

Chase Walk 2025 – Risk Assessment (v16)

No	Risk	Potential	Control Measure
1	Inexperienced walkers	Medium	All walkers must be approved by an appropriate Leader or in the case of groups such as Air/Army Cadets etc a senior officer or senior person with walking experience. This approval confirms their suitability to take part in the event. The route is classified as Terrain Zero under national guidelines issued by the Scout Association.
2	Walkers being incorrectly equipped	Low	All walkers must attend a comprehensive kit check prior to commencing the walk.
3	Walkers not understanding what is required of them throughout the event	Low	The full rules for both walks are available on the internet site well in advance of the signing up date. For the main walk a handbook containing all the rules together with general information is also available on the website and a hard copy provided on the day which forms part of their required kit. At the Scout walk a competent representative of the Scout Walk team gives a verbal briefing to all participants prior to them setting off on the walk explaining predicted weather conditions and general safety factors.
4	Walkers getting lost	High	The 40 mile route contains 15 checkpoints and the Scout route 6 checkpoints, that all walkers are required to pass through. Details of each walker are processed at the checkpoints and passed to a central control based at Beaudesert Outdoor Activity Centre where they are monitored by specially designed computer software. A dedicated team of walk controllers monitor the progress of all walkers and alerted when overdue for checkpoints. All teams are issued with a GPS tracking device specific to that team. This is supplementary to all other processes for tracking lost walkers. Every team is required to register mobile phone numbers at check-in. Sweep teams, who have direct communication with the Control Room, operate throughout the Scout Walk and during the hours of darkness for the main walk. Minibuses and other officials are available to assist in locating walkers if required and are GPS tracked and in direct radio contact to control.
5	First Aid requirement	Medium	All checkpoints are staffed by adult Scouters. A requirement of holding a Scouters appointment is that you have a current First Aid qualification. Each checkpoint will have a First Aid kit as will each minibus. Each team also carries a First Aid kit.

			Minibuses are provided to support the event and all drivers have the location of local hospitals. The option to call 999 exists where required. A staffed First Aid station located at Beaudesert deals with any issues when walkers return to Beau, either by completing the course or returned by minibus.
6	Walkers unable to complete event	Medium	A number of walkers will be unable to complete the event – in this case minibuses are provided to transport walkers from checkpoints to either the Scout Finish or Beaudesert Outdoor Activity Centre as required.
7	Walkers unable to reach checkpoint	Low	A 4x4 vehicle monitors the route throughout the entire event and carries access keys to both Forestry England and Staffordshire County Council land. This gives a vast area of access should it be required in the event of a genuine emergency. This vehicle is GPS tracked back to the event control room and in constant radio/telephone contact. Vehicle access to 'off road' areas of the course is only made in the event of a genuine emergency and where it is deemed safe to do so. Under no circumstances are closed areas to be accessed for convenience. Vehicle access is not permitted to the tow paths at any time.
8	Weather conditions inappropriate for walk	Low	The weather conditions are assessed prior to both walks commencing and throughout the event. The Walk Controllers will make an informed decision to allow the walks to commence. If conditions alter during the event the walks will be suspended if deemed appropriate in the interest of safety (as was the case in 2005).
9	Walking in hours of darkness	Low	All walkers are required to wear reflective Hi-Viz garments during hours of darkness – this is checked at kit check prior to starting the event and monitored by checkpoint staff throughout the event. Torches are also required. Walkers must keep to the recognised paths during the hours of darkness. The Scout walk is designed to finish before real darkness and avoids roads at the later stages.
10	Suitability of walkers to continue with event	Medium	Walkers are monitored by checkpoint staff and other officials on course. Where considered appropriate the organisers reserve the right to withdraw walkers from the course.
11	Event closure	Low	All checkpoints remain in place until all walkers have cleared the next checkpoint and control has confirmed that it is OK to stand that checkpoint down. At the end of the event experienced walkers shadow the last team(s) - this sweep team is GPS tracked back to the event control room and has full radio contact to the control.

12	Debrief	Low	A full de-brief is held by the organising committee shortly after the event and all suggestions, issues and observations are considered in preparation for the next year's event.
13	Walking along Towpaths	Low	<p>A small section of towpath is followed between Penkridge and the Park Lock Gate – this is undertaken by all teams in daylight hours. A checkpoint is located on the car park of the chandler’s shop that can deal with any emergencies that might arise.</p> <p>A further section of tow path is followed between Shugborough Hall and Seven Springs (Little Hayward) – some walkers on the main event will follow this towpath in hours of darkness. Each walker is required to carry a torch with spare batteries. All competitors complete a formal kit check prior to being allowed to start the walk.</p> <p>Checkpoints are located at Shugborough Hall and Seven Springs and can deal with any emergencies that might arise.</p> <p>Every team on the main walk is issued with a separate printed ‘guidelines for walking along towpaths’ including procedures to follow should someone enter the water. This document also includes information on Weil’s Disease.</p>
14	Walking along or crossing roadways	Medium	Where it is necessary to walk along or cross a roadway all participants are required to follow the rules of the highway code. If no footpath exists then walkers should use the grass verge and keep this to a minimum distance. The rules of the event require all walkers to wear Hi-Viz and reflective safety vests whilst walking in the hours of darkness and on roadways without a recognised footpath. A number of Hi-Viz warning signs are positioned out on the route at strategic points stating ‘Caution – Walking Event in Progress’. In addition marshals are located on the first road crossing point as the walkers come off the Chase to assist with supervision.
15	Rail crossing point	Low	The walkers are required to cross the railway line at the approved crossing point located by Marquis’s Drive which is by use of the pedestrian footbridge installed. In order to direct the walkers to that crossing a checkpoint is located immediately past the crossing at Morse Gorse pumping station.

16	Other users	Low	Participants are made aware that they should respect other users of the public access areas such as footpaths, bridal paths, towpaths etc. They must follow the country code and highway code throughout the duration of the event. Other users are likely to be runners, dog walkers, cyclists and the general public.
17	Slips, Trips and Falls	Medium	Walkers are required to take care whilst completing the route in order to avoid slips, trips and falls. Some sections may incur added risk such as muddy or wet areas, stones, stiles etc. Particular care is required if walking in the dark where torches should be used to light up the route ahead. Should anyone be injured as a result of slips, trips and falls they have an emergency contact number where additional support can be arranged by the event control to assist them.
18	Permissions and Notifications	Low	The followings agencies are made aware of the event and permissions gained where appropriate. Forestry England, Staffordshire County Council, Canal & River Trust, Parkgate Leisure Changers, Mansty Farm, Shugborough Hall, Staffordshire Police.
19	Personal Hygiene	Medium	Handwashing facilities must be in place and regularly used for anyone involved in the preparation and cooking of food. Disposable gloves should be worn and clean utensils (such as tongs) used when handing food to participants or staff. Every checkpoint must have a suitable quantity of hand sanitising gel readily available for all participants to use as they arrive at the checkpoint or after using any toilet facilities.
20	Special Measures	Medium	An assessment and implementation protocol must be made of any special measures required at the time of the event and, where possible, the Risk Assessment document updated to reflect these requirements. These would be measures imposed at either Government or at UK Scouting (England) levels and would include special measures relating to Covid or other such contagious outbreaks relevant at the time.
21	Compliance/Safeguarding	Low	Chase Walk is operated in full compliance of Scout Association rules and guidelines for such an event including Safeguarding issues.

22	Use of bicycles	Medium	<p>Bicycles may be used to assist sweep teams with their response around the course. Any such event official using a bicycle must be aged 18 or over. Approval has been given by both the Council Rangers and Forestry England provided all standard best practices are adhered too.</p> <p>In additional all cyclists must follow the rules and regulations of the Scout Association and must not cause a nuisance to participants or other users of the Chase.</p>
23	Minibuses & Equipment Van	Medium	<p>All vehicles are to be checked prior to use to ensure that they are in a suitable condition to be used and that all tyres, seat belts etc are in good order. The vehicle registration is to be checked online to ensure that it holds a current MOT and tax. Drivers licenses are to be checked online to ensure that they are valid and that they cover the use of the bus they will be driving - each driver will need to supply a check code to the Transport Coordinator. At least 2 adults approved by the Transport Coordinator must be on board the vehicle when it carries any event participants regardless of age. Normal Scout Association policies are to be followed in terms of transporting members.</p>
24	Sweep teams	Low	<p>Both the Scout Walk and the Main Walk make use of sweep teams. For the Scout Walk the sweep teams operate throughout the day patrolling the areas of the walk and able to respond to misplaced teams as necessary.</p> <p>The sweep team for the Main Walk operate in the closing stages of the walk normally picking up the last team through either Shugborough Hall or Severn Springs.</p> <p>All sweep teams remain in communications with the event control room either by radio or by telephone, and are supported by the Safety Car and minibuses as required.</p> <p>All members of sweep teams must be aged 18 or over and registered as a current adult member of the Scout Association, not as Network member.</p>
25	Weather conditions	Medium	<p>A general risk assessment of the weather conditions, prior to the start of both events and throughout the duration of the events, will be made by the organising team.</p>

26	Met Office weather warnings	High	<p>If the Met Office issue a YELLOW warning for the area then the specifics behind that warning will need to be very carefully considered before allowing either event to continue.</p> <p>If there is a Met Office AMBER or RED warning in force for surrounding areas those warnings will need to be very carefully considered before allowing either event to continue.</p> <p>If the Met Office have issued either an AMBER or RED warning for the area of the walks then the events will not take place.</p>
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NOTES

All walkers participate as teams of a minimum of 4 walkers. For the main event there is a maximum of 7 participants and for the Scout walk 8 participants per team.

All walkers have a unique walker number, and their progress is tracked by an experienced team of walk control staff using specialist software created specifically for this event. The walker reference is reported back to the central event control centre either on-line or via a dedicated radio network. There are 15 checkpoints that teams on the main walk must pass through and 6 checkpoints for the Scout walk.

Author	Roger Stocks	
Revision v7	Alan Chambers	20/01/16
2017 event	Roger Stocks	09/09/16
2018 event	Roger Stocks	28/10/17
2019 event v8	Roger Stocks	29/12/18
2020 event v9	Roger Stocks	10/08/19
2022 event v10	Roger Stocks / Alan Chambers / Duncan Smith	17/10/21
2022 event v11	Roger Stocks	31/01/22
2022 event v12	Roger Stocks / Alan Chambers / Duncan Smith	23/02/22
2022 event v13	Roger Stocks	08/03/22

2023 event v14	Roger Stocks / Richard Goodyear / Duncan Smith	15/02/23
2024 event v15	Roger Stocks	18/11/23
2024 event v16	Roger Stocks	12/02/24
2025 event v16	Roger Stocks	07/10/24