

SDOS Birding Walks Risk Assessment Form:

Assessors: Tony Benton, Paul Emerson and Richard Allan : Date of Assessment February 2024

Location: Fairmile Bottom (part 1 of walk), and Arundel, Black Rabbit pub car park (part 2)

Brief Description: Part 1 of the walk is at Fairmile Bottom, with one very steep incline. The focus includes looking for Hawfinches in an area called Sherwood Rough.

Part 2 is alongside the the River Arundel, starting and finishing at the Black Rabbit Pub. The focus includes a Harrier Roost and the possibility of Egrets and Barn Owl. Extremely muddy after rain.

Parking: For Fairmile Bottom, the lay-by is on the A29, about a mile and a half south of the Whiteways roundabout. It is very long and there is parking for more than a dozen cars. Look out for the white food van at the end of the lay-by. The W3W is: ///blinks.simply.nosedive Note: be aware that there is another shorter lay-by about half a mile before, with no food van.

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
Chill factor	All participants	Low	Wear suitable warm clothing	The river side walk is open and exposed and can be chilly, especially late in the afternoon in winter.
Uneven walking surfaces	All participants	Low	Suitable walking shoes or boots are recommended, especially wellington boots for the river walk in part 2 of the event.	Participants to ensure that suitable footwear is available to them

Muddy conditions	All participants	Low	Walking boots or better still wellington boots	Monitor weather forecast
Standing water and flooding	All participants	Low	Adjust route	Monitor weather forecast
Slippery surfaces	All participants	Low	Adjust route	The Fairmile Walk involves a very steep up and downhill section and could be slippery. The riverside walk can be slippery. A walking pole or similar might help some people.
Steep slopes	All participants	Low	participants to judge their own capabilities	One very steep slope, as reiterated elsewhere in this assessment.
Trip hazards	All participants	Low	participants to judge their own capabilities and take care	Care to be taken if tree roots cross the path at Fairmile Bottom
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	Not likley to be a hazard in the winter months.	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	
Notes, part 2 assessed on site by TB 7 February 2024				

Suggested clothing: Warm, waterproof clothing depending on weather conditions; strong footwear or wellington boots after rain. The stretch beside the River Arun can be extremely muddy after rain and really wellington boots are highly recommended. This section is also exposed and can get very chilly.