Please note this risk assessment has been sourced from a known walking organisation-Refer to this single generic risk assessment regularly and always when reviewing and planning new walks. Be aware that conditions can change seasonally. Always complete the necessary paperwork in the event of an incident and make the clerk aware - The risks and risk ratings listed below will be reviewed annually and are based on NMPC best practice guidelines.

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| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | Name | Signature | Date | Next review |
| **Assessed by Cllr Alan Briggs & Clerk** |  |  |  |  |
| **Adopted by NMPC** |  |  |  |  |
| **Walk March 2024** |  |  |  |  |

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| **Hazard** | **Adverse effects** | **At risk** | **Control measures** | **Risk Rating** | **Further action** |
| A walk route on the current programme is no longer suitable | Risk of injury if not running a safe walk | Councillors, Walkers, members of the public | the walk routes suitability has been considered on an on-going basis. This is a mainstream route with a recently replaced surface. | Med | Inappropriate walk routes will not be included.  Be prepared to change route if things change and it becomes unsafe due to new hazards etc.  Change route if Councillors/walkers are unhappy to walk this route. If this is not possible cancel walk.  If the route is busy due to the time of day, consider if plans should be made to hold the walk at a quieter time of day. |
| Large numbers of people attending | Risk of Injury  Spread of infection, illness and potentially death | Councillors Walkers | It is important that the walking group keeps together. The volunteer/ person at the back should be able to see/get the attention of the Front marker/ leader throughout the walk. Additional Cllrs called upon to provide an “extra pair of hands” and help manage the group in the middle if necessary. Front marker/ leaders to **always** wear high-viz jacket to be identifiable. | Med | Exceptionally, Councillors can make a decision to cancel a walk on the day if they feel the group is too large and unmanageable to be safe. |
| Adverse weather – heavy rain, wind, thunderstorms, snow, ice, heatwave etc. | Falls, slipping, lightning strike, sunburn/heat exhaustion | Councillors Walkers | Warn walkers that routes may be slippery or muddy when icy or wet. Walk to be cut short if necessary to keep walkers safe. Opt for shadier routes; carry water in hot weather; take rest stops.  In some weather conditions e.g., heavy rainfall/high heat (classified as Amber Weather Warning by the met office) the volunteer can at their discretion cancel the walk. In this situation, Councillors should try to go to the start of the walk to cancel in person if possible; let Cllr team know so walkers can be advised.  ALL Walks to be cancelled in extreme weather (classified as Red Weather Warning by the Met Office, also known as Level 4 and ref. National Emergency).  **Councillors should also not attend the walk even to forewarn walkers that it is cancelled.** | Med |  |
| Meeting place in a car park | Injury to death | Councillors Walkers | Meet in an area away from moving traffic that can accommodate the group number on the day. | Med | If car park too busy or the gathering of the group becomes disruptive, consider other meeting options. |
| Road crossing and road with no pavement | Injury to death | Councillors Walkers | Avoid major roads where possible. Warn walkers upon approach and gather group at safe crossing point, marshal if necessary. Walk Leaders to wear high-vis at all times. Keep the group together. Walkers warned to take personal responsibility for safe crossing.  For organised walks, the Highways Code advises large groups of people walking together should use a pavement if available; if one is not available, they should keep to the left. Front marker/leaders should act as Lookouts. They should be positioned at the front and back of the group, and they should wear fluorescent clothes in daylight.  Walks should avoid taking place on roads where there is no pavement as much as possible and never on roads outside of daylight hours. | Med | Change route if road crossing becomes unsafe. |
| Obstacles (inc. steps, boardwalks, stiles, wooden bridges) and difficult terrain | Trips and falls Injury | Councillors Walkers | Route checked in advance. Leader has sufficient knowledge of area to allow diversions. Monitor condition of surfaces, steps and bridges over time. Front marker to raise awareness of potholes, tree roots, overhanging vegetation or uneven surfaces out to walkers and ask walker to relay information down the line. Advice given to walkers on appropriate footwear. *(See Adverse Weather Hazard above.)* | Med | Extra care on uneven paths in Autumn (surface may be covered in leaves) or winter if icy. Consider avoiding certain routes. Avoid as many obstacles as possible for gentle walks.  Report footpath to HCC if the right of way needs to be maintained to improve access/ease of use. |
| Steep inclines | Over-exertion | Councillors Walkers | Warn walkers at start (offer alternative route if possible). Allow walkers to take their time to complete the section then have a rest period at the top if necessary. | Med | Ensure steep inclines are not part of a gentle walk |
| Attack by Animals –  (Dogs, Livestock in field cattle, sheep, horses) | Injury / death | Councillors Walkers | Warn walkers at start and remind them of following protocol around livestock. Walkers’ dogs to be kept on a short lead, and walk to rear of the group, if animal is charging let go of lead; do not feed or touch animals. Walk in single file; no shouting or exaggerated behaviour; stick to paths/perimeter; do not walk between the herd or between mother and young. Comply with any signage on site. | Med | Change route if Councillors/walkers are unhappy to walk this route. |
| Ticks (areas of woodland, heathland and near livestock) | Can carry Lyme disease – causing short and long term illnesses | Councillors  Walkers  Dogs | Wear long-sleeved clothing/trousers in areas of dense vegetation. Councillors will not remove ticks for walkers. Walkers should only attempt to remove the tick by using a tick removal tool (do not use fingernails or crush the tick). Check tick sites after the walk at home (hairline, behind ears, back of neck, elbows, armpits, back of knees, between toes etc), and seek medical attention if concerned. | Med | Volunteer can avoid routes with dense vegetation, particularly March – October when ticks are more prevalent. Advise walkers to seek medical attention. |
| Wasp or Bees Nest etc. | Injury / death | Councillors  Walkers  Dogs | If a nest of a stinging insect is blocking an existing route (e.g., narrow route where walkers cannot give a wide berth) then an alternative route should be instigated by the volunteer leader until the season ends and the stinging insects are no longer a presenting a danger. | Med | Invite walkers to make any insect related allergy known as appropriate response may become necessary in case of sting and subsequent anaphylaxis. |
| Routes near water | Drowning/death | Councillors  Walkers | Inform walkers at the start that the route will pass by water (river, canal, lake, ditches etc). Do not enter water if alone on route. Check depth with a wading stick. | Med | Avoid routes that may be susceptible to flooding during certain times of the year. |
| Medical and physical conditions worsened by exertion | Over-exertion/death  Heart attacks, angina, diabetic incident, exhaustion etc | Councillors Walkers | Promotional material explains the grade/difficulty of the walk. Front marker / leader volunteer reiterates this at the start of the walk. Councillors acting as a back marker supports slowest walkers; front marker keeps back marker in sight. All walkers to fill in the registration sheet (which asks them to consider if they are fit to take part). Councillors to ask ALL walkers if there is anything they need to be aware of at the start of EVERY walk. Councillors/Clerk to advise walker to attend with a carer if requiring one-to-one support to complete a walk. Good practice to have a first aider and first aid kit on all walks. Charged mobile phone available; leader able to pinpoint/describe location. | Med | Volunteer may wish to advise less able walkers that the walk may not be suitable for them. |
| Walking in low light/darkness | Exacerbation of all other risks | Councillors Walkers | Keep together; walk slowly; take torches; Councillors always to wear high viz jacket. | Med |  |
| Other pedestrians/ cyclists/ horse-riders on bridleways | Injury | Councillors, walkers and pedestrians and cyclists | Councillors to remind walkers at the start of the walk to be mindful and courteous of other path users. Walk in single file on narrow sections of the route. Front marker/back marker to alert group if a cyclist or other walkers/runners’ approach to allow room to pass | Low | Advise walkers at the start if group has a tendency to spread out across paths (which might appear anti-social to other path users). |
| Oak Processionary Moth (OPM) Caterpillars | Skin/respiratory irritation | Councillors  Walkers  Dogs | OPM caterpillars leave their nests predominantly between mid-June and early August.  Where routes use sites/routes where OPM is known to be present, walk leaders to alert walkers to possible presence; all attendees to avoid physical contact.   Advise walkers that if they develop symptoms of irritation to seek assistance from pharmacist/GP as appropriate. | Low | Volunteer can avoid enclosed routes with probable high rates of infestation e.g., Ebury Way when Oak Processionary Moth caterpillars are more prevalent. |