# Challenge Walk Event – Risk Assessment TemplateV6.0

# October 2026

## INTRODUCTION

## DETAILS OF THE EVENT. Essex Walker 2026

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| Date of event | 25th October 2026 |
| Local Group Organiser | Essex Herts LDWA |
| Event Start | Blackmore Village Hall |
| Event Finish | Blackmore Village Hall |
| Risk Assessment Author | Mike Wheatley |

## DESCRIPTION OF EVENT

A choice of 26 or 18 mile circular routes from Blackmore Village Hall with three checkpoints on the 26 mile route and one on the 18 mile route.

## AIM OF RISK ASSESSMENT AND WHO IT COVERS

The primary aim of the Risk Assessment is to understand key risks around the challenge event and for challenge event organisers to demonstrate they have been mitigated to an acceptable level. Some of the key risks challenge event organisers must consider are:

- Health, safety and welfare of entrants and volunteers taking part in the challenge event;
- Health, safety and welfare of local communities, including residents, landowners and the general public; and
- Reputational risk to the Local Group and LDWA.

## METHODOLOGY

An Event Risk Assessment Form is completed for all general risks associated with the event and a Route Risk Assessment completed for the route of the event. Guidance on the completion of the forms is given in Appendix A. Note: Anytime events only require a Route Risk Assessment.

## Event Risk Assessment

The Event Risk Assessment form requires systematic completion of the form as follows (see appendix A for further information):

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| Column A | Identification of all significant hazards and risks associated with the event including financial and reputational risks. |
| Column B | An assessment of the level of risk that these hazards/risks can impose on the event into high, medium and low risk **BEFORE** inserting the control measures (column D).This will also reflect the impact and the likelihood of the event occurring. |
| Column C | An assessment of the level of risk that the same hazards/risks can impose **AFTER** inserting the control measures (column D). |
| Column D | The proposed measures to be undertaken in order to control the risk. |
| Column E | The timescales and identification of personnel in order to ensure that the measures proposed are actually implemented |

## Route Risk Assessment

A Route Risk Assessment Form is completed for the entire route and guidance is given in appendix A. It contains 6 columns as follows:

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| Column A | Paragraph number of the hazard/risk in the route description |
| Column B | Grid reference of hazard/risk |
| Column C | Description of hazard/risk |
| Column D | An assessment of the level of risk that the hazard/risk imposes assessed as high, medium or low **BEFORE** inserting the control measures. This will also reflect the impact and likelihood of an accident /incident occurring. |
| Column E | An assessment of the level of risk that the same hazards/risks impose **AFTER** inserting the control measures. |
| Column F | Control measures suggested. |

EVENT RISK ASSESSMENT

## PART 1 ORGANISING THE EVENT

| A)<br>HAZARD/RISK | B)<br>INITIAL<br>RISK LEVEL<br>H/M/L | C) RISK<br>REVISE<br>LEVEL<br>H/M/L | D)<br>MANAGING THE RISK<br>PROPOSED ACTION/CONTROL MEASURES | E)<br>WHO IS RESPONSIBLE FOR FURTHER ACTION AND BY WHEN |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1.1 That the event organisers do not have the necessary skills and commitment to organise the event adequately. | L | L | • All organisers and CP managers have previous experience of running challenge events up to 50 miles<br>• All marshals have previously worked on challenge events. | MW/KN |
| 1.2 Persons attempt the event that are not appropriately qualified or equipped for the event leading to accident, injuries and placing extreme pressure on organisation of event. | L | L | • The event including a description of the route & requirements has been advertised on the E & H website and SI Entries.<br>• Potential participants are encouraged to contact event organiser for further details if they are at all unsure<br>• Final joining instructions covered everything required for the event including location, kit, safety measures, checkpoint locations and availability of route description & GPX file | MW/KN |

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| 1.3 Challenge event organisers are unable to attract sufficient volunteers to act as marshals. | L | L | ○ There will be at least four marshals at the start and finish and at the checkpoints, plus a roving marshal | KN |
| 1.4 Event cancelled at last minute due to non-availability of key accommodation, major problems en route or prevailing poor weather. Major reputational damage to LDWA if procedures not in hand to deal with this. | L | L | ○ Start/Finish and checkpoint locations all confirmed and paid for<br>○ Route had been checked<br>○ October event: inclement weather unlikely, but will be monitored in the days leading up to the event | MW/KN |
| 1.5 Budget for event is inadequate leading to cut backs on facilities, essential kit and loss of flexibility to respond to emergencies. | L | L | ○ Income from entries enough to cover running costs of event<br>○ E&H group has sufficient contingency funds to cover any emergencies | MW/KN/MS |
| 1.6 Access approvals could be refused, local residents raise objections to event. Could cause major disruption to event and cause reputational damage. There is a history of last-minute major changes to route etc. on this event. | L | L | ○ Route is on rights of way<br>○ No access denials anticipated | MW |
| | L | L | | |

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| 1.7 Transport arrangements are inadequate. Supplies for checkpoints are not delivered in time, baggage is not delivered, entrants are transported without due delay. Drivers may also become unduly tired and might not | | | • Rota in place to cover checkpoint staffing and delivery of equipment to CPs.<br>• Sufficient drivers available to cover any emergencies.<br>• All checkpoints within a 10 mile radius of the event HQ<br>• Duration of event maximum 12 hrs. | MW/KN |
| have adequate local knowledge. Failures in any of these areas can cause major disruption to the event. | | | | MW/KN |

## PART 2 FACILITIES, ROUTE AND STAFFING

| A)<br>HAZARD/RISK | B)<br>INITIAL RISK LEVEL<br>H/M/L | C)<br>REVISED RISK LEVEL<br>H/M/L | D)<br>MANAGING THE RISK<br>PROPOSED ACTION/CONTROL MEASURES | E)<br>FURTHER ACTION NEEDED/BY DATE |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| 2.1 That the headquarters facilities available for the event are not suitable, sufficient or unacceptably | L | L | • The event headquarters is a large, well-equipped Village Hall<br>• Marshals and entrants have been notified of parking arrangements | MW/KN |
| 2.2 That the checkpoints are not suitable, sufficient or unacceptably | L | L | • Blackmore village hall has large hall, well equipped kitchens and toilet facilities.<br>• Water stops are all outside | MW/KN |

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| 2.3 Hygiene measures for food/drink preparation is not suitable, sufficient or unacceptably | L | L | ○ Marshals aware of food allergens and intolerances and food hygiene | KN |
| 2.4 That the route is not appropriate for an LDWA event. It may be too difficult in terms of the terrain and it may be inadequately described and not signed in key areas. This could lead to accident/injury, people getting lost. Walkers/runners could inadvertently cause disruption to | L | L | ○ Route and Route Description have been checked by event organisers on marshals' walk.<br>○ Risks and areas where caution and care are required will be flagged up in the Route Description<br>○ Entrants will be reminded on day to take care on road crossings | MW/KN |
| local residents and public causing severe reputational damage to LDWA and Local Group. | | | | |
| 2.5 Refreshments are not adequate to meet needs of entrants causing problems with dehydration, loss of energy etc. | L | L | ➢ Refreshments provided at three checkpoints on long route and one on the short, plus a light meal at the finish<br>➢ water stops will provide snacks as well as water | KN |

## PART 3 MANAGEMENT OF THE EVENT

| A)<br>HAZARD/RISK | B)<br>INITIAL RISK LEVEL<br>H/M/L | C)<br>REVISED RISK LEVEL<br>H/M/L | D)<br>MANAGING THE RISK<br>PROPOSED ACTION/CONTROL MEASURES | E)<br>FURTHER ACTION NEEDED/BY DATE |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| 3.1 That incidents and possible emergencies are not managed on the day leading to escalation of problems. | L | L | o A&E details on information sheet sent to all marshals<br>o Sufficient marshals in place to deal with any incidents arising<br>o Accident report forms at each checkpoint<br>o Emergency contact number printed on route description | MW/KN |
| 3.2 Entrants become lost and/orare unaccounted for. | L | L | o Route Description and GPX files provided beforehand<br>o Emergency phone number on route description.<br>o Double checking in system at checkpoints (paper lists and PACER )<br>o Entrants who retire have been asked to do so at a Checkpoint, or to let an organiser know | MW |
| 3.3 Entrants (or possibly marshals') require medical treatment beyond | L | L | ➢ Entrants and marshals advised to dial 999 in an emergency | MW |
| the scope of their own medical kit (see guidance and best practice for challenge event organisers). | | | ➢ Hospital A&E details at each check point<br>➢ Defibrillators at Blackmore, Fryerning and Highwood<br>➢ Portable defibrillator with roving marshal | |

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| 3.4 Disposal of rubbish and recycling is not managed leading to reputational damage to LDWA and Local Group. Additionally, gates are left open on route and items dropped on route | L | L | • All recycling and refuse will be removed from checkpoints<br>• Entrants will be reminded about gates and litter at start of walk | KN |
| 3.5That supporters crowd a check point and/or park inappropriately. Operation of checkpoint could be affected and local residents affected causing reputational damage. | L | L | Car park marshals in place for start of walk<br>• Sufficient parking for supporters at BLackmore | MW/KN |

ROUTE RISK ASSESSMENTEssex Walker Challenge Walk Date Sunday 25th Oct 2026

**Start and Finish**: Blackmore Village CM4 0QW. Two routes of approx. 18 miles and 26 miles

A circular route (18 miles) and figure of eight route (26 miles) using public rights of way with three checkpoints.

The routes have been checked prior to the walk. A major part of the routes is on footpaths and bridleways. These are joined by unavoidable road sections. At roads where crossing is required the route description gives warnings to take extra care. Caution Walker signs will also be deployed where advisable.

| A)<br>PARA<br>NO | B)<br>GRID<br>REF | C)<br>HAZARD/RISK | D)<br>INITIAL<br>RISK LEVEL<br>H /M/ L | E)<br>REVISED<br>RISK LEVEL<br>H /M/ L | F)<br>CONTROL MEASURES |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Through out the routes | | Rough and uneven ground. Footbridges may be slippery when wet. Overgrown paths and low branches | *M* | *L* | Caution to be taken throughout. *Highlighted on route description* |

| | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Through out the routes | | Exposed to the elements during adverse weather. Dehydration/sunstroke. | *L* | *L* | Drinks available at checkpoints Emergency mobile number on route description.<br>Entrants advised to bring head torch and other personal illumination on body |

Each entrant has made an agreement that they participate at their own risk, and that they will obey the event rules and the country code. This Risk Assessment will be available on the Essex and Herts web site prior to the event.

**Risk to Landowners/communities**

The main concern is accidental trespass as the route is cross country and follows rights of way. These are mostly marked and well equipped with infrastructure such as stiles, bridges, and waymarks that help keep walkers on track. The walkers will have a written route description, which has been checked for accuracy (GPX also available). Landowners and the local community will be made aware where possible of the event in good time to enable them to raise any concerns they may have.

| | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Through out the routes | | Getting lost or becoming disorientated. Sustaining an injury or illness. | *L* | *L* | Route description and GPX available to download/print. Walkers advised to carry charged mobile phone and first aid kit |
| Through out the routes | | Road walking and road crossings | | | All highlighted on route description and entrants advised to take care. |
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# 1.0 ASSESSING RISK - GENERAL

1.1 The purpose of risk assessment is to minimise the likelihood of injuries and accidents occurring, and to reduce the possible severity of injury, as far as is reasonably practicable. You cannot eliminate risk entirely, but if you ensure that you do all you can to prevent it happening in the first place, and to ensure that the likely result is minor rather than major injury, you will probably have kept the risk to an acceptable level.

1.2 Risk assessment is a noun, whereas assessing risk is a verb. The actual process is the important part – the written document then forms a record of the action. Think about assessing, not assessment - always consider risk assessment as an activity, not a piece of paper. It remains live and can be altered at any time – for instance a change in weather could dramatically change the risk profile of parts of the event and increase a previously acceptable risk to unacceptable.

1.3 To assess risks, consider the most likely scenario, not just the worst case. There is a risk of fatal consequences with almost everything – but a simple fall on the same level would normally result in bruising and/or cuts, rather than major fractures or death! Work on reducing the risk of the fall itself, and that will automatically reduce the risk of severe injury as well in the majority of cases.

1.4 For example:

Road crossings on an event always cause concern to organisers. There is a fear that an entrant maybe distracted by reading his/her route description or being keen not to lose time he/she could take a greater than normal risk in crossing a road. There may also be other reasons, say poor sight lines, that make a road difficult to cross. Take for example a case when a footpath drops quickly onto a road with little warning and poor visibility for both the entrant and an oncoming vehicle. Assume the road is reasonably well used. A likely scenario could be that an entrant moving quickly down a slope could emerge without warning onto the road in front of a car. With any road, being hit by a vehicle can be fatal, but certainly a major injury is likely. So, the risk is certainly within the yellow (medium) level, at least. Now consider the actual area of the crossing. In this example, it is clearly a distinct possibility that an entrant could stray or stumble onto the road inadvertently – especially if they are tired. This makes the risk unacceptable, so action must be taken. Now you must consider what controls you can put in place to reduce the risk. Ideally, you would eliminate it entirely – perhaps you could amend the route so it crosses by a bridge instead? This would be the best solution, however, normally risks cannot be eliminated, so think about other effective controls.

List them, fill in the details in the action required section, and allocate somebody to take each action, with a deadline target date. In this instance it might be possible to vary the route, this would be the best solution. If not,you will need to consider how best walkers can be prevented from walking or running directly into the road. A note in the route description or a large sign at the bottom of the path might help. It may even be necessary to use a marshal to warn entrants of the coming danger. Other factors will also need to be considered. What time of day will the walkers reach it, will the section be slippery if there is rain etc?Your aim must be to reduce the risk rating to an acceptable level/low risk.

1.5 Risk assessment form(s) should be used to record all significant hazards, the nature and extent of the risk and the actionsrequired to control them. Follow up the actions to make sure they are completed on timeand record this on the assessment form.

2.0

1.6 If the risks change,they will need to be reviewed before the event.



# HOW TO COMPLETE THE FORMS

## 2.1 THE EVENT RISKS FORM

You can use the generic risk assessment form to help you complete your own risk assessment by adapting it. Remember that the generic risk assessment shows how it has been possible, by working out a programme for coping with the risks, to bring the risks for the event (shown in the 2nd column) to an acceptable level (in the 3rd column).

2.2 The Generic Event Risk Assessment form contains 5 columns. You first need to look at **column A**. Column A lists all risks and hazards associated with the event. You need to go through the suggested risks and confirm that they apply to your event (they probably will) and think carefully if there are other risks particularly pertinent to your event,but not already listed. For example,if due to the nature of the terrain, or the proximity of a river, flooding could occur. This could cause considerable disruption to an event and a contingency plan may need to be put in place. You need to put it down as a risk.

You then need to look at **column B** to assign a risk rating to your risk/hazard. You have three options:

| | |
|---|---|
| High Risk (Red) | This is an unacceptable risk. It cannot be accepted and must be reduced; if it is not possible to reduce then event cannot proceed. |
| Medium Risk (Yellow) | A significant risk exists. Action must be taken to reduce the risk, as far as reasonably practicable. |
| Low Risk (Green) | There exists a minimal,but acceptable risk. Risk is never totally eliminated, but is controlled within tolerable limits. |

In assigning a risk level you need also to consider the likelihood of the event happening since that will influence you in deciding the risk level. To use the example of flooding on a route. If you know that this area floods nearly every year in May and causes significant disruption itis likely that the risk will be high. However,if the area has not flooded in May for over 30 years, then the risk could be considered medium or low.

**Column C** shows how the risk rating can change when you look at measures to control or manage the risk. You need to look again at this column when you have completed column D.

You now need to look at **Column D**. This looks at how you can manage the risk. The generic risk assessment gives suggestions as to how this can be done. It makes several references to the rules of the event,which is attached as appendix B and is a key document.

**Column E** gives details of when and whowill be responsible for implementing the suggested actions. This section will need to be kept up to date and is a useful check to see if actions are implemented.

3.0

Obviously,all of the Organising Committee will need to be involved in agreeing the actions and taking responsibility for their implementation. Risk Management needs to be a team issue.

Having completed columns A, B D and E you are now able to return to **column D** to look at how, as a result of your proposed measures, you can reassess the risk identified earlier in column B. The revised risk needs to be inserted in **columnC**. If any high-risk items still remain as high, they need to be targeted and further measures considered.



## THE ROUTE RISKS FORM

3.1 The route risks form works in a similar way to the Event Risks Form except that it is solely concerned with the route. It should be undertaken when the route has been virtually agreed but before it is finalised since if any major hazards are identified there needs to be sufficient time for measures to ameliorate the risk to be introduced. The assessment could be undertaken by one person or by several, but if the latter they will need to agree a common approach. It is best if the assessors have not been heavily involved in the drawing up of the route since they will be able to look at the route with a 'fresh eye'.

3.2 The route risks form contains 6 columns. The assessor first needs to complete columns A B and C giving details of the hazard and risk located along the route and its location. Only significant risks or hazards should be listed and items of real concern that could cause injury or harm to persons walking/running on the route. The assessor also has to consider whether the risk could be considerably worse in different weather conditions and will have to bear in mind whether the hazard is most likely to be reached in darkness and/or when the entrants are likely to be very tired.

The assessor then needs to make an assessment as to whether the risk/hazard poses a high medium or low risk. A factor here needs to be the likelihood of the event happening since that will affect the risk rating. The choices are as for the Event Risk Assessment (para 2.2 above).

Only the Route Risks form needs to be completed for Anytime Challenge Events.

4.0