

Valley Adventure Centre – Bushcraft Risk Assessment

Risk Assessment for: Bushcraft	Assessor(s): Ben Girdwood	Date: 06/01/2023
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Overview of activity/ location/ equipment/ conditions assessed:	Bushcraft takes place around the Valley Adventure Centre site, and the designated Bushcraft area adjacent to the High Development area. Group size can range from 8 people upwards. The Bushcraft sessions includes foraging, shelter building and campfire building. A first aider is present at the Centre.
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Generic or specific assessment:		Specific		
Serial	Hazard(s) identified	Persons affected	Existing Controls	Additional Controls
1	Induction/ Safety Brief	All staff and public	All staff and public must attend a safety brief prior to embarking on the bushcraft activity.	A Safety Brief is attached
2	Slips, trips, falls and personal injury	All staff and public	Where possible, obstacles shall be removed. At the time of booking participants are informed about personal clothing and equipment and the perceived risk of the activity. Participants should be briefed on how to move over terrain, wet rock, etc.	
3	Young persons and vulnerable adults	All staff and public	Ensure that young persons and vulnerable adults receive an induction talk and safety brief. It is vitally important that they not only listen to, but also fully understand, the safety issues and rules of the activity. Ensure that young persons and vulnerable adults do not enter sessions where there are older or more experienced participants. No person will be allowed to participate unless they can demonstrate that they have fully understood the safety and activity rules.	Young persons and vulnerable adults will tend to forget the safety rules when they are excited. It is essential to repeat the rules at frequent intervals.

			<p>The minimum age for this activity is 7 years old. Occasionally 6 year olds may be permitted to participate (i.e. same school year 7th birthday parties).</p> <p>Under 16s require a 'Consent Form' signed by a parent or guardian or have an adult responsible in attendance. All other participants must read an Activity Disclaimer form, and the lead person must sign for their group.</p>	
4	Injury due to problems with health and/ or fitness	All staff and public	<p>Bushcraft foraging can be a physically demanding activity.</p> <p>All participants should be fit enough to undertake the activity and operate within their personal limits. Participants are advised to seek professional assistance if in doubt about the fitness level required for the activity.</p> <p>Participants with current injuries or undergoing medical treatment are discouraged from participating.</p>	
4	Injury, burns, and scalds from fire, smoke inhalation	All staff and public	<p>Fire lighting is to be strictly controlled. Use gloves for fire starting if required. Use only the designated fire pit. Extinguish the fire using water/fire extinguisher. Use an open area and burn only natural material.</p>	<p>Fire lighting may be restricted during the summer due to dry areas and local landowner restrictions.</p> <p>One to one supervision when fire starting.</p>
5	Injury through using hand tools, saws and knives	All staff and public	<p>Strict instructor control of knives and tools. Use only as necessary and brief/demonstrate proper use. Goggles and gloves should be used if required.</p>	<p>Demonstrate and closely supervise activity as required.</p> <p>One to one supervision when using knives or tools.</p>
6	First aid and medical requirements	All staff and public	<p>Supervising staff must have a valid first aid award.</p> <p>A first aid kit is available in the Tower or Cabin. An accident reporting record is kept</p>	<p>It may be impractical for participants to carry personal medications during the activity. All personal medications</p>

			by the Centre Manager. Participants with any dietary and medical requirements such as allergies, asthma inhalers, diabetes, etc should make themselves known to supervising staff so that appropriate measures may be taken to ensure the availability of personal medications if required.	should be immediately available or carried by a supervisor if requested. The activity is stopped if personal medications are required.
7	Fire	All staff and public	The site is 'No Smoking'. Naked flames are not allowed on-site unless as part of the 'Bushcraft' sessions at a designated fire pit. Staff are inducted and trained to respond in the event of a fire. Contact the emergency services by calling 999 from the Office Cabin or by mobile phone. There is a mobile reception for most networks.	In the event of a Fire or Emergency all users will be escorted by an instructor to the Emergency Assembly Area which is located next to the water pumping station at the main gate entrance to the centre.
8	Staff and Public entering the area during a session	All staff and public	Participants must be warned of possible vehicle movements on tracks, as it is a public area. Participants are encouraged to respect the landscape and other members of the public that may be in the vicinity.	
9	Injury due to ground and/or weather conditions	All staff and public	All staff and public are to wear suitable and supportive footwear for use outdoors and on uneven ground. Participants are told to wear long trousers due to nettles and brambles on the tracks and site. Activities may go ahead in most conditions. Rain and moisture have an adverse effect on the participants' ability to walk/run safely. Participants are briefed to take extra care because the terrain may be wet and slippery. Participants must be briefed that the wind may effect the session as the shelters and	A dynamic risk assessment is made before sessions. This activity will not commence in storms. If caught out in a storm, instructor is to find a suitable shelter for participants. The activity will be stopped if necessary. Rain showers may temporarily stop the activity. In the event of prolonged and heavy rainfall, the activity will stop completely and the session will be rescheduled.

			<p>campfire may become difficult to build or light.</p> <p>Instructors must ensure that the group are aware of dangers relating to the sun, i.e. heatstroke/sunburn or dehydration.</p> <p>Instructors are to ensure that participants have suitable clothing and sun protection i.e. sun hat and sun cream, prior to the activity commencing and have plenty to drink during the activity. Participants must be advised in cold weather of the dangers of hypothermia and exposure. Suitably warm clothing e.g. hats, gloves, and scarves should be worn, and hot drinks and extra food available.</p>	<p>Lightning storms will stop ALL activities. Participants are made aware of the implications when conditions are icy, windy or wet and asked to move slower and with more care.</p> <p>Instructors should monitor participants for any signs of sunburn, heatstroke, dehydration, hypothermia or exposure. Instructor should carry emergency shelter, extra food, and have the capability to make hot drinks.</p>
10	Injury from inadequate personal clothing and/ or footwear	All staff and public	Sturdy and close-toed footwear is required for bushcraft. Long sleeves and trousers are strongly recommended.	
11	Injury from static and mobile equipment	All staff and public	The equipment is to be inspected and maintained prior to use. The bushcraft area is to be inspected prior to use to ensure that there are no obstructions during the activity. A suitable area should be selected for shelter building, and must be checked for hazards. Provide a demonstration of shelter building and advise participants of the hazards relating to the shelter collapsing and potential hazards in the area.	Monitor the shelter building process.
12	Effect on equipment due to poor storage conditions	All staff and public	Equipment is to be stored in a cool dry environment and properly stowed to ensure that checkpoint lines are not tangled or missing, and that compasses and stopwatches are in good working order.	

13	Environmental Issues	All staff and public	Follow Leave No Trace principles. Do not disturb wildlife, crops, nesting birds, or rare flora. Rubbish is to be clear away. No waste food is to be left. Brief all users on impact to the environment.	Be aware of route choices and the impact on nesting birds, flora and fauna.
14	Ticks and lymes disease	All staff and public	Insect repellent, long trousers/gaiters. Buddy/self-check after the activity. Brief participants on how to avoid and how to remove.	Medical services if rash/redness, increased swelling or feeling unwell. Risk remains through the summer.
15	Contact with soil borne micro-organisms	All staff and public	Wash hands before eating. All broken skin to be covered. Cuts and scrapes to be cleaned and covered properly.	Monitor. Avoid areas that may be contaminated by waste, etc.
16	Poisoning from shellfish or plants	All staff and public	Shellfish, seaweed and shore plants are not to be eaten. Plants are not to be eaten with only the following exceptions: wood sorrel, raspberry, crab apple, and then in only small amounts.	Use a clean area away from roads, dog fouling, farm pesticides. If in doubt, do not eat.
17	Alcohol and drug misuse	All staff and public	All staff and public are particularly at risk when exposed to alcohol and/or drug misuse. Members of the public who appear to be under the influence of alcohol and/or drugs will be asked to leave the site immediately.	This is included in the safety brief. ALCOHOL, DRUG MISUSE AND OUTDOOR ACTIVITIES DO NOT MIX.

Date of review:	Serial amended:	Reviewed by:	Date of review:	Serial amended:	Reviewed by:
Jun 14	N/A	Corbett	Jan 2023	Review	Girdwood
Aug 15	3, 4, 6, 7, 9. Serial 17 added	Corbett			
May 16	General Review	Robinson			
May 17	General Review	Wade			
April 18	Review	Colin			
Feb 19	Review	Colin			
Jan 2020	Review	Colin			

April 2021	Review	Girdwood			
Jan 2022	Review	Girdwood			