

SDOS Birding Walks Risk Assessment Form: Woods Mill and Downs Link - primarily a Nightingale focused walk, but also suitable for dawn chorus walk.

Assessor: Tony Benton and kindly amended and endorsed by Val Bentley. : Date of Assessment. 22/3/2022

Location: Woods Mill, near Henfield. Woods Mill is the HQ for Sussex Wildlife Trust.

Brief Description: Woods Mill nature reserve (almost flat throughout); the Mill Stream (flat); possible extension to Downs Link (flat). This walk is not wheel-chair accessible. Participants (especially the leader) should monitor the weather forecast, wear suitable clothing and footwear, and recognise that a busy road has to be crossed with great care. Leader will check route prior to the walk.

Suggested clothing: Warm, waterproof clothing depending on weather conditions; strong footwear or wellington boots - participants should take account of prevailing weather conditions and possibility of walk ending in near darkness. SDOS information re the walk will advise that participants carry a torch.

Hazard	Who might be harmed	Evaluation of Risk	Risk mitigation measures	Comments
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	Very unlikely in May but monitor weather forecast
Darkness, cloud, fog	All participants	Low	Cancel or curtail walk Advise that torch to be carried	Only a risk if the conditions were very extreme
Hot weather	All participants	Low	Participants to wear suitable clothing and bring a drink	Very unlikely to be a risk with walks held in the evening
Uneven walking surfaces	Might affect less mobile participants	Low	Participants might wish to bring a walking stick or walking pole. Participants need to exercise care	Participants have to make judgements and take care
Muddy conditions	All participants	Low	Participants need suitable footwear and to take care if mud could result in slips and falls	Monitor weather forecast and make use of local intelligence in terms of conditions

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