

The Hebden – 21st January 2012 – Risk Assessment

Risk – Possibility of Accidental Injury or Damage around car park, hall and start areas due to number of entrants

Two car parks are available near the start venue which hold over 150 cars. One car park is at the Community Centre on rough ground (100 spaces) with the other at Valley Medical Centre (50 spaces) on a tarmaced area. Both are within a two minute walk of the Church Hall. There will be 4 or more marshals to supervise parking. Additionally there is car parking outside the Church Hall for marshals collecting food and other items for CPs. This will be supervised by 1 marshal. The start venue is a modern building and capable of holding the maximum entry although the numbers are only expected to be at their maximum for a short period before the start. There are convenient and signed fire exits. The kitchen area where hot food is produced is not accessible by entrants and has a hatch for serving warm food. The start area exits onto a main road for 200 yards. Marshals will warn traffic which is expected to be light at 8 am.

Risk considered low

Risk of Injury while crossing Major Roads

The event crosses 3 major A roads in the area. Only one of these poses a hazard and this is 1 mile after the start where entrants will still be bunched. There will be 2 or more marshals at this crossing to control entrants and to warn traffic. A warning board will be placed on the road which approaches the crossing from Halifax. A warning board will be displayed at the unmanned crossing on the approach to Peckett Well. The crossing at Eastwood is sighted both ways. Additionally a warning board will be placed before the blind corner on the minor road out of Birchcliffe. Entrants are expected to take normal care when crossing roads.

Risk considered low

Risk.- Possibility of losing entrants on route.

Entrants are issued with a detailed route description and this in conjunction with a map and compass should limit the risk. Many entrants now also use satellite navigation. Difficult areas of the route in the second half are waymarked. Additionally entrants carry a numbered tally and these numbers are controlled by marshals at check points (CPs) every 3 miles. CPs will be in contact with base via a Raynet radio link at all CPs, except CP6 which is a mile from the finish, to identify entrants who are missing. A sweep team follows the last entrant. Entrants will be withdrawn if at CP4 they are forecasted to end their walking too late in the dark. All entrants are advised to carry mobile phones.

Risk considered low.

Risk - Possibility of entrants suffering from dehydration and exhaustion.

CPs are sited every 3 miles and there are 6 in the 22 mile route and 4 in the 14 mile route. Refreshments and drinks will be available at each one with more substantial food and drinks available at CP3. Entrants are members of walking and running organisations, and enter events regularly, and are therefore experienced. However non- members are allowed to enter so risk to them is higher due to possible lack of experience. Retirees must retire at CPs and transport will be available to take them back to the start. There is an emergency telephone number and contact with the start venue is through the Raynet Group. Entrants are recommended to carry a safety blanket and other minimum levels of equipment.

Risk considered low.

Risk - Danger of injury to entrants due to uneven and slippery ground.

Weather in January is expected to be poor and therefore the risk is increased due to wet paving stones and muddy surfaces. Minor injuries would be handled by the casualty department at Halifax General Hospital about 10 miles away. Would expect emergency services to handle serious injury. All entrants will be issued with emergency telephone number to alert start venue of situation. Stiles and gates are generally in good order.

Risk considered medium

Risk – Danger of injury to entrants due to paths overgrown with vegetation

Many paths have brambles at knee level and overhanging branches at eye level which often remain un-cleared by councils and land owners and therefore create a risk of personal injury. Entrants readily recognise this and take appropriate precautions themselves to minimise the risk. Where possible attempts are made by the organisers to clear these and to warn of unseen obstructions.

Risk considered medium

Risk – Possibility of risk to the general public

The route is over public rights of way many of which are narrow paths but these are unlikely to be frequented by general members of the public in winter. Buildings very close to the route have been notified of the event.

Risk considered low

Risk - Damage to third party property

Entrants agree to abide by the countryside code to use stiles and gates and not to climb over walls. Very few smoke and all are careful about litter.

Risk considered low.

Risk – Food Contamination

Food is prepared and served at the start, finish, and at most checkpoints. The start and finish are indoors but 5 of the 6 checkpoints are outside. We buy the food as fresh as possible. The pork pies for the meal at the finish will be made and collected on the day of the event. The bread is collected on the day of the event or the evening before from Tesco's in Halifax. All food contained in tins and packaging is bought for the event and is well within its use by date. Some tins and bottles are carried over from our July event but are always within their use-by date. Some of the cakes are home baked in the weeks before the event and then frozen. The ingredients going into the apple crumble are pre-prepared with the stewed apple being frozen. The crumble is baked at the finish and the custard is made on demand. As much food as possible for the check points, such as sandwiches, is prepared at the start and then plastic wrapped and sent out. Liquids are dispatched from the Hall in large plastic drums which are rinsed out before being filled with water. The food preparation is limited to nominated individuals.

Risk considered low.

3rd August 2011