

## SDOS Birding Walks Risk Assessment Form

**Assessor(s) :** Tony Letchford & Tony Benton

**Date of Assessment:** 4<sup>th</sup> November 2025

**Location:** Farlington Marshes

Three car parks are available - height barriers at entrances (6' 3"). The far (Eastern) car park is at the entrance to the seawall & reserve. Beware on exiting the car park & joining the main road.

**Advisory Notice:** all participants are asked to read this document carefully. Walk leaders are not provided with First Aid kits, nor are they expected to be First Aid trained. All participants must take this into account and must also bring with them any medication that might be required.

**Brief Description:** Farlington Marshes is bound by a sea wall that is very exposed to the elements & can be uneven in places. Some people with mobility problems could thus find themselves challenged. Be aware also that the paths can be very muddy in places, especially after rainfall. It is a very exposed area and can be windy & cold. Please be advised that there are no facilities at this reserve.

**Suggested Clothing:** Stout walking shoes. This walk is most likely as an autumn or winter outing and waterproof & warm clothing will be necessary. Layers and headgear are advised, depending on the weather conditions.

Hazard	Who might be harmed	Evaluation of Risk	Risk mitigation measures	Risk grading after controls put in place	Comments
Bad Weather	All participants	Low/medium	Cancel or curtail walk	Low	Monitor weather forecast
Lightning storms	All participants	Medium	Cancel or curtail walk	Low	Monitor weather forecast
Snow & Ice	All participants	Low/medium	Cancel or curtail walk	Low	Monitor weather forecast
Darkness, cloud ,fog	All participants	Low/medium	Cancel or curtail walk	Low	Monitor weather forecast
Hot weather	N/A				Outings only planned for autumn/winter.

Uneven walking surfaces	All participants	Medium	Suitable walking boots or shoes are recommended. Participants may wish to bring a walking stick or pole(s). Participants need to exercise care.	Low	Participants should make judgments & take care.
Muddy Conditions	All participants	Medium	Suitable walking boots or shoes are recommended	Low	Monitor weather forecast
Standing water & flooding	All participants	Low	Adjust route if necessary	Low	Monitor weather forecast
Slippery surfaces	All participants	Low	Adjust route if it should be slippery	Low	A walking pole might be appropriate
Steep slopes	N/A				No steep slopes on this reserve
Trip hazards	All participants	Medium	Participants should judge their own capabilities & take care. The sea wall is uneven in places	Low	
Stiles & gates	All participants	Low		Low	There is an entrance gate & two other latch/kissing gates. There are no stiles to negotiate
Barbed wire, electric fences	All participants	Low	Keep to the main footpaths	Low	
Obstructive vegetation	All participants	Low	Beware of brambles & low growing shrubs. Keep to the main walkways	Low	
Stinging or thorny plants	All participants	Low	Beware of brambles & low growing shrubs. Keep to the main walkways	Low	
Falling tress or branches	N/A				

Biting insects	All participants	Low	Use insect repellent if necessary. If bare legs be aware of very low possibility of tick bites.	Low	Consult a GP if a tick bite is suspected. A circular or oval shape rash around a tick bite can be an early symptom of Lyme disease in some people
Snakes	All participants	Low		Low	Not expected as outings will be in the Autumn/Winter
Farm or other animals	All participants	Low/medium	Farm animals encountered should be given a wide berth and not cornered	Low	Not encountered on the sea wall, but may be present on the marshes
Cycles	All participants	Low	Cyclists are not permitted on the reserve, but may be encountered Participants are advised to be alert	Low	Cyclists are only permitted along the top path adjacent to the car parks. However they may be encountered on the sea wall
Traffic	All participants	Medium	There is a sharp bend from the main road & into the reserve. Participants should take great care when exiting the car park & merging with the flow of traffic.	Low	There is limited viewing when crossing the road to /from the car park
Car Parking	All participants	Medium	The car park is uneven in places. Be aware that thieves may operate in this area, do not leave any valuables on view inside the car	Low	

Risk Assessment Template 26/05/2025 TL