb line). • Check water flow and determine whether safe to enter water. • Check substrate in waterbody and determine whether safe to enter water and whether safety line required. • Ensure Personal Floatation Device is used where there is a risk of falling into water. • Take care on slippery rocks at the waterbody edge or submerged within the waterbody (may not be visible from surface). • Take care when using electrical appliances (such as mobile phones) when working within water. Ideally use a waterproof casing for any electrical devices. • Do not get cold whilst working in water – take breaks to warm up or swap with a colleague. • Always face upstream in rivers. • Take care to avoid submerged structures and debris.
<p>Personal hygiene</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Wash hands, especially before eating or drinking, using antiseptic wipes or hand gel. • Consider wearing gloves if working in areas where there may be a high risk of contracting diseases such as Leptospirosis or Cryptosporidium e.g. area with rat urine or stagnant water. • Cover any open cuts or grazes with a waterproof dressing or gloves. • Check body carefully for ticks the night following fieldwork. Remove ticks immediately using a tick removing tool or tweezers. Ensure that all of the tick is removed.
<p>Post-site visit:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • If symptoms of Leptospirosis (e.g. temperature of or above 38C, severe joint pain - particularly in calf muscles, headache and chills) develop then seek medical advice. • If symptoms of Lyme disease (e.g. rash around tick bite site, fatigue, chills, fever, headache, aching muscles and joints, stiff neck, swollen glands) develop then seek medical advice.

Safe working practices

- If symptoms of Cryptosporidium (e.g. gastrointestinal illness, diarrhoea) develop then seek medical advice.

This is an indication of symptoms only; symptoms may take as long as 30 days to develop and vary between patients. Participants must be familiar with the possible symptoms of these diseases and know when to seek medical advice.