

SDOS Birding Walks Risk Assessment Form

Assessor(s) : Tony Letchford & Terry Goble

Date of Assessment: 17th July 2025

Location: Newtimber Hill

The path to Newtimber Hill is from the Wildflower Café. The café is located at NT Saddlescombe Farm off the Saddlescombe Road, which is the road from Poynings to Brighton. There is a small car park on the west side of the road. Parking for approximately 15 cars. Please avoid the deeply rutted area in the car park. Participants should take great care when crossing the road. Cross with care and avoid the blind corner

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: Newtimber Hill is steep in places and some people with mobility problems could find themselves challenged. Similarly people with cardio or breathing difficulties could find some of the slopes challenging.

Suggested Clothing: Stout walking shoes, sunhat, sunscreen. Sandals are not recommended. This walk is most likely as a spring or summer outing but waterproof clothing may be necessary, depending on the weather conditions.

Adders: are present. They normally disappear before we can approach. However on cooler days they may be sluggish & should be treated with caution

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	N/A				N/A walks are planned in the summer only
Darkness, cloud ,fog	All participants	Low/medium	Cancel or curtail walk	Low	Monitor weather forecast
Hot weather	All participants	Medium	Participants are advised to bring water, wear suitable clothing & consider using sunscreen	Low	Monitor weather forecast
Uneven walking surfaces	All participants	Medium	Suitable walking boots or shoes are recommended. Participants may wish to bring a walking stick or	Low	Participants should make judgments & take care: this walk involves some fairly steep inclines

			pole(s). Participants need to exercise care.		
Muddy Conditions	All participants	Low	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	All participants	Medium/ high	Wear appropriate footwear. Use of walking poles may help	Low	Very steep in places, participants should judge their own capabilities
Trip hazards	All participants	Medium	Participants should judge their own capabilities & take care. The grazed pasture is uneven in places	Low	
Stiles & gates	All participants	Low/Medium	Care when negotiating the stile. Assist others as required.	Low	There is one stile 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 trees 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	Medium	There are known to be adders on the downs, and they must not be picked up or approached in a way that spooks them	Low	Everyone to respect the need for snakes to be given room. Stout shoes or walking boots or similar should afford protection
Farm or other animals	All participants	Low/medium	Farm animals encountered should be given a wide berth and not cornered	Low	
Cycles	All participants	Low	Not likely to be encountered, but possible. Participants are advised to be alert	Low	
Traffic	All participants	Medium	Participants should take great care when crossing the road. Cross with care and avoid the blind corner	Low	There is limited viewing when crossing the road to /from the car park
Car Parking	All participants	Medium	The car park is very uneven in places. One deeply rutted area must be avoided when parking	Low	