



## SOS Birding Walks Risk Assessment Form:

Assessor(s): Tony Benton and Jonathan Cook

Date of Assessment 8 December 2024

Location: **River Adur around Shoreham-by-Sea** Meeting at 10.00 at TQ210049 in the Adur Memorial Recreation Ground. What3Words  
 ///asserts.zips.reseller

Tony Benton will lead us over the Norfolk Bridge to the Ropetackle Arts Centre area where the path will lead up beside the river to the Toll Bridge and return. This is quite a wide path but is shared with loose dogs, walkers and cyclists and with whom we have to be aware. The path is flat but will also be muddy so good winter footwear and warm clothing is essential. The wind will be cold beside the river. The distance is approx. two miles and can be enjoyed by those members who do not want to walk far to start their yearly bird list. On returning to the Ropetackle corner there is a comfortable coffee shop to end this visit. OTHERWISE, you can visit other birding areas very near, such as Widewater, and/or Shoreham Fort which is the estuary of the river to see if the Purple Sandpipers might be showing. (Both Widewater and Shoreham Fort have charging car parks).

IMPORTANT: "Cars cannot turn right into or out of the car park off/onto the A259. Cars departing the site towards Worthing will need to turn around at the A259/A283 roundabout at Ropetackle. Cars arriving at the site from the north/east will have to proceed to the A259 roundabout (large Shell garage on left) where they can make a 180° turn to approach the site from the west".

IT IS IMPORTANT for people who don't know this area because it adds time to access the car park. Better still, people can join this walk by using public transport. Shoreham by Sea railway station is about a 20 minute walk from the car park meeting point. The 700 Coastliner Bus stops very close by and the Brighton & Hove buses No 2 route also passes very close to Ropetackle.

This is a half day walk with Tony leading the walk. Audrey will be attending (07511 423687) so contact her with any queries.

Hazard	Who might be harmed	Evaluation of Risk (Low/Medium/High)	Risk mitigation measures	Comments
Losing participants	All, particularly those who walk at different paces, wander off route, linger longer and those who need to leave early	Low	Head count in and out. Leader walks at the pace of the slowest and appoints a 'fit' back marker.	Brief the group at the start to keep together
Bad weather	All	Varies	Look at weather forecast Ensure all are appropriately clothed. If extreme cancel the event	Ensure participants understand terrain and conditions to be encountered. Adhere to any Met office warnings.

Hazard	Who might be harmed	Evaluation of Risk (Low/Medium/High)	Risk mitigation measures	Comments
Lightning storms	All	Medium	Look at weather forecast Cancel the event. Care with tripods.	Adhere to any Met office warnings.
Snow and ice	All	medium	Probably cancel	Adhere to any Met office warnings.
Darkness, cloud and fog	All	Varies	Keep the group close together, torches in the case of darkness and making people more aware of trip hazards.	Ensure participants understand terrain and conditions to be encountered.
Hot weather	All	Low	Look at weather forecast. If extreme heat, cancel the event. If normal summer heat, ensure the right clothing (hat, body covered), sufficient liquids and sun screen.	Leader takes additional water in case required by others. Adhere to any Met office warnings.
Contact with biological agents	All	Medium	People advised not to handle plants/animals and to wash hands before eating, drinking or smoking if any contact is made. Where appropriate, participants are briefed on ticks and Lyme disease (risks, precautions and symptoms) before the walk	Participants warned of possible presence of these before start walk and along walk.
Terrain	All	low	Some gentle ascents and descents	Ensure participants understand terrain and conditions to be encountered.
River bank	All	NA	Ensure participants keep to paths.	Paths are away from river edge
Uneven walking surfaces	All	Medium	Announce at start, walk at a pace where people can negotiate, warn if there's particular locations	Ensure participants understand terrain and conditions to be encountered.
Muddy conditions	All	Low	Help people through particularly muddy areas and ensure appropriate footwear.	Ensure participants understand terrain and conditions to be encountered.
Standing water/flooding	All	Low	Look at weather forecast. If extreme flooding cancel walk	Ensure participants understand terrain and conditions to be encountered. Adhere to any Met office warnings.

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Slippery surfaces	All	medium	Occasional slippery parts of the path may be encountered	Ensure participants understand terrain and conditions to be encountered.
Trip hazards	All	medium	Announce at start, walk at a pace where people can negotiate, warn if there's particular locations	Ensure participants understand terrain and conditions to be encountered.
Stiles/gates	Less agile	low	There are no anticipated stiles	Ensure participants understand terrain and conditions to be encountered.
Barbed wire/fences	All	low	Care should be taken	Not expected
Obstructive vegetation	All	low	Care in overgrown areas	
Stinging/thorny plants	All	low	Care in overgrown areas	
Falling trees/branches	All	Low	Look at weather forecast	Not expected on route. Adhere to any Met office warnings.
Biting insects	All	Varies	Warn participants of this and if anyone needs to carry an EpiPen, they have it with them.	
Snakes	All	Unknown	Take care, particularly on warm, sunny days	If bitten, keep the victim calm as possible and not to move around.
Farm and other animals	All	Low	Give a wide berth to livestock. Do not run away.	Dogs can be a hazard on this walk, so awareness is required.
Cycles and horses	All	Medium	Be aware of other users of the paths alongside the river	<b>This walk uses a part of the Downlink, a long distance cycle path. It's a shared space and care should be taken, cyclists can approach silently and at speed.</b>

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Cars and other vehicles	All	Medium	Take care in the car park and crossing roads in Shoreham town centre, the roads are busy.	Common sense is required.
Desk assessment of mobile phone coverage in the walk's area <a href="https://www.signalchecker.co.uk/">https://www.signalchecker.co.uk/</a>			Leader takes a fully charges mobile phone.	All major phone networks have coverage in the Shoreham area for voice and 4G connectivity.
If a serious accident occurs during the event.	All	Low	SOS walking groups are not required to have trained first aiders present and advice is to contact the emergency services immediately.	in the event of a serious incident, even if there happens to be a member present who has attended a first aid course.
First Aid kits	All	Low	SOS walk leaders may carry a basic small first aid kit, which SOS will supply. This does not imply that the leader has qualifications to use this content, but will act in a common sense way should a situation arise.	Please note that the contents of these kits will become expiry dated and SOS will replace these when required. A central register of who was sent these kits will be maintained for ongoing replacement.

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