**Southampton University Hillwalking Club**
**General Risk Assessment**

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| **General Information** |
| Organisation | Southampton University Hillwalking Club (SUHC) |
| Assessor(s) | Thomas Daly, *President*Chang Liu, *Vice President*Matthew Clark, *Away Trip Secretary & First Aider (Former President & Day Walk Secretary)*Contact: walking@soton.ac.uk  |
| Sports Body: | British Mountaineering Council (BMC) |
| Last Updated: | 22nd October 2021 |
| **Description of Activities** |
| **Day Walks**The Club hosts weekly walks during term time and holidays, usually on Saturdays. Walks are open to all, and students will be asked to register for free club membership to qualify for SUSU insurance. Competent walk leaders plan walks within the New Forest, Hampshire, the South Downs, Wiltshire, Dorset, Surrey and other surrounding areas, hosting a variety of landscapes and terrains. Details of each walk is advertised in advanced to enable members to make informed choices before participating. Day Walks make use of public transport, including trains and some buses. The Club’s responsibility for the event ends once the walk finishes. Members who continue socialising after this point do so at their own risk.**Away Trips and Expeditions**The operation of Away Trips and Expeditions are like that of Day Walks, but for longer durations (whole weekends) and therefore require overnight stays in accommodation and the provision of meals for Away Trips. Both vary in landscape and terrain, and members are well informed on the nature of the trip before consenting to participate. Required and advisory kit lists are provided to all participants. Sign-up is required for all trips, via our website (<https://walking.susu.org/events.php>). Private transportation (e.g. Union Minibuses and personal cars) is usually used for Away Trips and public transportation for Expeditions.**Socials**Socials are held weekly or on a fortnightly basis. They are usually located either within Southampton where attendees can use public transport to travel or are held online. Occasionally, the minibuses are hired to reach events further afield. They are organised by the Social Secretaries and are aimed to be as accessible as possible. Depending on the type of event, sign-up in advance and/or payment to the Club’s bank account may be required.**COVID-19**COVID-19 is a new illness that can affect your lungs and airways. It is caused by a virus called Coronavirus. Symptoms can be mild, moderate, severe or fatal. All COVID related risks on the different Club activities and the Club’s relevant control measures are covered in this COVID Risk Assessment: <https://www.susu.org/groups/risk/210_1634061357.pdf>. |
| Competent Walk Leaders | Competent walk leaders describe individuals with experience planning and leading a walk on behalf of the club. These individuals are usually members of the committee who demonstrate the appropriate skills and aptitudes for walk leading and the safety of others. Where a competent walk leader is not a current member of the committee, they will be selected by the committee based on an assessment of their previous walking, navigation and risk assessing experience. |
| Minibus Drivers | Drivers describe individuals who are registered “SUSU Approved” minibus drivers, based on the assessment of the students’ union Facilities Manager and/or Transport Co-Ordinator. Minibus drivers must be 21 years old or older, have held a clean driving licence for at least three years and have passed SUSU’s minibus familiarisation test. |
| Car Drivers | Any member wishing to use their own car for any club events does so at their own risk. The club does not take responsibility for any wear-and-tear, damage or theft to the individual’s property. In the case of members car sharing, the committee will check and ensure that each member is happy to travel privately. The driver will also be asked to prove they have a valid license for use in the UK, MOT, vehicle tax, and motoring insurance. |
| SUHC Emergency Equipment | Megaphone x 1 First Aid Kits x 7 Whistles x 5Emergency blankets x 6 Walkie-talkies x 8 Compass x 18Emergency shelter x 4 Head torches x 6 Safety Rope x 2 High visibility jackets x 6  |

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| Reference Guide: Mountain Rescue Procedure |
| PHONE AVAILABILITYIn the event of accident note relevant details (location, name, gender and age of casualty, nature of injuries, number of people in the party, your mobile phone number).• Dial 999 or 112, ask for 'Police', then 'Mountain Rescue'.• Give all your prepared details of the incident.• Do NOT change your position until contacted by the rescue team.• If you have to make a further 999 call, follow this procedure in full again.FOR SPEECH OR HEARING ISSUES• Text ‘register’ to 999.• Contact the emergency SMS service by texting 999. Your message should include ‘Police’ + details of incident + location.NO PHONE AVAILABILITY• Tell at least one person not on the walk where the group is going each day.• Instruct the nominated individual to alert the Police and Mountain Rescue at a set time of the day if no contact is has been made.IF ALL ELSE FAILS• Stay in one place. Do not waste energy. • Put all available layers and clothes on.• Distribute emergency blankets and shelters.• Ration food and water as appropriate.• Sound six blasts on a whistle OR six flashes on a torch. Repeat every minute.BMC Latest Advice for Hillwalking Clubs: <http://www.thebmc.co.uk/Download.aspx?id=1913>  |

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| **Hazard Impact** | **Risk Probability** |
| **Level** | **Description** | **Level** | **Description** |
| 1 | Low impacting hazard/minor injuries. Firstaid (if appropriate) will be administered onthe scene and the event will have only atemporary impact on the patient. | 1  | Very low likelihood of occurrence. |
| 2 | Serious injury causing hospitalisation forless than three days. The impact could lastfor several months. | 2 | Potential to occur within activity. |
| 3 | Major injury or death. Loss of limb/s andpresents life-threatening conditions. Inhospital for longer than three days and anelongated period of recovery | 3 | Likely to occur within activity. |
| *Overall risk (as displayed in the table below) is the level of Hazard Impact multiplied by the Risk Probability as shown in these tables.* |

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| Task | Risks/Hazards | Who might be harmed | Current control measures | Current risk /9 | Additional control measures | Action by whom? | Outstanding risk/9 |
| Walking | Weather | All participants | Walk leader takes into account the forecast weather conditions before deciding if the walk can go ahead. Consider rescheduling walks if Met Office severe weather warnings are issued. | 6 | Kit requirements published in advance and appropriate clothing for weather enforced on the day eg: Waterproofs, warm clothing. | Committee / Walk Leaders | 3 |
| Walking | Inappropriate footwear (leading to dislocated joints or broken bones or sprains/strains) | All participants | Participants are advised in advance what is suitable footwear prior to an event. | 6 | Participation is only granted if appropriate footwear is worn.First aid kits carried on all walks, and leaders informed of emergency procedures. | Committee / Walk Leaders | 2 |  |
| Walking | Terrain / Environment causing lower limb injury | All participants | Leader selects suitable terrain for the abilities and fitness of the group. | 3 | Participants are warned of potential hazards, including but not limited to loose material underfoot, cliff edges or unstable overhanging cliffs/rock face. Mountain first aid training is organised by the club so that in the case of injury it can be dealt with correctly. Well-equipped first aid kits are provided by club for each walk and are held by at least 1 walk leader. Path closure signs and diversions are adhered to. | Committee / Walk Leaders | 2 |  |
| Walking | Member gets lost | Any participant | Competent walk leaders will haveknowledge of the route and willcarry a map and compass. Walkleaders will be provided withtwo way radios, expected to usemobile communications and willbe spread throughout the group. | 2 | Committee members will beinstructed to inform othermembers of situationsthroughout the group. The route will also be drawn on maps handed out to committeemembers at the start of the walk. | Committee / Walk Leaders | 1 |  |
| Walking | Water bodies (drowning) | Any participants | Participants advised not to enter any body of water | 6 | Participants will be briefed if the routes go near bodies of water. In an emergency, use any available safety apparatus such as life rings and throwlines if available. Call 999 at the earliest opportunity. No participant should enter a water body to attempt rescue of a casualty. In socials, swim in only life guarded areas. | Committee / Walk Leaders | 3 |  |
| Walking | Trips, slips and falls (from lowland) | Any participants | Participants will be told beforehand to wear suitable footwear and clothing that should prevent such issues. | 2 | Participants will not be pressured into walking at a speed which is not comfortable for them. | Committee / Walk Leaders | 2 |  |
| Walking | Trips, slips and falls (from height) | Any participants | The importance of walking bootswith good grip and ankle supportwill be emphasised. Members who do not wear suitable walkingshoes will be disqualified fromparticipating. Participants will bebriefed on the terrain beforehandand routes along ridges, unfenced cliff edges and open drops will only be attempted where absolutely necessary or deemed safe to. | 6 | Members who do not wearsuitable footwear will be left atthe accommodation or at another safe place such as a local town or village. Participating memberswill not be pressured into walking at a speed which is notcomfortable for them and asingle file format will be adhered to on narrow paths at height. Walk leaders will discuss the weather forecast and its effect on the route at the start of each day. They will turn the group back if weather conditions deteriorate. | Committee / Walk Leaders | 3 |  |
| Walking | Dehydration | Any participants | Participants will be told to bring plenty of fluids | 2 | Members of the committee recommended to bring additional water that can be shared out to participants if they run out of their own. | Committee / Walk Leaders | 1 |  |
| Walking | Sunburn | Any participants | Participants will be told to bring adequate sun protection (eg: suncream, hat, sunglasses etc.) | 2 | Walk leaders to check weather forecast, including UV levels, and advise accordingly through the kit list on event listings | Committee / Walk Leaders | 1 |  |
| Walking | Blisters | Any participant | Participants will be told beforehand to wear suitable footwear and clothing to prevent such issues. | 2 | Committee members to carry first aid kits with blister plasters. | Committee / Walk Leaders | 2 |  |
| Walking | Insect bites (eg: ticks and mosquitos) | Any participants | Participants will be made aware of the risk of insect bites, especially during the warmer months. | 2 | Participants will be advised to wear clothing that covers arms and legs, or the use of insect repellent spray. Committee to advise participants to check themselves for ticks at the end of the walk, especially if the route includes areas of long grass or high deer activity. | Committee / Walk Leaders | 2 |  |
| Walking | Hypothermia | Any participants | Participants will be told in advance of walking in cold weather to bring extra layers (hat, scarf, gloves and thermals). | 3 | Walk leaders to be briefed on how to recognise theonset of hypothermia (e.g.shivering, confusion, changes tocomplexion, lack ofcoordination). Emergencyblankets, shelters and handwarmers will be carried bycommittee members. | Committee / Walk Leaders | 2 |  |
| Walking | Injury from animals (farm, wild or domestic) | Any participants | Care is taken when passingthrough an area containinganimals (e.g. field of cows, sheep,horses, etc) and avoided where possible. Participants advised not to attempt to pet or feed animals. | 6 | Any animals showing aggression or appearing to be nervous are avoided at all times. | Walk leaders | 3 |  |
| Walking | Leader is seriously injured | Any participants | Walks are only ever run if more than one capable leader is present | 1 | Reserve walk leader to be briefed on the planned route and equipped with a map and compass. | Committee | 1 |  |
| Walking | Level crossings (railways) | Any participants | Take care when crossing railways, look both ways before you cross. Obey any signage, barriers, lights and/or audible warnings. Only ever use designated public crossings, preferably ones with visual or audio signals. Never trespass, there may be live rails or overhead cables. If in any doubt, do not cross and phone the railway authority using the crossing phone or using the contact details on the crossing data plate. | 3 | Walk leaders to head and tail the group as they cross. Participants to be told to cross in an orderly fashion to minimise time spent on the tracks. | Walk leaders | 3 |  |
| Walking | Roads (crossing or walking alongside – being hit by a vehicle) | Any participants | Committee members and walkleaders will ensure that the groupcrosses roads in a staggeredformation. That is, in smallergroups so that the entirety of thegroup is not crossing at any onetime. Roads will only be crossed ifnecessary and when the road isclear. Major roads without footpaths (such as A roads) will be avoided as walking routes, unless they have designated crossing points. | 3 | Committee members/walk leaders will wear high-visibility vests if necessary (such as crossing a road on a blind corner or in weather conditions/time of day with adverse visibility). When walking alongside a road with no pavement, in low light or visibility a walk leader with a high vis vest should be stationed at the front and back of the group, with a white light at the front and red at the rear. | Walk leaders | 3 |  |
| Walking | Injuries fromTechnicalequipment(crampons andice axes) onTechnical walks | Any participants | Walks requiring such equipmentwill be limited in the number ofparticipants and will only includethose who have a goodunderstanding of how to walk with and use the equipment.There will always be a first aidtrained leader participating. | 6 | The walk leaders will assess theexperience of the participantsand ensure the route is withintheir capabilities. The route planwill be shared with othercommittee member/ walkleaders not participating andradio contact will be maintainedif possible. Regular updates willbe communicated when phonesignal is found. | Walk leaders | 4 |  |
| Walking | Night-time walking | Any participants | If this is not the intended purpose,planned alternative shorter routes will be taken in the event of problematic delays. Extraheadtorches will be carried bywalk leaders. Members will beadvised to bring torches with them if the walk is scheduled to end three hours before sunset. | 4 | Walks with tricky terrain willalways be planned with at leastthree hours daylight contingency. Trip secretaries will ensure the head torches have suitable charge before a walk. Walk leaders are advised to carry high vis vests to improve their visibility to the group and to traffic (vehicular, cycles or foot traffic) | Walk leaders | 2 |  |
| Walking | First Aid Treatment Required | Clubs/Soc MembersGeneral Public in proximity | A first aider/first aid kits will be equipped with suitable PPE where close contact is necessary.The injured party will be asked to self-treat under verbal advice using a personal or sanitised first aid kit, whenever possible.Advise members to bring along a first aid kit for personal use. | 6 | Before and after treatment hand sanitation should be completed if possible.When treating wounds, cross-contamination should be avoided. Gloves should be worn when treating open wounds and waste disposed of responsibly. | Club First Aiders | 3 |  |
| Transport | Public Transport – timetables and safety | Any participants | All participants will be briefed on the public transport route before travel (i.e. timetables, routes). | 1 | Committee members will ensure participants adhere to health and safety rules. | Walk leaders | 1 |
| Transport to/from walk | Private Transport(cars + minibuses) | Clubs/Soc MembersGeneral Public in proximity | Public transport used where possible as safety measures are already in place. Private vehicles and hired minibuses are checked before use and passenger behaviour is enforced, especially seatbelts | 3 | Minibuses divers are rotated regularly so that the driver does not get tired and has time to recover. | Drivers and Committee members | 3 |
| Transport | Vehicular incident(road trafficcollision) | Any participant | Drivers will check the route before travelling, including any road closures, roadworks, congestion and incidents. Drivers will only drive the minibus if they feel well rested and alert enough. No driver will be pressured into driving against their will. All passengers will always be required to wear a seatbelt – this is the law. | 3 | Drivers will swap at regular intervals, only driving for a maximum of 2 hours at a time. A reserve driver will always be ready to take over at any one time. Drivers will refrain from alcohol until their driving duties are complete for the day. Committee members will ensure that passengers do not adversely disrupt or distract the driver in any way.In the event of a collision, SUSU accident procedures must be followed. Remove members out of danger. If there are any injuries, treat with first aid if there is no danger to the first aider. Call 999 at the earliest opportunity. | Drivers and Committee members | 3 |
| Transport | Minibus breakdown | Any participant | Drivers will follow the SUSU procedures to alert the recovery services. | 2 | Non-driving committee members will ensure passengers are kept warm and sheltered whilst waiting for recovery services. If only one minibus is faulty, theremaining minibus will begin to make recurrent trips to take passengers to a safe space (e.g. accommodation, pub, cafe or walk location). | Drivers and Committee members | 2 |
| Transport and accommodation | Theft of personal belongings | Any participant | All participants will always be informed to carry their valuables with them, and encouraged not to bring unnecessary items. Any other personal possessions will be locked in the accommodation or minibus during the day | 1 | Valuables will not be left unattended. Committee members are responsible for the security of the accommodation and minibuses. | Committee members | 1 |
| Accommodation | Fire | All participants | All participants will be briefed by the Trip Secretaries on the fire and evacuation procedures, including the location of fire exits, manual call points and fire assembly points on arrival. Only participants confident in their abilities may operate fireplaces, gas hobs or other fuel-burning appliances. Participants reminded to keep loose clothing and other flammable items away from naked flames and hot surfaces. | 3 | The committee will ensure no participant attempts to operate any source of heat or fire under the influence of alcohol. Fire exits and doorways are to be kept clear of obstructions. Fire doors must not be propped open. Committee members will operate fire extinguishers and blankets if it is safe and they are confident to do so. In the event of a fire, raise the alarm, evacuate the premises, dial 999 and ask for fire service. The committee shall ensure no one re-enters the building without authorisation from the fire service. | Committee members / Trip Secretaries | 3 |
| Accommodation | Camping – trip hazards | Any participant | Guy ropes will be pitched as short as possible and will be fluorescent in colour. Members will be advised to use a torch to move around in reduced light. Tents will be pitched with adequate space to safely move around. Tents will be set up in teams under the supervision of a committee member. | 2 | Trip Secretaries will be familiar with pitching they Club’s tents and are responsible for ensuring they are in a good condition. | Committee members / Trip Secretaries | 2 |
| Accommodation | Burns and scalds (as a result of fireplace/fuel burning appliance) | Any participant | Members will be informed that they should only operate fireplaces if they are confident in their ability. Only solid fuel should be burned in solid fuel appliances. | 1 | The committee will ensure no member operates the fire under the influence of alcohol. | Committee members | 1 |
| Cooking | Cuts, burns and scalds (as a result of cooking) | Any participant | Extra caution is taken when cooking, including using knives, ovens, microwaves and other kitchen appliances. Oven gloves to be used when handling hot cookware. | 1 | All members will be informed where the kitchen first aid kit is located for plasters and minor dressings. Committee members will assist any member who needs help cleaning and dressing a cut, burn or scald. If there is any doubt of the severity of the injury, committee members will call 111 for advice. | Committee members | 1 |
| Cooking | Food poisoning | Any participant | All food will be correctly stored in the kitchen, including the separation of raw and cooked foods.Meats should be thoroughly cooked through before serving, with juices running clear.Fruit and vegetables should be washed before consumption. | 2 | Committee members to ensure colour coded chopping boards and food preparation areas are adhered to in order to minimise cross-contamination. Surfaces to be cleaned and sterilised before and after use. | Committee members | 1 |
| Cooking and Walking | Anaphylactic shock (severe allergic reaction) | Any participant | All participants of events requiring food are required to provide details of any allergies. Other events: participants are encouraged to inform the committee of any relevant allergies/medical info. Food to be stored sealed and separated to reduce cross-contamination risks. Nut free food is provided by default. | 3 | Committee members to ensure colour coded chopping boards and food preparation areas are adhered to in order to minimise cross-contamination. Surfaces to be cleaned and sterilised before and after use.Any member who requires an EpiPen (epinephrine autoinjector) or other anti-allergen medicine must ensure they pack it on the trip and inform a committee member. In the case of emergency, committee members must call999. | Committee members & club first aiders | 3 |
| Socials | Slips, trips and falls | All participants | All boxes, cables and other trip hazards to be stored away from meeting area. Extra vigilance will be paid to make sure that any spilled food products/objects are cleaned up quickly and efficiently in the area. Floors and passageways to be kept clear of obstruction and dry. Report any trip/slip hazards to facilities teams/venue staff asap. If cannot be removed mark off with hazard signs | 6 | When using SUSU/Uni spaces: seek venue staff or security in the event of an incident. Report all incidents to SUSU reception at the earliest opportunity. | Committee members | 3 |
| Socials | Alcohol consumption | All participants + general public in proximity | Participants may become at risk as a result of alcohol consumption, or become a risk themselves (risk of injury to themselves or others, and risk of fluid loss due to excess urination or vomiting). Encourage participants not to drink too much alcohol, and recommend hydrating with water. Anybody in the group who is very drunk or appears unwell should be encouraged to go back home, ideally accompanied by a friend.Risk of intoxicated members of the public acting violently/abusively towards participants. Risk of drink spiking. | 6 | Participants are responsible for their individual safety and conduct. Participants should guard their drinks. Initiation events not to be tolerated.For socials at bars/pubs/clubs, security will be present at most venues. Alert security staff in the event of injury or abuse. | Committee members and participants | 3 |
| Socials | Transport | All participants + general public in proximity | Members are responsible for their safety and transport between social venues. Event organisers to direct participants to the venue(s). Avoid groups blocking pavements and spilling into roads. | 6 | Where possible venues chosenfor socials will be local/known to members and within a shortdistance from each other. | Committee members and participants | 3 |

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| **Action Plan** |
| **Part no.** | **Action to be taken, incl. Cost** | **By whom** | **Target date** | **Review date** | **Outcome at review date** |
| 1 | Keep up to date with the latest Government, NHS and BMC advice regarding the differences in COVID restrictions in the devolved nations | Trip organisers/walk leaders | Ongoing | Ongoing | Amend risk assessment (if necessary). Consider amending trip plans should guidance or legislation change. |



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Thomas Daly

President 2021-22



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Chang Liu

Vice President 2021-22



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Matthew Clark

Away Trip Secretary 2021-22 and First Aider