

Organising a Group Visit to a National Park

Mosaic training manual



This manual has been put together by the Campaign for National Parks' Mosaic Project. The Mosaic project works to build sustainable links between National Park Authorities and New Audiences, including black and minority ethnic communities and young people.

For more information about the Mosaic Project please see the Campaign for National Parks website: www.cnp.org.uk/mosaic or get in touch with the Director for Campaigns and Engagement at the Campaign for National Parks on 0207 9244077, 6-7 Barnard Mews, London, SW11 1QU.

For further copies of this manual, please visit www.cnp.org.uk/mosaic

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Section 1: What you need to know

1.1 ESSENTIAL INFORMATION

Choosing a Group Leader

When deciding on Group Leaders the following will help:

1. The important things is to be clear about who Group Leaders will be. This clarifies who will make decisions, whether by one person or collectively.
2. Always have at least two people who can share the information, in case one of them is ill, or cannot make the trip.
3. Group Leaders need to work closely with external partners e.g. National Parks, accommodation and activity providers.
4. Record all information in a central place so that those involved with the visit have easy access to it and can deal with any issues that might arise.
5. Group Leaders should be responsible adults that are able to deal with all legalities associated with organising a visit.
6. We recommend that Group Leaders have first aid training, or have a trained first aider on the visit.
7. When working with children or vulnerable adults, Group Leaders should have a current CRB check (Criminal Records Bureau) and comply with the relevant legal requirements, such as the Child Protection Act. If unsure they should seek appropriate training (Your local Council can advise.)
8. Group Leaders are the leaders from the moment they leave until they get back - they are responsible for all the members on the visit.
9. Group Leaders need to keep a clear head and not take any intoxicating substances while out on the visit.

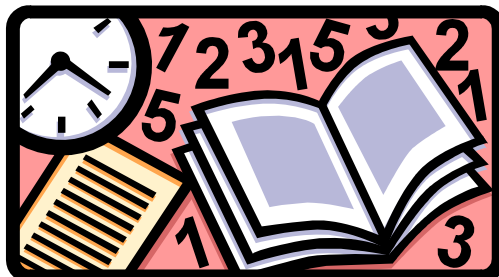
Where are you going?

When are you going?

What are you going to do?

Along with the **Organising a Visit Golden Rules** summary in Appendix 1, use the following list to help you:

- Date of visit – this is needed for accommodation & activity bookings
- Consult with group members to gain their ideas (**see Section 2, page 6**)
- Where in the UK do you and your group want to go?
- Time of year – consider weather or other events happening.
- How long are you going for?
- Is the area suitable for the group you are taking? Consider levels of ability, fitness.



1.2 ROLES & RESPONSIBILITIES

This section provides guidance on who is responsible for each aspect of a visit.

Leader/s responsibilities - the group leader should:

1. Familiarise themselves with procedures, guidelines, and policies re: organising safe visits to the countryside via a training day.
2. Recruit a deputy.
3. Recruit 2 key volunteers or members of staff to attend and support the trip.
4. Make sure that all volunteers and staff attending the visit are well briefed.
5. Ensure that details of the visit, such as staff and participant contact numbers, copies of emergency and medical consent forms, are left at base with a responsible person.
6. Brief parents of children about the visit well in advance.
7. Emphasise that group members should not bring any valuables on the visit.
8. Check whether the group members have appropriate clothing, well in advance. Charity shops are excellent for outdoor clothes.
9. Produce a participants information pack, prepared with the help of the group, National Park staff and accommodation provider. **(See Section 7 page 19)**

Legal requirements

10. Prior to planning the trip check various training needs:
 - Basic First Aid - ensure that there is appropriate First Aid provision
 - Child Protection
 - Risk Assessment
11. Ensure there is adequate insurance cover in place. Reassure participants on this point.
12. Recruit participants for the visit and ensure consent forms are completed.
13. Circulate a Group Visit Code of Conduct **(see page 5)** to all people attending.
14. Set up a trip file to ensure that contact sheets, forms & emergency contact details are taken on the visit.
15. Include in the trip file a summary of any medical requirements of group members (obtained via consent/booking forms).
16. Check Child Protection Guidelines and have valid CRB checks as necessary – get professional advice if you are unsure.

National Park (if directly supporting your visit)

17. Plan and prepare for the visit by carrying out a pre site visit and risk assessment with the National Park's support.
18. Brief National Park staff about the makeup of your group.
19. Involve your National Park contact during the planning process and on the actual visit.
20. Feedback - please share the group's views with the National Park.

Accommodation and food

21. Identify appropriate accommodation based on group needs.
22. Contact the accommodation provider to clarify sleeping arrangements, provide information on diet, and any other needs such as a quiet space for prayers.
23. Ensure that group members are aware of arrangements for refreshments e.g. bringing their own lunch/providing information on what is available at the venue.

Cancellations

24. Be aware of last minute cancellations and have an alternative plan.
25. Contact all associated individuals if visit is to be cancelled e.g. National Park, accommodation and activity providers.

After the visit

26. Ensure that all group members fill in feedback forms
27. Review the visit and record suggestions for changes in procedures for future visits.

Group Visit Code of Conduct (to be circulated to all participants)

1. Any form of abuse whether: cultural, racial, sexist or ageist comment, or any form of physical or emotional abuse will not be tolerated. All persons involved in abusive behaviour will be asked to leave. (*See Note)
2. Everyone is asked to fully participate in activities.
3. Everyone must observe and comply with safety instructions given by staff at the venue or National Park.
4. Respect each other, listen to and value everyone's contributions, even if different from your own.
5. Be personally responsible for your own safety and the safety of others.
6. Wear appropriate clothing and footwear to ensure your safety.

***Note - Group behaviour is ultimately the responsibility of the group leaders.**

- Any inappropriate behaviour must be addressed by the group leaders.
- In extreme cases the group leader will decide whether the individual/s should go home.
- Put rules in place before going out on visits and if time allows, get the group to do their own code of conduct based on this basic code.



Section 2: Where are you going?

This Section considers the initial elements of planning your visit, in particular assessing what your group wants to do and developing an itinerary.

(Other sections of this guide separately address in greater detail the issues of accommodation, transport, insurance, volunteers, and creating a participants' pack.)

2.1 WHAT DOES YOUR GROUP EXPECT?

Before deciding anything, it is important to find out what the group members want.

- Are they looking for family based activities?
- Do they want to do something physical?
- How long will the visit last?

An effective way of gathering this information is to organise a social event that is also meeting.

2.2 MEETING WITH YOUR GROUP

With your first-hand experience and knowledge of a National Park, you can present ideas for activities to your group. It helps to use photos and information leaflets about the Park and share them with your group. You can collect material from either the National Park Authority or Visitor Centres.

Your group should be asked to consider:

- Who the visit is for – just them or others?
- Where to go?
- What activities would they like to do?
- Who wants to come?
- Who else do they want to bring?
- What do they need to be able to take part in the visit?

Consider practicalities such as:

- How far they are prepared to travel
- Food provision – does the group want to cook the evening meal?
- Accommodation
- Transport
- What to wear

When asking for ideas and opinions, not all participants want to speak in front of the whole group, so try using a flip chart and give everyone *Post-it* notes to add what they want on the flip chart.

See **Section 9 'Promotional Event'** for more ideas on how to organise your meeting.

2.3 FACT FINDING VISIT

Considering going on a **fact finding visit** for you to a National Park (see box below). If you only plan to meet with your group once then you should make this visit before the meeting.

Alternatively, you could arrange a simple, preliminary meeting with your group, then make a fact finding visit to the National Park. After this you could hold a more detailed group planning meeting.

Fact finding visit

The detail of the visit should be agreed with the National Park, especially if you wish to meet with staff at the National Park Authority. Aim to visit the venues and facilities you are thinking of taking your group to.

If you are considering an overnight stay for your group, you could also meet with YHA staff and look around a Hostel. The YHA, who were part of the Mosaic, provide budget accommodation which is suitable for large groups (see Section 3: Accommodation).

Where to find information

National Parks offer a huge variety of things to do, this can almost be overwhelming.

Once you identify your group's interests, it will help you to refine the options.

If your group wants an adventure, you could choose walking, cycling, climbing, canoeing, or potholing, plus visit an activity centre where you can have a taster session, or activity break.

For less active groups there are country shows, festivals, arts and crafts, wildlife and nature, a gentle stroll on a good path and picnics. There are many historic houses and gardens, plus industrial heritage attractions and museums.

The following information uses the New Forest National Park as an example, every National Park has similar resources:

Visitor Enquiries

- Call the New Forest Centre on 023 8028 3444
- Check their website: www.newforestcentre.org.uk or send an email to office@newforestcentre.org.uk

What's on guide

- A detailed guide to events from and surrounding area is published every year. Contact the New Forest Centre office to have a copy posted to you.

Tourist Information Centres

- Visit or contact one of the 8 Tourist Information Centres around the New Forest (contact details are published in the guide.)

Web site

- Use the excellent database on www.newforestcentre.org.uk/group-visits to search for events, activities, facilities, accommodation, and transport information

National Park Education Service

- If you have more detailed enquiries about activities that are suitable for your group, see the website: www.newforestnpa.gov.uk/learningabout+education or call the New Forest Centre office: 023 8028 3444.



2.4 WHAT WILL YOU DO?

When you gather information, your itinerary should:

- Be simple (see example below)
- Show times of certain activities and visits
- Include information about what to expect during the day
- Include appropriate times for breaks and take into consideration travelling time.
- Emphasise that these times are approximate and may be subject to change depending on weather and other unforeseeable problems
- Ensure all activities are risk assessed (see section 2.4 below) and alternatives should be planned.
- Consider activities indoors if the weather is very wet.
- Give people a meeting time half an hour before the latest time you intend to set off. This allows for late arrivals, last minute toilet stops, etc.
- Build in time for toilet stops, taking coats off and on, etc
- Put contacts on the itinerary (eg the group leaders, or the activity provider)
- Remember the bigger the group, the longer it takes to move!

Example itinerary

Time	Activity	Notes
09:45-10:00	Meet outside the New Forest Centre	Joe Bloggs: Group leader Jane Doe : Assistant Group Leader
10:00-12:00	Visit exhibition, visit shop and visitor information centre	All
12:00-13:00	Lunch (food provided)	Outdoors, weather permitting
13:00-14:00	Talk and walk with New Forest Commoner	Outdoors, bring waterproof & flat sturdy shoes / trainers
14:00-14:30	Travel to Burley village	Transport provided
14:30-15:30	Tour of village	Guide to be confirmed
15:30-16:00	Travel back to Lyndhurst	Transport provided
16:00:00	Ends	

Additional Information

- All times are subject to changes beyond control such as weather and traffic.
- Some of the activities require a reasonable level of fitness, e.g. some walking up steep hills.
- Participants need to be informed and transport should be available to assist, where possible.

2.5 RISK ASSESSMENT FOR NEW GROUPS

It is important to be aware of the possible risks of a visit to a National Park in order to make sure the visit is safe.

The simplest way of doing this is to talk to a local staff member and tell them whether your group has any experience in visiting different landscapes. If you are taking a group new to all of this, ask them to suggest ideas and activities. You can then assess the visit depending on your group's needs. Local staff know their Parks well and have already risk assessed all aspects of the Park. They can suggest a range of activities some of which they may be able to accompany. Do tell them the age range and physical abilities of the group.

You can book and pay for outdoor activities from specialist centres, with professionals who have skills to deal with all the safety issues. Thus you can be assured that the activity providers are skilled and responsible for the care of your group.

Using the itinerary, make notes of what you need to be aware of on the day. A simple risk assessment form can be found in Appendix 2 forms section.

After a few visits you will be more confident. You may want to do risk assessments yourself in combination with advice from local staff. Appendix 4 "Introduction to advanced risk assessment" will provide you with more information.

FACT FINDING VISIT & RISK ASSESSMENTS

The fact finding visit helps you build the itinerary as you can check timings, talk to people to prepare them for your visit, check toilet locations, check that you've chosen an appropriate location (if you haven't been there before), check cooking facilities etc. The visit is also a good time to fill out the risk assessment form or check if these have already been written in which case ask for a copy.

Once you've done the risk assessments keep them on file for future use and check them once a year to make sure they are still accurate.

Section 3: Will you stay overnight?

3.1 RESIDENTIAL ACCOMMODATION

Although you can visit just one day, there is so much to see and do in a National Park that staying overnight can be great fun too! Plan your accommodation so that you are as close as possible to your chosen activity locations. If you don't have access to your own transport, seek accommodation that has good public transport links.

Obtain as much information about your accommodation as possible, preferably by scheduling a pre-visit. The best people to do this are the visit leader and the deputy leader or one other accompanying adult. This enables the leader/s to gain firsthand knowledge about the layout of the venue, facilities and activities and be aware of fire, safety precautions and emergency evacuation procedures. This information can be shared with any volunteers helping on the trip.

When booking overnight residential accommodation be aware of the following:

- What type of group is going out on this visit and how do their ages and abilities affect your choice?
- Know your group's dietary needs, e.g. vegetarian, vegan, Halal. Tell the accommodation about specific requirements.
- Do any of the group have any special needs, e.g. disability or medical requirements? Check what they need and consider how to facilitate this.

Cultural and religious issues when staying overnight.

- If a mixed group is attending:
 - Are group members happy to share living space?
 - Are they happy to share rooms?
 - Are they happy to share toilets and showers?
- You may need to arrange the accommodation so that the group is separated by gender, perhaps in a different part of the hostel. The accommodation provider can advise you on this. (Youth Hostels in England and Wales are aware of the need to separate genders within the hostel. You will be informed if they are unable to accommodate this.)
- It may be possible to get sole use of a hostel or other type of accommodation – ask.

3.2 YHA

The YHA is one of the leading charities providing accommodation in National Parks. It has 230 hostels across England and Wales, mostly in the north of England. In National Parks, the YHAs often provide you with the most economical accommodation for groups.

The standard of facilities in YHA accommodation varies a lot, so you must make sure that it is suitable for the type of group you have in mind. The buildings range from formerly grand houses, converted schools and chapels, to tiny huts in remote, hill-side locations or even tents in the gardens.

YHA hostels are open for most of the year. During the day staff may only be available during 8-10am and 5-10pm.

Rooms: The type of accommodation ranges from en suite bedrooms to simple bunk style dormitories. Most YHA accommodation is shared with other people of the same gender. Typically, rooms have bunk beds sleeping between 2 to 16.

Special arrangements can be made for families or friends to share the same room. You may also be able to request the use of only lower bunks in rooms.

You will be provided with freshly laundered bed linen to make up your own bed. Pillows, duvets and/or blankets are provided.

Washing facilities: Most hostels only have showers, with lockable doors. Showers and toilets will be close to your room. Most rooms also have hand washbasins.

You will need to bring towels and toiletries (including soap) with you.

Food: Most hostels have a self-catering kitchen, which is equipped with hobs, grill, toaster, and kettle. Pots pans, crockery and cutlery are all provided. Some may also have an oven, microwave or fridge.

Many hostels will provide meals & packed lunches. See YHA website: www.yha.org.uk for further details.

General facilities Most hostels have a lounge, self-catering kitchens, drying room and bicycle store. Some hostels also have a games room, a TV and laundry room.

The hostel can provide information about things to do in the local area.

Smoking and other rules: Obviously there is no smoking in any public building in the UK plus each hostel has its own rules, do check this.

Prepare your group for this - most people think the countryside should be a quiet place so some hostels will not allow loud music. Youngsters may be very disappointed if they are not warned about this beforehand. YHAs can be very flexible if they know in advance what to expect.

Usually everyone needs to be in the hostel by 10pm. If you need to stay out longer do check with local staff. They may provide you with your own key for the night.

Travel: Many hostels are easily accessible by public transport. Most, but not all, are accessible by car or minibus - some involve a short walk. Maps and information on all hostels can be found on the YHA website: www.yha.org.uk

All hostels provide good standards of welcome, comfort, security and privacy as well as a responsible attitude to the environment. All residents are requested to respect this.



3.3 WHERE ELSE TO LOOK FOR ACCOMMODATION

Each National Park can provide information about local accommodation, see list:

BRECON BEACONS

Website: www.breconbeacons.org Tel: 01874 624437

e-mail: enquiries@breconbeacons.org

BROADS AUTHORITY

Website: www.broads-authority.gov.uk Tel: 01603 610734

DARTMOOR

Website: www.dartmoor-npa.gov.uk Tel: 01626 832093

e-mail: hq@dartmoor-npa.gov.uk

EXMOOR

Website: www.exmoor-nationalpark.gov.uk Tel: 01398 323665

e-mail: info@exmoor-nationalpark.gov

LAKE DISTRICT

Website: www.lake-district.gov.uk Tel: 01539 724555

e-mail: hq@lake-district.gov.uk

NEW FOREST

Website: www.newforestnpa.gov.uk Tel: 01590 646602

e-mail: enquiries@newforestnpa.gov.uk

NORTHUMBERLAND

Website: www.northumberland-national-park.org.uk Tel: 01434 605555

e-mail: enquiries@nnpa.org.uk

NORTH YORK MOORS

Website: www.moors.uk.net Tel: 01439 770657

e-mail: info@northyorkmoors-npa.gov.uk

PEAK DISTRICT

Website: www.peakdistrict.gov.uk Tel: 01629 816200

e-mail: info@peakdistrict.gov.uk

PEMBROKESHIRE COAST

Website: www.pcnpa.org.uk Tel: 0845 345 7275

e-mail: info@pembrokeshirecoast.org.uk

SOUTH DOWNS

Website: www.southdowns.gov.uk Tel: 0300 3030 1053

e-mail: info@southdowns.gov.uk

SNOWDONIA

Website: www.eryri-npa.gov.uk

Tel: 01766 770274

e-mail: parc@eryri-npa.gov.uk

YORKSHIRE DALES

Website: www.yorkshiredales.org.uk Tel: 0870 1 666333

e-mail: info@yorkshiredales.org.uk

- Some National Parks may have educational centres that also have residential accommodation. Check with local staff.
- **Tourist Information Centres** will also be able to provide you with information on local accommodation providers. They are happy to help as they generate a small part of their running costs by arranging your accommodation. You can find all Tourist Information Centres in the UK at: information-britain
- **Ramblers** the charity that supports walkers and promotes walking has a list of accommodation on it's website: www.ramblers.org.uk



Section 4: How will you get there?

4.1 PLANNING TRAVEL & TRANSPORT

Choosing appropriate transport is a vital part of organising a visit and the mode of transport will vary depending on the venue, the size and budget of the group.

The group leaders need to give careful thought to planning transport. Group leaders are responsible for ensuring that coaches and buses are hired from a reputable hire company.

It is important to have policies and procedures in place to ensure that transport used by the group is safe.

Group leaders must ensure the drivers are qualified to drive and if they are driving a hired minibus they must have D1 on their licence. (See section 4.2)

The key transport issues are **participant safety** and **legislation**.

Addressing these issues: The main things to consider include:

- Type of transport
- Adequate supervision during the journey
- Passenger safety
- A safe pick up point to wait for then get on board transport
- Appropriate transport for participants with special needs
- Head count at appropriate places e.g. getting on and off transport
- Competence and training of the driver of the vehicle, including whether the driver holds the necessary licence.
- Distance and how long the journey will take
- Whether more than one driver is needed, especially on long journeys
- Type of journey: motorway driving or country lane driving
- Stopping points on long journeys – sufficient stops at suitable areas, with toilets
- Potential traffic conditions
- Weather

Risk Assessment item to add the total risk assessment for the trip:

- If using a minibus, the driver should not be included in team supervising the group.

Coaches, buses and minibuses

- Luggage must be stored correctly and not obstruct aisles or exits, or impede the vision of the driver.
- On long journeys, ensure sufficient breaks for participants.
- There are minimum rest requirements for drivers which must be taken. (See Appendix 3)
- Seat belts must be worn and participants should remain seated through-out the journey. The group leader must check that safety belts are used.
- Plan arrangements in the event of a breakdown or emergency

- Make participants aware of emergency exits, first aid and fire fighting equipment
- Bring small bags for travel sickness. Participants should be told to bring their own medication if they know that they suffer from travel sickness, as the group leader cannot and any medication out.

Legislation for coaches and buses

- Professional coach and bus companies are required by law to be registered and to hold a Public Service Vehicle (PSV) operator's licence. Only book coach and buses through reputable companies.
- Coaches that carry children must be fitted with seat belts, but buses are not required to have them.

Walking

- When walking, the group needs to observe safety rules in the Green Cross Code and Highway Code. Plan the safest route and use crossings when available.

Trains

If you are using a train:

- Firstly consider the number in the group - is this really feasible?
- Arrange an obvious meeting point e.g. at the ticket office in front of the station.
- Ensure participants can travel to the meeting point, you may need to use taxis.
- Check group tickets as there are usually discounts.
- Have a contingency plan for delays or cancellations.

If you use public transport, you need to book in advance or, if this is not possible, avoid peak times to ensure the group stays together and doesn't get split up by rush hour commuters.

Risk Assessment item to add the total risk assessment for the trip:

- Careful supervision is needed for participants on trains when there is space for them to move around.

Researching times and booking for trains and other public transport

National Rail Enquiries : tel: 08457 484950 www.nationalrail.co.uk

The Trainline: www.trainline.com

Traveline – tel: 0870 608 2 608 www.traveline.org.uk

Private Cars

If you are using private cars, you need to check that:

- The vehicles are roadworthy and correctly insured, including third party insurance for passengers and insurance for **business use**. (Often this last point is not included in ordinary domestic insurance.)
- Drivers do not transport any young person alone, as part of the child protection policy.
- Parents must be informed if their children will be travelling in private cars and written consent obtained.
- If more than one car is used, the route is agreed in advance and plans are in place for vehicles being lost or delayed.
- All drivers take adequate breaks.
- Seat belts are worn at all times.
- Adequate vetting procedures are in place for any volunteers who are driving.

4.2 MINIBUS DRIVER REQUIREMENTS

Group Leaders need to check that all drivers of minibuses:

- Are **over 25** for insurance purposes.
- Hold a **clean, current**, full driving licence with at least two years' driving experience.
- Have the full **D1** entitlement on their licence. Check this.
- Have a **Midas** or other certificate of minibus driving competence.

The lack of experience in driving in the countryside may be an issue. The confidence of the driver is a safety issue and must be considered when choosing a volunteer driver.

When using volunteer drivers, please print Appendix 3 this is a tool to help them run checks of what they need to check or think about before driving.

Driver Responsibilities

Minibus drivers must not drink any alcohol the evening before the event or during the event, in case of emergencies. If they are on medication they must check with their GP in case they are not able to drive.

Hiring Vehicles

Although a hired minibus will have undergone a safety inspection by the Hire Company, the driver is still legally responsible for ensuring that it is in a roadworthy condition. We recommend that any minibus hired should be less than 2 years old. There's a check list to help in **Appendix 3**.

Seats belts

All vehicles must be fitted with seat belts for the driver and all passengers and these should be used. By law, passengers in any minibus must wear the seat belts provided. Please ensure they know this.

4.3 ADVICE FOR DRIVERS

Planning the Journey.

- The minibus driver should plan the route in detail to make sure there is lots of time to reach the destination. Recruit a navigator to help, don't rely on GPS as they often don't work in NPs.
- Give yourself lots of time & enjoy the journey - accidents are more likely to happen when rushing.
- Identify safe places to pick-up & drop-off, bearing in mind safety and other road users.
- If the journey is long, it's better to hire a professional coach/minibus company.

Passenger behaviour

Passengers must behave sensibly and acceptably, without compromising the health and safety of themselves or others. They must not distract the driver in any way, even if they are related.

They must remain seated and use seat belts.

Provide a rubbish bag in the minibus and ask people to use this

Passengers who do not meet this reasonable standard must be dropped off where they can travel home by public transport, if adults.

Driving Times - Tiredness of the driver is now well recognised as a significant factor in road traffic accidents. The maximum number of hours that a driver may drive in any 24 hour period is **9 hours** and the maximum working day is 12 hours which includes all teaching, supervision and driving.

Stop every **2 hours**, for a break of at least 10 minutes. The chances are passengers will need toilets by then anyway. On long journeys recruit a second person to share the driving.

Section 5: Insurance

5.1 WHAT INSURANCE COVER WILL YOU NEED?

Appropriate insurance cover is needed for all countryside visits.

Once you have researched your visit, assess whether the group will need any additional insurance. For example outdoor adventure centres are very clear that groups are insured for the actual activities they are in charge of, and will recommend additional accident insurance to cover getting to the centre and the periods in between activities.

Most community groups with a building or who run visits of any kind may already be covered but **check** in relation to any outdoor activities which the group itself is running. If you do not have cover for outdoor activities ask the existing insurer to quote.

You must be clear about the details of any insurance cover which you have. If you are unsure about what you read in the insurance policy, you must ring up and clarify points with your insurer

The most common forms of insurance are:

Public Liability

This indemnifies the employer and employees in respect of liability at law arising out of accidental bodily injury or loss of, or damage to, property caused by third parties where negligence is shown.

Employer's liability

This covers employers in relation to employees who suffer injury or death whilst carrying out their duties, where negligence on the part of the employer or employee is proven.

If you do not have an insurance policy you can get a quote from:

Methodist Insurance Company: enquiries@micmail.com or 0845 606 1331.

Co-operative Insurance Services: co-operativeinsurance or call 08457 46 46 46

Tennyson (part of Zurich group): www.tennysoninsurance.co.uk

(Other insurance companies are available so please do check with them as well.)

Please note: You will need to purchase cover for a year as they generally won't provide cover for one trip or if they do it will be very expensive.

Ramblers (the main charity supporting and promoting walking) have a group membership scheme which includes insurance in the membership fee. For more details and costs contact: ramblers@ramblers.org.uk or their website www.ramblers.org.uk

Section 6: Volunteers helping with trips

6.1 VOLUNTEER ESSENTIALS

When taking out a group you must have the correct adult volunteer to participant ratio, especially if there are children and people with special needs or disabled people.

Check with voluntary organisations, schools and use your judgment regarding ratios. If in doubt, ask your local volunteer bureau for advice.

Generally the recommended adult volunteer to participant ratios:

Children under 9	6 children to 1 adult
Teenagers	8 young people to 1 adult
People with special needs	2 people with special needs to 1 helper.

Suitable volunteers

- Make a list of the things volunteer can help with: this could range from getting participants to fill in and return booking forms, to coming on the trip.
- If your group is new to visits into the countryside, consider training volunteers in what to expect.
- Volunteers who are new to the countryside may be distracted by the experience and hence distracted from their role as a group carer. Take them with you on your pre-visit so that they are familiarised - and have a good time.
- When working with children or vulnerable adults, ask for a references if you don't know the volunteers.
- Every adult working with children under 16, must have a current CRB check. If this isn't possible make sure that there are always 2 adults with each child.
- Ensure that at least once of your volunteers has First Aid qualifications.
- Consider what relevant knowledge or experience the volunteers need e.g. a teenage group means you may wish to involve people with youth work experience.
- If possible, avoid volunteers who have young members of their own family present because, understandably, they may be distracted by their responsibility.

Expenses

Volunteers provide their service on an entirely voluntary basis and refunds should be offered for all approved out of pocket expenses with valid receipts, plus pay a mileage allowance for the use of volunteer's car/minibus. Each organisation should discuss this with the volunteer.

Volunteers will incur additional expenses such as travel, meals, car park, child care etc. Your organisation will need to decide if you can cover these costs. (These costs can be included in grant applications for trips.)

You can find more information on volunteering from your volunteer bureau or on the web, e.g. Volunteering England www.volunteering.org.uk

Section 7: Participants Pack

7.1 WHAT TO INCLUDE?

Participants Pack

- It's a good idea to create participant's pack for trips to National Parks, especially for the first visit.
- In Appendix 2 you will find some forms that you may want to use. Modify them to suit your requirements.
- Think about other items you may want to include e.g. local leaflets, National Park guides etc.

Who is the pack for?

- To keep admin costs down you may only want to give out the itinerary to group members.
- For young children – provide less words, more activities & illustrations, the Parks have these materials.
- When the group splits into smaller groups, make sure there is information about meeting points, a map, and details of where and when everyone will come together again.

Example Participants Pack

- ✓ Itinerary
- ✓ Visit Information Sheet to include - what to bring & what to expect
- ✓ Booking / Emergency contact forms (complete & collect these before you leave on the visit)
- ✓ Feedback & evaluation questionnaire
- ✓ National Park Contact Sheet (hand out after visit)
- ✓ Leaflets about National Park, YHA, Countryside Code and activities.

Blank version of the sheets are in Appendix 2.

Include an emergency contact number in case family or friends need to contact participants. If it is a mobile number keep your mobile switched on, check & charge the battery and, most important, check that you are able to receive a signal!

7.2 VISIT INFORMATION SHEET

A visit information sheet should give participants enough information about where they are going without overloading them with details, for example:

- Where they are going - full address and telephone number, including accommodation and National parks/country park/activity centre.
- Who are the leaders, with at least 2 contact numbers.
- Where and when to meet.
- Time when they should be at meeting point. (Add 15 minutes before minibus will be leaving.)
- List of what to bring e.g. walking boots, waterproofs, bottles of water, rucksack.
- Map of area.

Make sure that people at home know where their loved ones will be and provide a landline in case they need to get hold of them. Don't rely on mobile phone signals!

EXAMPLE OF A VISIT INFORMATION SHEET

Visiting Exmoor National Park 6 July 2013

Exmoor National Park
Exmoor House
Dulverton
Somerset
TQ13 9JQ

Contact: Simon Watts-Avison
Position: Exmoor Ranger
Phone: 01388-1323600

Contact 1

Key Community Group Contact Person Mohammed Islam
Job Title Community group worker
Contact Numbers 0202 764 15 000

Contact 2

Partner Community group Contact Person Nuradin Dirie
Job Title Community group worker
Contact Numbers 0202 764 15 000

Travel Arrangements:

Pick up from **Walnut Tree School gate** at **8.30am on 6th July 2013**

All participants have to be at the pickup point 15 minutes in advance, 8.15 am, as we will be leaving at **8.30am promptly.**

Make sure you have a full bottle of water when you are out on activities. Please refill this from taps.

Please have rucksacks or bags with you to carry lunch and to collect your own rubbish to take home.

Clothing

Please make sure you have clothing suitable for all weather, bring layers rather than single bulky items.

- You must have sturdy shoes or trainers for walking.
- Bring a waterproof coat or an anorak – this is Britain!
- For all the activities you need to wear loose, comfortable clothing.
- All specialist equipment will be provided.

The Countryside Code

Please read the leaflet enclosed. (Quiz and prizes for the correct answers.)



Section 8: Cancellations

8.1 CANCELLATION PROCEDURE

Due to unforeseen circumstances the visit might have to be cancelled, so it is important to have a cancellation procedure in place.

Precautionary actions

The first step:

- Be aware of any cancellation policies relating to the transport and activities that have been booked through an external provider, as you may incur a fee for cancelling.

Some coach or mini bus companies have a favourable cancellation policy and may allow you to postpone the visit if sufficient notice is given.

Likewise be aware of each activity providers' policies as they do vary.

Things to consider in the event of a cancellation:

1. Agree in advance who will do what in the event of the cancellation of a trip.
2. In bad weather, or if any other health and safety aspect is compromised you may need to cancel.
 - Contact the transport company.
 - Contact venue.
 - Contact all members of the group so they are informed as soon as possible.
 - Arrange an alternative date.
3. All key people have each other's contact details, including the home number/mobile number of group leader and contact at the venue
4. Ensure you have emergency numbers for the transport company especially if you have to cancel within 24 hours of the booking.
5. There is usually a minimal cancellation time and if you give notice after a certain date you may lose all the money. However, to avoid a company sending a bus and driver out, try to negotiate a refund or postpone the trip to another date. If the company agree this will be out of the kindness rather than a right.



Section 9: Promotional Event

A promotional event can be organised after the visit to a National Park to introduce new members to what is on offer and enthuse them to visit National Parks.

The event can be used to:

- Let community leaders and groups know about visiting National Parks.
- Provide real examples from the visit to encourage participation by others.
- Introduce representatives of organisations who can support visits (National Park Authority, YHA etc) who can present what their organisations can offer in helping communities to organise suitable visits.

9.1 PLANNING THE EVENT

Things to consider in planning an event

- Provisionally set a date and venue for an event, ideally in the local community centre with suitable venue for at least 15 people.
- Contact the National Park representative and let them know about the date you have provisionally set and confirm their attendance.
- Contact the youth hostel you visited and confirm a representatives' attendance.
- Contact other representatives that may have been involved in the group visit.
- Give representatives a brief of what they need to do and how you would like them to present their information to group members, through presentations or workshops. Encourage them to bring a display, plus leaflets or information to give out.
- Make sure you have the equipment you need for the presentations. Check if representatives need an OHP, flip chart or projector.
- Send out invites to community group leaders and workers interested in finding out information about National Park visits. Ask them to RSVP.
- Put on a small display of photos and information showing what you did on your visit.
- Provide snacks and drinks.
- Provide a sheet for people to sign so you know who came to the event, with a column to tick to show if they are interested to go on a visit.

Sample Event Programme:

Allow 2-3 hours:

- Group leader to Chair the day.
- Either present or provide a sheet highlighting the aims of the day.

Presentations

- Group leader to do short presentation and show pictures of their visit.
- National Park to do short presentation.
- Youth Hostel to do short presentation.

Workshops and discussions

- Short workshop to get people thinking about visiting National Parks.
- Provide an opportunity to network during breaks.

Example of workshop session

Have photos of National Parks, buildings and activities.

Get people to choose one of each of the three categories and present to the rest of the group why they chose them (If you have not got any pictures taken on the visit, pictures may be provided by the National Park).

- The workshop can be done at the beginning of the event to break the ice, especially if people do not know each other.
- You may want to ask the National Park, Youth Hostel or other presenters if they have any other ideas on how to use this session for gathering information.
- Think about doing an informal session round a table so that people get the opportunity to ask questions.



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Appendix 1: Organising a Visit: **Golden Rules**

Start Small

If you haven't organised a visit or event before, start off with something small and manageable. Take a few friends for a summer picnic, visit a local attraction. This will give you a feel for what the responsibilities are in a safe environment and help build your confidence.

Appoint a Deputy

Never do it alone. Work with others so you can bounce ideas off each other, sort out problems together and so that there is someone else to hold the reins if you get sick.

Write things down and share the information

Keep written records – plans, names and contact details of people coming, names and contact details of where you're going etc. Tell someone where this information is.

What might go wrong?

Imagine all the worst case scenarios and how you'll deal with them (without getting too depressed about it) Eg what if the weather is bad? Does it matter? (often it matters less than you think it will). What if people are late? What if one of the helpers has a last minute emergency, what if someone has an accident? If you're prepared for the worst, you'll deal with things calmly and know what you're doing. Discuss all of this with someone else. (Use Risk Assessment forms in this manual as necessary)

Go on a site visit first – Information is king

Try to visit the place where you are going before the trip. Check toilet facilities, how long it will take to do the activities you've planned, whether drinking water is available etc. Talk to activity providers, cafe owners, bus drivers etc so you have as much information as possible. Before the visit, draw up a list of things to check so you don't forget anything!

Try to take at least one other person with you on the visit. You can bounce ideas off each other.

Sometimes it's not possible to make a pre-visit. If this is the case, gather as much information as you can by phoning accommodation providers, the local tourist information or Ranger or other people working in the area.

Make a Plan

When you first have the idea of organising a visit, think of what you want to do and all the things you need to do to achieve it. Try to give a time deadline for each activity. Write it down and share it.

Remember that you are responsible

You are responsible for the group at all times. Have all the information you need with you. Carry emergency contact details and contact details of all places you're going on the visit. The group will look to you for guidance, to solve problems etc.

HAVE FUN!

Probably the most important of all. Enjoy yourself. If you've prepared everything, you should be able to deal with the unexpected. If you relax, the group will relax and you'll all have a good time!

Appendix 2: Sample forms

A.1 ITINERARY

Please note: All times are approximate & subject changes beyond our control e.g. weather, traffic.

Date	Time	

A.2 SIMPLE RISK ASSESSMENT FORM

ACTIVITIES	NOTES IN CONSULTATION WITH NATIONAL PARK RANGER

A.3 ADVANCED RISK ASSESSMENT

Activity / Event:

The assessment process involves a straightforward way of identifying hazards, estimating the probability of harm and identifying the appropriate control measures to reduce risk to an acceptable level.

Activity	Hazards (something that can cause harm)	Who might be harmed?	Existing control measures	Assess risk, considering control measures, and identify Further action needed	Assessor's signature
<i>Example:</i> Driving to event	Breakdown	Driver, passengers, other road users	Hire company maintenance schedule	Ensure hire vehicle is maintained & has a full fuel tank. Obtain, and keep in event folder, the hire company breakdown procedure.	

A.4 GROUP TRIP HEALTH & SAFETY CONTACTS SHEET

This can be handed to family members and staff staying behind as well as those going on the trip.
It is based on a form in the DfEE publication 'Health & Safety of pupils on educational visits'.

1. Name of group:		
2. Group leader:	Contact phone number:	
3. Date & time of departure:	Departure point:	
4. Date & time of return:	Return point:	
5. Total number in group:	Group members:	Adults:
6. Emergency contact list for everyone in the group? Y / N (Keep copies with this form)		
7. Group Emergency Contact: Daytime	Evenings / weekends	
8. Travel company emergency contact:		
Name:	Emergency contact number:	
9. Insurance company:	Emergency contact number:	
10. Accommodation:		
Address:		
Post code:	Phone number:	
Out of hours number:	Fax number:	
Accommodation contact name:		
11. National Park contact name:		
Address:		
Postcode:	Phone number:	
Other emergency numbers & details (e.g. location of local hospital) :		

A.5 VISIT INFORMATION SHEET (for participants)

Insert: Group Name & Date of Event	
Name of National Park	
Address	
Phone number	
Name of link person	
Group Leader 01 name	
Mobile number	
Landline	
Group Leader 02 name	
Mobile number	
Landline	
Travel Arrangements	
Meeting point address	
Date & time	
<p>All participants should be at the pick-up point 15 minutes <u>before</u> departure time as we will be leaving promptly.</p>	
What to bring	
<p>Please bring: Clothing suitable for all weather, including a waterproof coat or an anorak. You must have sturdy shoes, trainers or walking boots. For all the activities you will be required to wear comfortable, casual clothing. Specialist equipment will be provided. Please bring with you towels and toiletries for your use in the accommodation.</p>	
Helpful Hints	
<p>Leave details of the event with a contact person at home. All food will be provided but feel free to bring a few extra items. Bring a small waterproof camera.</p>	

A.6 LEADERS VISIT CHECK LIST

(This list is an example, consider and add your own items)

Issue	Checklist	Tick
Staff	Roles agreed, staff trained and experienced	
	Appropriate ratios for the group overall and for specific activities	
First aid	Suitably qualified first aider	
	First aid box/Sick Bags	
Insurance	Insurance cover obtained & covers all activities & participants	
Travel	Travel company has safety procedures and insurances in place	
	Driver has a map of venue	
Venue	Staff have knowledge of the venue	
	A preliminary visit has been made	
	There is a designated contact person at the venue	
Communication	Contact Sheet has been completed	
	Itinerary has been completed	
Young People information	Young people briefed e.g. meeting points and itinerary for the day	
	Young people informed about risks and safety procedures	
	Young people agree to code of conduct	
	Young people briefed about what additional clothing, food and drink they should bring	
Parents/carers	Registration forms completed	
	Parents/carers have given consent to all activities	
	Details of medical and additional needs have been provided	
	Parents briefed about the trip	
Emergency	Risk assessment completed	
	All staff and pupils aware of emergency procedures	
Feedback	Diaries and Questionnaires completed	
Signed		
Position		
PRINT name		
Date:		

This list provides a useful starting point for checking safety aspects of your planned trip.
You may wish to include further information, according to your circumstances.

A.7 BOOKING & EMERGENCY CONTACT FORM (for participants)

(Please complete before the visit and hand back to group leader)

Registration / Emergency Contact Form page 1

Date of Visit:			
Location of Visit:			
Your Name:			
Name of children:			
Home address:			
City / town:	Post Code:	Phone:	
1. Health & General Information			
1.1 Please let us know if you, or your, children have any particular needs such as medical conditions, disabilities, or other points, which you would like us to be aware of:			
Medical conditions	Self Y / N	Children Y / N	Please state:
Disability	Self Y / N	Children Y / N	Please state:
Other	Self Y / N	Children Y / N	Please state:
1.2 Please indicate if you or your children are on any medication at the moment:	Self Y / N	Children Y / N	If yes, please give brief details:
1.3 Are you or your children allergic to any medication?	Self Y / N	Children Y / N	If yes, please specify:
1.4 Have you or your children had a tetanus injection in the last 10 years?	Self Y / N		Children Y / N
1.5 Can you or your children swim 50m?	Self Y / N		Children Y / N
2. Other information			
2.1 Do you agree to any photographs taken during the day to be used in publicity materials to support the work of Mosaic and the National Park?			Y / N
2.2 I agree to receiving medication as instructed and to any emergency dental, medical or surgical treatment, including anaesthetic or blood transfusion, as considered necessary by the medical authorities present.			Y / N
Please see next page			

Registration / Emergency Contact Form page 2

2.3 Please tell us about any special dietary requirements you, or your children, have:

2.4 Please tell us which medication you, or your child, may be given for pain/ flu relief - if necessary:

EMERGENCY CONTACT

Name:

Address:

Post code:

4. 2nd Emergency Contact:

Name:

Telephone Number:

Address:

Post code:

5. Name of Family Doctor:

Telephone number:

Address:

Post code:

Declaration:

I will inform the Leader as soon as possible of changes in my or my children's medical, or other circumstances, between now and the start of the trip.

I agree to my son/daughter receiving medication as instructed and to any emergency dental, medical or surgical treatment, including anaesthetic or blood transfusion, as considered necessary by the medical authorities present. I understand the extent and limitations of the insurance cover provided.

Signed:

Date:

A.8 WHAT WENT WELL FORM

Name (optional):					
Date:					
Name of event:					
Location:					
1. Overall how satisfied were you with this event? (Please circle)					
1	2	3	4	5	6
Very poor	Poor			Good	Excellent
2. How much has your understanding of this National Park increased as a result of this event? (Please circle)					
1	2	3	4	5	6
Not at all	Slightly			A lot	Greatly
Please provide further comments below:					
What went well					
What didn't go so well					
What could be done better next time					
Other comments					

Please hand to the group leader **before** you leave today.
Many thanks.

Appendix 3: Drivers Checklist – to be completed before driving

If you find a defect, **DO NOT** drive the vehicle. Report it to the owner of the vehicle - your organisation or to the hire company

	Vehicle	Checked?
1	Tyre pressures	
2	Tyre condition	
3	All lights including indicators	
4	Fuel tank full	
5	Oil level in engine & water level in radiator	
6	Windscreen wipers & washer bottle full	
7	Horn works	
8	Mirrors and alignment – make sure you can see before driving	
9	First Aid Kit carried and complete	
10	Fire extinguisher within test date	
11	Warning triangle	
12	Current Tax disc & a Small Bus Permit	
13	Spare tyre & wheel changing equipment	
14	Emergency door(s) are clearly marked	
15	Reversing warning alarm (recommended)	
16	Reversing lens fitted to rear window (recommended)	
17	Fuel cut-off switch – ask to be shown where this is	
18	Vehicle carrying capacity clearly marked	
19	Lift or ramp for disabled passengers (if fitted)	
Useful equipment to carry in a minibus		
• Emergency instructions and contact details for hire company.		
• Insurance policy details, breakdown policy details, contact numbers etc.		
• Mobile phone/phone card/change for telephone - for emergencies.		
• High visibility coat (BS en 471) and flashing torch – which works.		
• Pen and paper.		

Before & during the journey

- When reversing take care and always ask for someone to help.
- Make sure all luggage is stowed safely, with aisles unobstructed & emergency exits are clear .
- Identify & use safe pick-up and drop-off locations.
- Ask all passengers to leave the vehicle in a clean condition, have a rubbish bag available.
- Consider a Risk Assessment for the journey, especially in winter.

Appendix 4: Introduction to Advanced Risk Assessment

4.1 OVERVIEW

This section gives you basic information about risk assessment. Always do a risk assessment before you take your group out. Group leaders should take all reasonable measures to ensure, so far as is reasonably practicable, their own safety and the safety others while out on visits.

Risk assessments before and during an activity are essential tools in reducing the level of risk that you and your group are exposed to. Only when the planned activity has been considered with other information, such as behaviour of group, different weather conditions and other variable hazards, can it be claimed that all reasonable steps have been taken to ensure the safety of your group.

Risk assessments are relatively straightforward to produce and generally do not need technical formulae or professional health and safety expertise. The group leaders should work with others to make sure the visit is safe, i.e. National Park and accommodation providers.

Preparing your risk assessment

- What is the planned activity? (Everything you will be involved in)
- What are the hazards?
- Who might be affected by them?
- What safety / control measures need to be in place to reduce risk to an acceptable level?
- What steps will be taken in an emergency?

Take the following factors into consideration:

- the type of visit / activity and the level at which it is being undertaken.
- the location, routes and modes of transport.
- the competence, experience and qualification of supervisory staff.
- the ratios of leaders to children.
- the group members' age, competence, fitness and temperament and the suitability of the activity.
- the special educational or medical needs of group members.
- the quality and suitability of available equipment.
- seasonal conditions, weather and timing.
- emergency procedures.
- how to cope if a group member becomes unable or unwilling to continue.
- the need to monitor the risks throughout the visit.

What do you do with it?

The risk assessment should be recorded and the information within it should be communicated to all who take responsibility during the visit / activity.

Remember: risk assessments are working documents. Risks and their significance can change from day to day or minute to minute. Risk assessment is a process.

Conclusion

Assessing risk is something we all do every day of our lives. We are always considering the consequences of our actions.

The difference is that organising an activity or visit makes you responsible for the welfare of the group and you cannot claim to have taken all reasonable steps without having produced, used, continually monitored and reviewed a comprehensive risk assessment.

4.2 ADVANCED RISK ASSESSMENT PROCESS

When do I do a risk assessment?

Once the checklist has been completed for either planning a residential trip or an organised event or activity (or both) – a list of potential hazards (see definitions below) will have been identified. By using the Risk Assessment Form, the risk of these hazards causing injury or damage can be reduced to the lowest possible level.

Definitions:

- **Hazard:** Something with the potential to cause harm
- **Risk:** The likelihood of harm occurring from the identified hazard – this risk, once assessed, will be high, medium or low.
- **Control Measures :** these are actions that have already been taken or that could be taken to reduce risk to the lowest possible level

Please be aware that all risk assessments are subjective, and to a degree based on the views of the assessor. To make your assessment less subjective, involve others in this process. Safety management is about solving problems and two heads are often better than one.

Five Steps to Effective Risk Assessment:

Step One - Identify the Hazards

Concentrate on those hazards that could cause serious harm. Tackle the whole project logically from start to finish listing under general headings all the hazards you can.

General headings may include the following:

- | | |
|-----------------------------|--------------------------------|
| a) Meeting point | f) All planned activities |
| b) Method of transport | g) Extra curricular activities |
| c) Journey | h) Return journey |
| d) Venue | i) Drop off points |
| e) Setting up equipment etc | |

These examples are a guide:

- | | |
|---|---------------------------------|
| • Slipping/tripping hazards | • Electricity e.g. wiring etc. |
| • Fire | • Dust and fumes |
| • Chemicals. | • Manual handling |
| • Geographical hazards (such as lakes & risk of drowning, cliffs , loosing people etc.) | • Noise |
| • Moving parts of machinery. | • Poor lighting |
| • Working at height | • Extreme temperatures |
| • Vehicles | • Repetitive work |
| • Biological hazards | • Lone working/ violent attacks |

Think of the tasks in each of the worker's jobs and think of the action required by individuals in their role. Identify the hazards involved. Think of the activities other people will be undertaking. What hazards are they exposed to?

Step Two - Who could be harmed?

Consider the following groups of people and note on the Risk Assessment Form:

- | | |
|--------------------------------|-------------------|
| • Employees or volunteer staff | • Disabled people |
| • Contractors | • General public |
| • Walkers | |

Step Three - Consider the existing control measures

Seek out information on the safety controls and procedures in place. This will include appropriate certification, licenses, fire and first aid provisions and procedures, activity instructor qualifications, safety equipment, safety training etc. These will have been identified on the planning checklist. If you are not satisfied with the adequacy of the existing controls, seek to improve them. Risk Management may be able to contribute to solutions.

Step Four – Calculate the Level of Risk

Consider the likelihood of an accident happening. Enquire about previous accidents and incidents to assist you in your estimation of what the potential for an accident would be. Consider the severity of the accident and then determine the primary risk using the matrix below.

		Likelihood		
		H	M	L
Severity	H	3	3	2
	M	3	2	1
	L	2	1	1

Severity
H = Fatality - major injury causing long term disability
M = Injury - an illness causing short term disability
L = Other injury or illness

Likelihood
H = Certain or near certain
M = Reasonably likely
L = Very seldom or never

Risk Rating
3 = High risk
2 = Medium risk
1 = Low risk

Consider the controls in place and decide if the risk is acceptable.

- Are there further safety controls that can be put in place to eliminate, isolate or minimize the risk further?
- Do you have contingency plans in place?
- Emergency numbers to hand?

Step Five - Record and Review

Having recorded your findings and actions, you must ensure that you communicate the risks and control measures to appropriate people. Risk assessments should be written down and filed in a safe place. The process of communicating the risks and control measures should also be documented.

Later, if there are any significant changes to the activity or venue, reconsider and review your assessment. You may need to re-evaluate the risk.

The risk assessment example can be used to guide you in completing a risk assessment of any planned activity or event. A copy of the Risk Assessment form can be found in Appendix 1.