

Blair Atholl Risk Assessment 2026

Name of activity, event, and location	On site climbing at Blair Atholl, Possibly including Mobile Climbing Wall, tree climb/leap of faith, prussiking, caving ladder climb, crate climbing and tyrolean	Date of risk assessment	9/6/26	Name of person doing this risk assessment	David Sneddon
		Date of next review	6/7/26 (to be reviewed after site visit on 5/7/26 to confirm location)		

What could go wrong? What hazard have you identified? What are the risks from it?	Who is at risk?	What are you going to do about it? How are the risks already controlled? What extra controls are needed? How will they be communicated to young people and adults and remain inclusive to all needs?	Review & revise What has changed that needs to be thought about and controlled?
Mobile climbing wall risks	Explorers, leaders, non participating explorers	See mobile climbing wall risk assessment	
Fall from height due to structure or anchor failure	Explorers, leaders, bystanders	Trees checked to be of sufficient size/strength before use. Trees must be at least 30cm diameter to be used. Area around trees to be checked for excessive ground compaction or signs of damage to the roots of the trees. Trees checked for any sign of disease such as excessive loose bark, dead or rotted areas or any areas of discolouration. Trees with bifurcations not to be used if the bifurcation is below the height of the activity. Bifurcation above the height of the anchors is acceptable All equipment checked before being installed and visually checked before every session. Equipment used in accordance with manufacturers instructions e.g. no cross loading or tri loading carabiners, slings not girth hitched. Thorough check of all activity equipment carried out after any period of extreme weather.	
Fall from height due to equipment failure	Explorers, leaders	All equipment to be checked before each use for any damage or excessive wear. PPE to be stored away from any potential causes of damage such as chemicals, heat and sharp items. PPE not to be stored wet. Wet PPE will be hung to dry Elements to be constructed in accordance with operating manual and to be checked before every session. Quarantine process in place so that any equipment found to be faulty cannot be used.	
Protruding/sharp objects on climbing surfaces	Explorers, leaders	Surfaces checked before use for any sharp or protruding points. Tools available to remove any sharp areas before use.	
Fall from height due to improper equipment use/poor belaying	Explorers, leaders	All equipment to be used in accordance with manufacturers instructions including techniques for use and compatibility with other equipment. All staff to follow activity operating manual at all times	

You can find more information in the Safety checklist for Section Volunteers and at scouts.org.uk/safety

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		All staff inducted and assessed by technical advisor to ensure they can use equipment competently. This is to include their belaying to ensure they can belay safely and an indication as to how the participants should be attached to the belay system.	
MSK injuries	Explorers, leaders	Belayers swapped to prevent RSI from belaying. Explorers advised to rest if they develop any symptoms of MSK injury and referred to medical team if no improvement by end of session	
Entanglement/snagging causing degloving injury, suspension at height or asphyxiation	Participants, staff	All participants and staff to remove neckies and lanyards before participating in the activity. Any loose clothing such as excessively baggy tops and hoods to be tucked in or changed. Strings from hoodies to be tucked in or the hoody taken off Long hair to be tied back Rings, earrings, piercings and other jewelery to be removed before the activity. If jewelery cannot be removed it should be covered with tape.	
Effects of extreme weather: illness	Explorers, leaders	Participants and staff to wear clothing appropriate to the weather conditions. Participants wearing inappropriate clothing will be asked to change to appropriate clothing before starting the activity. Participants and staff to be monitored for any effects of extreme weather and preventative steps taken early e.g. shade and rehydration for heat illnesses, dry clothes and rewarming for cold illnesses. First aider available to treat any illness and further support available from camp medical team as required. Participants instructed to bring filled water bottle with them if the weather is warm Shaded area available for participants in warm weather. Participants asked to wear sun cream if it is sunny	
Fall from height due to unauthorised access	Non participants, public	Area around each element will be barriered off to make it clear that access is not permitted. Any staff member who observes unauthorised persons on the activity outside of activity times will report this to reception for intervention. Where possible belay ropes will be tied up out of reach from the ground and any low hanging activity equipment will be tied up out of reach. Climbing wall lower panels to be closed when activity not supervised.	
Dropped object causing injury	Explorers, leaders, bystanders	Activity area to be barriered off to prevent unauthorised persons being in the activity area. All persons in the activity area must wear a properly fitted climbing helmet.	
Rope burn from ropes	Explorers, leaders	All staff to be assessed prior to running the activity. All participant belayers to be coached and directly supervised by a staff member when belaying. Ropes to be compatible with the belay devices. Ground anchors with direct or semi direct belaying to be used if there is a significant weight difference between the climber and belayer	
Collision	Explorers	All elements to be set up in areas which are clear from obstructions such as branches or other trees.	

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		On elements with moving belays, ensure the belayer, anchor and climber remain close to each other.	
Medical event while taking part in the activity	Explorers, leaders	Anyone who requires emergency medication (e.g. inhaler or adrenaline auto injector) to bring it to the activity and inform a member of staff. Anyone with a medical condition requiring any adjustment to the activity to inform a member of staff. All activities set up to permit immediate lowering of the participant in an emergency. First aider available during the activity.	
Effects of extreme weather: Lightning	Explorers, leaders, bystanders	If lightning is forecast imminently then activity cannot go ahead. If any thunder is heard then activity to be stopped and the ROSPA 30:30 rule to be followed – If the time between visible lightning and audible thunder is less than 30 seconds then all activity must be stopped and everyone must leave the woods. Activity can be continued 30 minutes after the thunder and lightning has passed.	
Effects of extreme weather: high winds causing tree failure or deadfall	Explorers, leaders, bystanders	Activity area checked before being chosen to ensure there is no standing dead wood or hung up branches which could fall During high winds continual dynamic risk assessment carried out by team leader and any concerns about tree failure or falling deadwood to be acted on. Activity to be stopped and all persons to move out of the trees until wind has reduced After any period of high wind, activity area to be throughouly checked by staff members for any hanging deadwood prior to continuing with the activity.	
Bites and stings causing minor injury, illness	Explorers, leaders	Areas which will be walked on strummed to reduce nettles etc. Participants recommended to wear long trousers and bring midge repellent. Participants instructed to check for ticks when they are back at subcamp.	
Inappropriate clothing causing skin irritation or leaving wearer exposed to injury indecency	Explorers, leaders	Appropriate clothing to be worn at all times including top which covers shoulders and tummy and shorts or trousers which go down to the knees. No skirts or kilts to be worn Closed to footwear which cannot fall of to be worn. No flip flops, sandals, crocs or high heels to be worn	

Don't forget, as part of your programme planning, you should have contingency activities in reserve just in case you can't do what was planned or you need to stop half way through. Make sure this is shared with those involved, so everyone knows how to respond. You should have risk assessed contingency activities prior to them taking place and communicated key information to those involved as with all activities.

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