

SDOS Birding Walks Risk Assessment Form:

Assessor: Tony Benton with support and advice from Bernie Forbes. : Date of Assessment 28 September 2022

Location: West Dean Woods, meeting at map reference 197/SU836155 Staple Ash corner

Brief Description: The walk is mostly uphill, less than one mile, although not very steep. Likely muddy after rain. Please note that you might become aware of shooting in the vicinity. Parking at Staple Ash corner requires care, especially after rain, when cars could get bogged down.

Suggested clothing: Warm, waterproof clothing depending on weather conditions; strong footwear or wellington boots after rain. A small camp chair or similar is suggested for anyone who finds it difficult to stand for long periods.

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	Medium	Cancel or curtail walk	Monitor weather forecast
Snow and ice	All participants	Low / Medium	Cancel or curtail walk	Monitor weather forecast
Darkness, cloud, fog	All participants	Low	Cancel or curtail walk	Monitor weather forecast
Frost - especially in combination with underlying mud can result in very slippery conditions.	All participants	Low/medium	Adjust route	Monitor weather forecast
Uneven walking surfaces	All participants	Low	Suitable walking shoes or boots are recommended	Participants to ensure that suitable footwear is available to them
Muddy conditions	All participants	Low	Walking boots or wellington boots	Monitor weather forecast
Standing water and flooding	All participants	Low	Adjust route	Monitor weather forecast
Dog poo	All participants	Low	Participants to be aware	Vigilance is required.
Steep slopes	All participants	Low	Participants to judge their own capabilities	The walk for me most people is not very steep.
Trip hazards	All participants	Low	Participants to judge their own capabilities and take care	

Stiles and gates	N/a			
Barbed wire, electric fences	N/a			
Obstructive vegetation	N/a			
Stinging or thorny plants	N/a			
Falling trees or branches	N/a			
Biting insects	All participants	Low	If wearing shorts or similar, be aware of very low possibility of ticks	Consult a GP if a tick bite is suspected
Snakes	N/a			
Farm or other animals	All participants	Low	Although unlikely, any farm animals encountered should be given a wide berth and not cornered	
Prolonged standing	All participants	Low	If the walk involves watching a roost site, prolonged standing might trouble some participants. Participants to make their own judgements in advance.	The best resolution is for anyone likely to be affected to bring a lightweight camping stool or similar.
Narrow lane with farm traffic and cars.	All participants	Low	All participants to be aware of traffic, take care, and look out for each other.	