

# Activity Risk Assessment

Name of activity, event, and location	High Ropes Inc. all elements Hertfordshire Scout Activity Centres- Phasels Wood Activity Centre	Date of risk assessment	October 2025	Name of person doing this risk assessment	Katy Pearce EM HCSC Reviewed by: Doug Stack ACM HCSC
		Date of next review	October 2026		

Hazard- what could go wrong?	Who is at risk?	Assessment of risk	Control measures in place	Remaining risk using control measures
Injury caused by falling from height	Participants, instructors	High	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Safe systems and procedures are in place, approved by independent technical advisor.</li> <li>Climbers are always roped on whilst on the activity.</li> <li>All PPE correctly fitted at start of session and 'Good to go checks' are carried out before climbing.</li> <li>Anyone standing/waking forward of the belay wire, must be wearing a correctly fitted helmet at all times.</li> <li>All instructors are trained, and their competence is assessed in line with our Standard Operating Procedure.</li> </ul>	Low
Participants becoming stuck	Participants	Low	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Instructors are trained in how to rescue participants.</li> <li>Instructors run their sessions, utilising 'challenge by choice' and 'comfort zone' offering options for participants to set their own level of challenge.</li> </ul>	Low
Unsupervised use of equipment	Participants, Leaders	Medium	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The high ropes compound is locked whenever the area is unsupervised.</li> </ul>	Low
Failure due to weight	Participants	Medium	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Should an instructor have a concern of a participant's weight they shall ask them directly. Questioning will be done privately away from earshot of the group.</li> <li>If harnesses cannot fit participants correctly they cannot participate in the activity.</li> </ul>	Low
Injury caused by entrapment i.e. hair	Participants, Instructors	Medium	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Instructors are positioned in direct supervision.</li> <li>'Good to go checks' are carried out by instructors prior to leaving the ground which include making sure all hair is tied back and loose clothing tucked in.</li> <li>When descending participants are instructed to use their feet and hands to fend off from the elements minimising the chance of getting their harness/helmet caught.</li> </ul>	Low

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			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>All descents must be controlled.</li> </ul>	
Injury caused by collision with elements	Participants	Medium	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Participants are instructed to sit back in their harnesses and hold onto their rope.</li> <li>Instructors should wait until participants are stable before lowering.</li> <li>Participants should be encouraged to use their hands and feet to protect themselves from collision with elements.</li> </ul>	Low
Injury from Metal Splinters	Participants	Medium	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Participants are instructed to not touch any metal wires with their hands while on the course.</li> </ul>	Low
Entanglement with element	Participants	Medium	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Participants are instructed to stay on the outside of elements and not climb through or around elements.</li> </ul>	Low
Injury from crates (crate stacking element)	Participants, Leaders, Instructors	Medium	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>On the base for crate stacking, have sufficient separation from belayers.</li> <li>Limit stacking to 15 crates high. If limit is reached, participants are encouraged to push the tower over, in a controlled manner, away from themselves and other participants.</li> <li>Participants can only pass crates to others by physically handing them or using the poles provided. Crates are not allowed to be thrown.</li> <li>Only one crate can be passed at a time with only one other participant present in the fall area.</li> <li>Participants are told to remain vigilant and must always face the stack.</li> </ul>	Low
Injury from broken and cracked crates (crate stacking element)	Participants, Instructors	Medium	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Monthly equipment checks are carried out.</li> <li>Routine visual inspections are completed and signed for at the start of the day and before each session.</li> </ul>	Low
Weather	Participants, Leaders, Instructors	Low	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Centre Management Team/Lead Instructors must check weather at start of day and monitor throughout.</li> <li>Sessions must be stopped if wind speeds exceed 24mph, dependant on location.</li> <li>If crates become too slippery, session must be stopped immediately.</li> <li>Sessions must be stopped immediately in thunder and lightning, and wait for 30 minutes after end of storm, before re commencing.</li> </ul>	Low

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			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Sessions to be cancelled in extreme hot or cold temperatures.</li> </ul>	
Uncontrolled groups of young people	Participants, Leaders, Instructors	Medium	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Groups must be accompanied by a supervising adult.</li> <li>Group leader is responsible for managing the groups behaviour as stated in the booking terms and conditions.</li> </ul>	Low
Self-led sessions/ equipment	Participants, Leaders	Medium	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Group leader is responsible to ensure that those with own permits/qualifications must have completed and signed a Self-Led Activity Registration Form for the activity. Up-to-date permits/qualifications must be uploaded.</li> <li>Supervising adult must be shown the activity area/activity equipment by centre staff before commencing the activity or been provided an alternative method.</li> <li>An additional competent adult should be present supervising individuals that are not engaged on the activity.</li> <li>Those with own permits/qualifications are responsible for their own risk assessment in addition to this risk assessment.</li> <li>When using own equipment individuals are responsible for their own risk assessment. In addition individuals must provide evidence of appropriate equipment records and must be set-up and run to HCSC standard operating procedures.</li> </ul>	Low
Clients with additional abilities/pre-existing health issues	Participants, Leaders, Instructors	Medium	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Group leader must provide information about significant medical requirements and additional needs during the booking process. Instructors should discuss any needs with group leaders before the session is started.</li> <li>Lead instructors/management should review information and make any specific adaptations, determined with an individual risk assessment.</li> <li>Group leader is responsible for having access to essential medication i.e. inhalers.</li> <li>Participants with a history of injuries should be warned about the physical nature of taking part in this activity and have read the activity information before starting.</li> </ul>	Low
Novice participants	Participants, Leaders, Instructors	Medium	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Ratio of 2 instructors and at least one competent adult per 15 participants.</li> <li>Safety briefing given at the start of the session to identify the specific hazards and safety rules to follow and reinforced throughout.</li> </ul>	Low
Failure of equipment	Participants, Leaders, Instructors	Medium	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Monthly equipment checks are carried out.</li> <li>Routine visual inspections completed and signed for at the start of the day and before each session by the activities team.</li> </ul>	Low

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			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>If the activity equipment has a defect during use, the activity must be stopped immediately until repairs are completed, safety checks carried out and verified so activity can recommence. This must be recorded appropriately.</li> </ul>	
Poorly maintained activity area	Participants, Leaders, Instructors	Medium	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Annual external independent inspections are carried out.</li> <li>Monthly activity area checks are carried out.</li> <li>Routine visual inspections completed and signed for at the start of the day and before each session by the activities team.</li> <li>If the activity area has a defect during use, the activity must be stopped immediately until repairs are completed, safety checks carried out and verified so activity can recommence. This must be recorded appropriately.</li> </ul>	Low
Misuse of equipment	Participants, Leaders, Instructors	Medium	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Clear briefing is provided at the start of the session.</li> <li>Instructors to follow safe systems they have been taught.</li> </ul>	Low
General Injury	Participants, Leaders, Instructors	Medium	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Groups are responsible for their own first aid. Groups must have someone adequately trained and have a suitable first aid kit.</li> <li>Additional first aid kit and defibrillator are available at reception/activity and key staff on duty to offer further support if required.</li> <li>Those with NGB qualifications must hold a valid first aid qualification (if a requirement).</li> </ul>	Low