

# East Lancashire Ornithologists Club Risk Assessment



*Image: Dotterel by R Markendale*

This risk assessment has been undertaken to identify risks associated with field trips and indoor meetings under the banner of ELOC; East Lancashire Ornithologists Club.

Significant risks have been analysed and where applicable, suitable control measures have been implemented, this is with the intention of reducing the overall level of associated risk, likelihood of an incident and the severity of any injuries incurred.

Everyone has a duty of care to take reasonable care for themselves and others, by following the instruction and guidance within this assessment and additionally using good common sense and life skills, will reduce risk, leading to an overall improved level of safety and acceptable levels of residual risk.

Note: Where examples are provided, they are non-exhaustive but are intended to trigger further considerations.

#### Key Terms

Hazard – A condition or circumstance with potential to cause harm.

Risk – Likelihood of that harm occurring.

Control measure – Something put in place to prevent / reduce risk. e.g. This risk assessment!

#### **Field trip Activities:**

All field trips are undertaken at an easy pace simply due to the nature of the activity, this will enable all attendees to comfortably complete the trip, however some level of fitness will be required, proposed attendees should consider their personal physical capabilities prior to accepting invitation to and attending any field trip event.

Individuals should inform other attendees, who, if at any point are struggling to maintain pace or generally feeling unwell or suffering any other debilitating condition.

Directly prior to a field trip commencing the event leader will undertake a pre-event team talk, highlighting intended routes, expected time of completion of each leg and any other relevant information e.g. expected planned meal break times.

Head counts will be undertaken on commencement and periodically throughout and at completion of event.

Anyone wishing to leave the event early or before its completion and for any reason, must inform the event leader prior to doing so. e.g. Not intending to travel to a further planned location.

Attendees are responsible for personal transportation to and from activities, however car sharing is encouraged.

Additional consideration will be required should self-drive of driver hired mini bus or similar be used, consideration to be assessed and agreed prior to commencement e.g. Specific licence and possible associated conditions.

Field trips may include boat trips on inland waterways and at sea.

Considerations are required prior to such events: where possible documented specific safety instructions should be sought and relayed to all attendees prior to or/and at the onset of the event, verbal safety instructions are acceptable where associated documentation is lacking.

Specific safety instructions e.g. Evacuation procedure, life vest/ buoyancy aid use and operation.

Consideration should be given to attendees with impaired hearing, where verbal instruction is applied.

Suitable footwear and clothing are encouraged, with consideration of potential / likely weather conditions.

**Indoor meetings:** are regularly held in the Higham Village Hall.

An extensive online document is available, covering guidance on equipment on site, its operation, including electronic access to the hall, electrical fuse boxes explained, food and drink making facilities, lighting inside and out, PIR activated lighting outside main access door.

Heating / Air con is available via ceiling mounted equipment.

The Higham Village Hall Website contains a comprehensive user guide containing information re; access, basic facilities, emergency equipment, List of Contact Numbers etc.

Link to Higham Village Website [www.highamparishcouncil.com](http://www.highamparishcouncil.com)

Link direct to **Village Hall User Guide**

<https://www.highamparishcouncil.com/wp-content/uploads/2024/07/Higham-Village-Hall-User-Guide-v3.pdf>

**Emergency Equipment:**

Heat detector in food prep area and smoke detectors are fitted throughout along with installed fire extinguishers suitable for controlling combustible materials on site.

Water x2 Powder x 1. Fire blanket x1.

Emergency 1<sup>st</sup> aid kit.

Water supply stop cock.

Emergency lighting

**Training:**

No formal outdoor leader training has been undertaken, however existing experience of numerous previous events over a considerable time without major incident indicates an historical level of continued safety.

<b>Assessment date</b>	JUNE 2025
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<b>Assessed by</b>	Alan Stott
<b>Review</b>	Assessment will be reviewed periodically [12 monthly] or following incident or significant changes to associated legislation and or group rules or identified potential improvements.

All outdoor event attendees are registered ELOC members however from time-to-time prospective members attend to evaluate its suitability before officially enrolling as a member, guests may also be invited, these examples are all subject to the recommendations and expectations within this assessment.

<b>Identified Hazards</b>	<b>Current Control measures</b>
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<b>Attendees lack of knowledge of the event; what to expect.</b>	<p>A suitable description of the event is included in the online events log and is verbally expressed directly prior to commencement.</p> <p>The description includes a basic timeline of included events and facilities e.g. named locations intended to visit, W.C. availability, food break approximate timing, other relevant information identified.</p> <p>Where possible a map and the expected route is included in the online event description and often handouts are issued on the day or at earlier events.</p>
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<p style="text-align: center;"><i>Identified hazards (continued)</i></p> <p><b>Slips trips and falls:</b></p> <p>Outdoor events are likely to include underfoot conditions that may be more hazardous: Muddy, uneven, narrow and or shale strewn pathways, slippery stepping stones, steep embankment / inclines.</p> <p>Protruding stones, sods, tree roots, hanging branches and vines etc</p>	<p style="text-align: center;"><i>Current Control measures</i></p> <p>A description of suitably preferred footwear should be included within the event description at time of publishing. Walking Boots / shoes, wellingtons etc.</p> <p>It is customary for attendees to highlight and inform others of imminent associated hazards.</p> <p>Individuals using lifetime skills and knowledge to ensure their personal safety.</p>
<p style="text-align: center;"><i>Identified hazards (continued)</i></p> <p><b>Weather conditions:</b></p> <p>Adverse weather conditions pose additional risk, high winds, lightning, snow/ice torrential rain etc</p> <p>Exceptionally hot sunny weather.</p>	<p style="text-align: center;"><i>Current Control measures</i></p> <p>Attendees should monitor weather forecasts in advance of the event to assess suitable personal garment selection. Event leader is authorised to call the cessation of any event before or during that event that may, in their judgement, be subject to unacceptable adverse weather conditions, in addition alternative routes may be taken if deemed necessary any such change will be dynamically assessed throughout.</p> <p>Individuals should carry and apply effective sunblock during fairer weather conditions.</p> <p><b>See Lightning guidance addendum on the final page of this assessment.</b></p>
<p style="text-align: center;"><i>Identified hazards (continued)</i></p> <p><b>Dehydration and Hunger:</b></p> <p>It is vitally important that attendees don't succumb to either dehydration or excessive hunger.</p>	<p style="text-align: center;"><i>Current Control measures</i></p> <p>Recommendations in place for attendees to carry sufficient food and drink to enable sustenance throughout the event which may be for prolonged periods of time and possibly in remote areas.</p>

<p><i>Identified hazards (continued)</i></p> <p><b>Attendees getting lost or disorientated:</b></p>	<p><i>Current Control measures</i></p> <p>Where possible a map and the expected route is included in the online event description and often via handouts on the day or at prior events.</p> <p>The event leader continually monitors the group for anyone falling behind and takes mini breaks to allow catchup and recuperation time.</p> <p>Headcounts are held pre-event, during and on completion of the event.</p>
<p><i>Identified hazards (continued)</i></p> <p><b>Injury from Traffic collision:</b></p> <p>Pedestrian walking off pavements accessing and crossing roadways at onset, during and on completion of events.</p>	<p><i>Current Control measures</i></p> <p>Majority of events are off road based however road walking is necessary at times, general safety is based on individuals using lifetime skills and knowledge.</p> <p>Attendees should be encouraged to stay alert, to face oncoming traffic during road walking and warn others of approaching traffic and or impending danger.</p>
<p><i>Identified hazards (continued)</i></p> <p><b>Emergency Conditions</b></p> <p>There is potential for emergencies to arise during all field events.</p>	<p><i>Current Control measures</i></p> <p>Most attendees carry a mobile phone.</p> <p>In isolated locations the use of What 3 words phone app could be used to direct emergency personnel to the desired location.</p> <p>What 3 words is accepted by over 85% of UK emergency services.</p> <p>Dial 999 Emergency services and confirm the service required; Police, Ambulance, Fire or Coastguard.</p>

Findings / outcome	Suggested additional control measures
<p>Based on this assessment it is deemed that should the controls and safety measures identified in the assessment be fully implemented and adhered to by the attendees, the assessment should merit a rating of <b>Low Risk</b></p> <p><b>Acceptable</b></p>	<p>Produce and publish a roll call of attendees' sheet for each event, include attendees' acceptance signature as confirmation/ declaration of understanding of this assessment and to abide by the requirements/ recommendations within.</p> <p>Where possible identify a designated 1<sup>st</sup> aider /consider training a key member to CPR standard. Carry basic 1<sup>st</sup> aid kit</p> <p>Nominate key personnel and define clear roles and actions to be taken should an emergency condition arise.</p> <p>Consider producing a documented record of field trip events, to include attendees, location, any anomalies arising etc.</p> <p>Consider holding an accessible electronic copy of this assessment on the club website and inform all members of its location and encourage members to read and follow its contents.</p> <p>Online document should be protected and made read only access to ensure its validity and integrity.</p>
<i>Environmental considerations</i>	
<p>Promote car share to reduce pollution, both airborne and noise, ease traffic congestion and improve parking space conditions.</p> <p>Litter prevention, leave nothing behind but footprints.</p>	

**Assessor: Alan Stott**

**Field trip leaders / planners: Nigel Leeming and Glenn Higgins**

**Club Secretary: Adrienne Lancaster**

**Pre event team talk**

Complete Roll call sheet and headcount.  
Reminder of approximate duration.  
Check for equipment and sustenance.  
Confirmation of current & expected weather conditions.  
Reminder to inform event leader of any onset of sickness or injury during walk.  
Reminder to stay as a group throughout, not heading off from the group, unless agreed.  
Reminder of the necessity to follow leaders' instruction / guidance.  
Reminder to prevent litter pollution.

**Guidance when caught in an electrical storm**

Seek shelter indoors or in a metal roofed car with closed windows.

If outside avoid water and find a low-lying open place that is a safe distance from trees, poles or metal objects

Be aware of metal objects that can conduct or attract lightning, including, umbrellas, tripods, wire fencing and rails.

If you find yourself in an exposed location it may be advisable to squat close to the ground, with hands on knees and with head tucked between them.

Try to touch as little of the ground with your body as possible, do not lie down on the ground  
If you feel your hair stand on end, drop to the above position immediately.

*Taken from Met Office guidance.*