

**SDOS Birding Walks Risk Assessment Form:**

Assessor Sue Miles Date of Assessment: 15/3/22 Updated by: Jenny Holter Date of Assessment: 24/04/22

Location: Hope Gap/Seaford Head. Parking is at South Barn car park.

Brief Description: 2.5-mile circular walk from South Barn via Hope Gap, descending to the Cuckmere valley, then ascending past Harry's Bush. The route is along grass paths and hard tracks with 3 steep ascents/descents and 2 stiles.

Suggested clothing: Outdoor clothing suited to the weather conditions at the time, sturdy footwear suitable for country walking

<b>Hazard</b>	<b>Who might be harmed</b>	<b>Evaluation of Risk</b>	<b>Risk mitigation measures</b>	<b>Comments</b>
Bad weather	All participants	Low / Medium	Cancel or curtail walk	Monitor weather forecast
Lightning storms	All participants	Low/medium	Cancel or curtail walk	Monitor weather forecast
Snow and ice	All participants	Low	Cancel or curtail walk	Monitor weather forecast
Darkness, cloud, fog	All participants	Low/Medium	Cancel or curtail walk	Monitor weather forecast
Hot weather	All participants	Low	Participants should wear suitable clothing and sun-cream, hat etc. Also bring a drink.	There is little shelter on most of the walk.
Uneven walking surfaces	All participants	Low/medium	Advise participants to take care.	Exercise care – paths are generally flat, but animal holes or ruts may occur.
Muddy conditions	All participants	Low	Wear suitable footwear and take care if mud could cause slips or falls. Ask for assistance if needed – e.g. a steadying hand	Monitor weather forecast and local knowledge of the conditions.
Standing water and flooding	All participants	Low	Wellies may be needed if the river has flooded and paths are wet and slippery. The walk may be re-routed if paths are impassable.	Monitor weather forecast and local knowledge of the conditions.
Slippery surfaces	All participants	Low/medium	Advise participants. See also above.	

Steep slopes	All participants	Low/medium	Advise participants. Participants may wish to use a walking stick or pole to assist with steep ascents and descents. The pace will be slow with opportunities to pause on steep ascents.	Participants should indicate if they require a rest to catch their breath.
Trip hazards	All participants	Low	Advise participants to take care in case of animal holes.	
Stiles and gates	Less mobile participants	Low/medium	Take care and ask for assistance if needed.	There are 2 stiles and a gate on this walk. One of the stiles is quite high.
Barbed wire, electric fences	All participants	Low	Advise participants. Keep to main paths.	
Cliff face	All participants	Low/medium	Advise participants to exercise care, keep well back from the cliff edges and take note of any signage.	Participants should not stray beyond the designated path or any warning signs.
Stinging or thorny plants	All participants	Low	Participants to exercise care.	Paths are generally wide and well maintained so this is unlikely to be a problem.
Falling trees or branches	All participants	Low		Most vegetation is shrub level and set back from the main paths.
Biting insects	All participants	Low	Participants should wear suitable clothing	
Farm or other animals	All participants	Low	If any grazing animals are encountered they should be given a wide berth.	Take care not to spook or corner any farm animals.
Road and farm traffic	All participants	Low	Exercise care	Occasional slow-moving vehicles may use the track near the car park.

