

SDOS Birding Walks Risk Assessment Form: North Henfield (Mock Bridge) - primarily a Nightingale focused walk, but also suitable for dawn chorus walk.

Assessor: Tony Benton, with support from Tim and Jenny Holter. : Date of Assessment. 11/5/2022

Location: . A walk of about 2 miles through meadows and woodland, close to Mock Bridge, London Road, Henfield, West Sussex. Heading north from Henfield on A281 you pass, on your left, Garden Sage (a garden centre) and very shortly after this you turn left when you see a parking sign. The car park is parallel to the A281 but behind a hedge. Please note that there is height restriction barrier of 6 foot 6 inches.. Post code approximately BN59AL.

Brief Description: This walk is not wheelchair 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. In summary this walk is across lovely meadows and through some woodland, on uneven paths. There are no slopes to be negotiated.

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

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 if it's a late evening walk	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 - the paths can be rutted, or very wet, depending on prevailing weather	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
Road crossing	All participants	Medium	Try to cross the road by the pub to the footpath gate opposite	Participants are expected to take great care when crossing the road
Farm animals	All participants	Low	If farm animals are encountered, animals should be given a wide berth	Participants must take care to not corner or spook farm animals
Biting insects	All participants	Low	Participants to wear suitable clothing and bring if necessary midge spray or similar	Participants to judge this in advance
Obstructive vegetation and stinging or thorny plants	All participants	Low	Participants to exercise care along more enclosed footpath stretch	The route is usually unobstructed in May
Gates and bridges	All participants	Low / Medium	Participants to take care and ask for assistance if necessary (such as a steadying hand). One short wooden bridge is uneven	The 'wonky' bridge is safe to use and has handrails, but the surface could be slippery after rain. Care to be taken.
Snakes	All participants	Low	Suitable footwear mitigates any risk	Snakes not previously encountered on this route