




High Ropes Safety Arrangements and Risk Assessment

Summary

Significant hazards: The structure, the environment, the weather, midges, competencies

Associated risks: Failure of the structures, injuries from falling from height, injuries from falling objects, sunburn, dehydration, hypothermia, lack of concentration, muscular strain, emotional stress, friction burns.

Controls: Participants to be briefed on the safety arrangements by the person in charge.
 The activity will be lead by a competent instructor(s).
 Regular inspections of the equipment are to be carried out.
 Lapwing Lodge Management Board will carry out and record the findings of safety compliance inspections and take appropriate corrective action when necessary.

		Signed:	Date:
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Approved by:	Hilary Graham, Chair Person		
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Next review date:			

High Ropes

Rule 9.78 High Ropes Activities.

- a. High ropes activities are: Any off ground activity, not covered by the adventurous activity permit scheme that should use a belay or similar safety system such as cow's tails or a trolley system. Examples of what activities are included within this can be found in FS120423 *High Ropes*.
- b. Temporary high ropes structures are: A high ropes construction erected for a single event or no longer than a week, whichever is longer.
- c. Permanent high ropes structures are: A high ropes construction not classed as temporary.

Rule 9.79 Permanent High Ropes Activities

- a. Construction and maintenance of permanent high ropes structures must follow the guidelines in AAIAAC (Adventure Activities Industry Advisory Committee) – The UK Ropes Course Guide. This can be found at www.scouts.org.uk/highropessetup.
- b. Permanent high ropes structures must have a written operating manual which needs to be approved by a Technical Adviser. The minimum qualification of a Technical Adviser is Mountain Instructor Award (MIA) or a European Ropes Course Association (ERCA) qualified high ropes instructor qualified to rescue (or equivalent of higher).

Further details of what should be included within the operating manual can be found in FS120423 *High Ropes*.

Rule 9.80 Temporary High Ropes Activities

- a. Construction of temporary high ropes activities must follow the guidelines contained in FS120423 *High Ropes*.
- b. Temporary high ropes activities must be constructed and operated either:

By the holder of a climbing permit (that includes selecting anchors and setting up belay systems), or a caving or mine exploration permit holder (not including a permit for caving or mine exploration – no vertical pitches). Operation (group size, supervision levels etc) must be within the remit of the permit.

Or

Using a setup agreed by a County Climbing Assessor or a European Ropes Course Association (ERCA) instructor qualified to rescue (or equivalent or higher), and which is: Constructed by a competent person, and has a written operating manual, both of which must be agreed by a County Climbing Assessor or a European Ropes Course Association (ERCA) instructor qualified to rescue (or equivalent or higher).

Further details of what should be included within the operating manual can be found in FS120423 *High Ropes*.

Lapwing Lodge Risk Assessment: High Ropes

Adventurous Activities Permit Scheme applies to:

Climbing and abseiling, except;

- bouldering;
- climbs using auto belay systems (systems that lower a climber to the ground without any human intervention)

Supervision requirements:

Activities Coordinator: This person is responsible for the implementation of the high ropes safety arrangements.

Person in Charge: A single instructor will be appointed in charge of all high rope activity. This person will have overall responsibility.

Qualifications: All instructors will have attended and passed a site specific training course from an approved ropes course training company.

Ratios: The Instructor / participant ratios for the ropes course must never exceed 1:12. There must always be a fully qualified instructor onsite who has been trained in accessing and rescues.

Assistants: Each instructor will have an assistant to help oversee the activities and will be trained in emergency rescue belaying.

Lapwing Lodge Risk Assessment: High Ropes

Summary of health & safety controls and pre-activity assessments record:

Actions	PIC to record findings of their assessments.
Name of competent Person in Charge (PIC):	
PIC to visually inspect high ropes structure for defects:	
PIC to inspect high ropes equipment for defects:	
PIC to inspect ground cover for defects:	
PIC to assess weather conditions:	
PIC to assess ability / health of the group:	
PIC to record the number of those participating:	
PIC to brief the group on the safety arrangements:	
PIC to lead warm-up exercise.	
PIC signature, date and time	

Lapwing Lodge Risk Assessment: High Ropes

What are the hazards?	Risk	Who might be harmed	Risk Control	Responsibility
The high ropes structure	Injury from failure of the structure	Anyone	Annual professional inspection in accordance with BS EN: 15567 part 2: Sports and recreational facilities – Rope courses – Operational requirements. The structure, elements and all supporting operational methods will be independently inspected.	Camp warden Inspection to be recorded. All components of the course, structural, geological, operational and environmental must be reviewed, inspected and Certified annually by an external Ropes Course Inspection Company.
The high ropes structure	Injury from failure of the structure	Anyone	Fixed equipment to be inspected at monthly intervals by a qualified Instructor.	Camp warden Qualified Instructor Inspection to be recorded. All components and parts of the structure to be checked for signs of damage and wear

Lapwing Lodge Risk Assessment: High Ropes

<p>The high ropes structure</p>	<p>Injury from failure of the structure</p>	<p>Anyone</p>	<p>Pre-use inspections to be carried out by a qualified Instructor.</p>	<p>Vandalism: Any signs of unauthorized entry to the ropes course (or part off). Has the course been vandalized, damaged or tampered with. Storm Damage: Any signs that the ropes course (or part of) has been damaged by high winds or lightning. Ground Cover: The wood chip, pea gravel or rubber matting should be thoroughly inspected for foreign objects that may cause injury to participants. If any objects are found, they are to be removed before the course can be used. Personal Protective Equipment: All P.P.E. must be inspected in accordance with the relevant manufactures recommendations supplied with the equipment.</p>	<p>Camp warden Qualified Instructor</p>
<p>Unauthorised Use of facility</p>	<p>Injury from misuse</p>	<p>Anyone</p>	<p>This is a normally a prohibited area. All climbing ropes and equipment to be removed to secure storage. All tracer lines to be secured out of reach. Ladders removed to secure storage.</p>	<p>Before any activities take place arrangements will be made with staff. Staff vigilance.</p>	<p>Staff – Person in charge</p>

Lapwing Lodge Risk Assessment: High Ropes

Climbing	Person unfit to participate	All Participants	Participants to be asked if they have any physical or medical conditions which may affect their ability to kayak.	Staff to make a judgement if a person is fit to participate. Professional advice may have to be sought.	Staff – Person in charge
Climbing	Strains	All Participants	All participants to take part in a warm up session to include stretching exercises.	All participants to be briefed on basic climbing techniques.	Staff – Person in charge
Climbing	Equipment failure	All Participants	All equipment checked prior to use. Any equipment found to be damaged or suspect to be shall be withdrawn from use. All equipment to correspond to relevant specifications (UIAA or CE). Regular checks, replacement and maintenance of equipment.	Withdrawn equipment to be removed and placed in quarantine, to be repaired or scrapped. All belay systems to include the ground anchors or bases of posts. Fixed equipment to be checked and maintained as per maintenance schedule.	Staff – Person in charge
Climbing	Head injuries from falling objects.	All Participants	All participants and staff must wear helmets at all times All participants to ensure their pockets are empty.	Staff vigilance throughout session.	Staff – Person in charge
Climbing	Falling from height		All participants to wear a full body harness and helmet. All participants to be belayed throughout climbing.	Staff to tie security knot in the 'dead rope' at a suitable point during climbing.	Staff – Person in charge

Lapwing Lodge Risk Assessment: High Ropes

Extreme Weather	Lightning	All Participants	<p>If lightning or other extreme conditions are to be expected the session must not proceed.</p> <p>If conditions manifest themselves during the session abandon and get the group to safety as quickly as possible.</p>	Staff to Obtain weather forecast prior to session taking place.	Staff – Person in charge
Weather	Hypothermia	All Participants	Staff to ensure that clothing is appropriate to the prevailing weather conditions.	Staff to take action if clothing is inappropriate to ensure the welfare of the participant.	Staff – Person in charge
Weather	Sunburn and dehydration	All Participants	Ensure that all participants are aware of the need to protect themselves from the sun and drink water.	Staff to take action if clothing is inappropriate to ensure the welfare of the participant.	Staff – Person in charge
Midges	Distraction leading to an accident	All Participants	Staff to make a judgement when the midges are excessive. If so, the session must not proceed.	Staff vigilance throughout session.	Staff – Person in charge
Belaying	Climbers falling	Climbers	<p>Belayers are to be briefed and assessed on the use of the belaying arrangement by their instructor.</p> <p>The instructor to supervise the belayers who may employ a competent assistant.</p>	<p>The <i>Petzl GriGri</i> is a self-braking belay device. When the rope, tied to a climber, comes under sudden tension, usually from a fall, a cam inside the GriGri pinches the rope and stops the climber's fall.</p> <p>Note: The <i>Petzl GriGri</i> is NOT an auto-locking hands-free device.</p>	Staff – Person in charge

Lapwing Lodge Risk Assessment: High Ropes

Climbing	Ill-fitting equipment	All Participants	<p>All participants to have their personal protection equipment checked by staff prior to beginning the session.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Harnesses • Helmets • Gloves <p>Appropriate shoes to be worn.</p>	<p>Staff vigilance to ensure that equipment remains correctly fitted throughout the session.</p> <p>Staff to inspect that shoes / boots are in good condition and that laces or other fastenings are correctly secured.</p>	Staff – Person in charge
Climbing	Entrapment	All Participants	<p>Entrapment of hair/ fingers/ jewellery in rope, etc.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Long hair to be tied up, • Jewellery to be removed. 	Participants made aware of hazard and instructors to monitor.	Staff – Person in charge
Climbing	Failure of belay system and operation.	All Participants	<p>Refer to emergency / rescue plan</p> <p>Recognised belay systems only should be used.</p>		Staff – Person in charge
Climbing	Ground anchors	All Participants	<p>Anchors are rated but must only be used as indirect belays.</p> <p>The anchors are to be used as part of a system which also includes a person belaying.</p>		Staff – Person in charge

Lapwing Lodge Risk Assessment: High Ropes

Abseiling	Falling from height	All Participants	<p>Participants to be secured to the safety line when waiting at the top of the tower.</p> <p>All participants working at height to wear a harness and helmet.</p> <p>Participants to be secured to an abseil rope and a safety rope belayed from the top.</p> <p>The abseil to be releasable to allow for lowering the case of emergencies.</p>	Staff – Person in charge
Abseiling	Burns to hands	All Participants	<p>Consideration given to participants to wearing gloves.</p>	Staff – Person in charge
Crate Stack	Hit by Crates	All Participants	<p>Belay points to be chosen well away from the area of Collapse.</p>	Staff – Person in charge
Ladders	Falling from height	All Participants	<p>Ladders to be secured when in use.</p>	Staff – Person in charge
			<p>Spectators to be kept well away from the area of Collapse.</p>	Staff – Person in charge
			<p>Ladders to be inspected before use for damage.</p>	Staff – Person in charge