

Bushcraft – General

Activity: Bushcraft

What are the hazards?
 Timber, Tree roots, Branches, etc.
 Bracken, Sweet chestnuts, Pine cones
 Poisonous Wild Foods
 Nettles
 Weather
 Kelly Kettles
 Boiling water
 Fire
 Tools – predominantly knives and saws

Who is at risk? Staff, participants and members of the public.

What are the risks?	Existing safety measures/controls	Likelihood	Risk Rating
Being hit on the head by timber, due to a dangerous carrying technique, or the shelter collapsing. Suffering eye damage from branches or twigs carried at eye level	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Helmets may be worn at the discretion of the instructor. If participants are asked to wear helmets, the instructor must also wear a helmet at all times Participants should be instructed in a safe carrying technique i.e. never carry timber above shoulder height and care taken when turning with the wood in order to prevent contact with other people At all times Participants are required to take general care in their actions and this is monitored by the instructor and group leader. Good instructor awareness 	LOW	LOW
Sweet chestnut cases or rubbish in leaf litter puncturing and/or irritating the skin. Rubbish with sharp edges hidden in the leaf litter causing injury	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Participants should be advised to take care when gathering leaf litter Litter will be collected and placed in the bin whenever encountered 	LOW	LOW

<p>Tripping over and falling</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Group told not to run within the area and to watch out for slippery logs especially in wet weather • All areas maintained to acceptable conditions for the activity in question (i.e. natural woodland for environmental sessions, clear footing where spotting is required etc.) • Instructors and participants should wear appropriate footwear i.e. old trainers 	<p>LOW</p>	<p>LOW</p>
<p>Back injury from lifting/moving logs</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Participants will be shown correct lifting and carrying techniques and advised to seek help when moving awkward or heavy materials • Participant briefed not to carry large logs • Good instructor awareness • Instructors to undertake annual manual handling training. 	<p>LOW</p>	<p>LOW</p>
<p>Exposure to carcinogenic spores from bracken during late summer and autumn. Attempts to pull up bracken leading to cut hands</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Participants advised NOT to pull up bracken for use on their shelters and if they do the instructor will clearly brief the likelihood of cutting hand and how to pick it safely • First aid kit available and instructor trained. 	<p>LOW</p>	<p>LOW</p>
<p>Participants climbing trees and falling from height</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In fine weather participants can be asked not to climb trees, or to climb no further than head height (that is, the Participants height above the ground) as appropriate to the group • Climbing of trees should only be to enable participants to reach hung up dead wood on low branches for shelters/fires. 	<p>LOW</p>	<p>LOW</p>
<p>Stings from Nettles during collection/preparation</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Before collecting nettles the group will be shown the best method of collection • Gloves/rags will be made available to minimise stinging 	<p>LOW</p>	<p>LOW</p>

<p>Eating inedible/ poisonous plants and fungi</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Group warned against eating anything from the wild unless they are certain of what it is, or have been advised of its fitness to eat by an accompanying expert • Instructor only to provide samples of food they are able to positively identify, as being safe for consumption • Particular care must be taken with fungi • Instructor to be aware of any food allergies within the group before preparing/giving out any edible items- both wild foods and items being made on the session such as damper bread. If unsure, check with the group leader. 	<p>LOW</p>	<p>LOW</p>
<p>Fire – spreading / setting light to the peat under ground</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fires only to be lit in appropriate locations; i.e. on a clear site with no overhanging trees and either in a fire pit or raised off the ground • Fires not to be left unattended at any time • An adequate supply of water and a fire blanket to be on session at all times • Fire to be extinguished before leaving the site. 	<p>LOW</p>	<p>LOW</p>
<p>Scalding/burns by fire/hot food/pots/liquid</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Area immediately around a fire (the fire circle) should not be walked through; only individuals tending to the fire should be in close proximity and they must be invited in by the instructor • If necessary a 'restricted' area will be physically marked out • Instructor to make participants aware of safe fire lighting techniques and the effect of wind direction, etc. • Instructor to judge whether handling of hot items is appropriate by group. • if necessary participants may aid in the preparation of food, but only adults will be able to cook the food or handle pots 	<p>LOW</p>	<p>LOW</p>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Groups to be reminded at the start of the activity not to handle metal pots/kettle once they have been over a fire • Oven gloves to be provided where pots need to be handled 		
Burns during friction fire-lighting	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Correct method will be demonstrated and the activity carried out under the direct supervision of the instructor • Group will be advised that the drill can still reach very hot temperature, even before smoke has been generated and therefore a suitable level of care taken in handling the drill • Gloves to be made available for handling the nest if required 	LOW	LOW
Burns / Scalds from Kelly Kettles	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Group to be reminded that metal heats up quickly and not to touch the kettle once the fire has been lit • Twigs to be added through the top hole in the Kelly kettle from the side, no hands should go directly over the top hole of the Kelly kettle • Kettle should never be boiled with the cork fitted inside the spout • The spout should not be positioned over the hole in the base pot • Group to communicate when blowing into the fire to provide oxygen, So no fuel is added at this point in case embers gets blown upwards • The instructor to mark out/ explain the area in front of the Kelly kettle water spout, where hot water may splash out when the kettle boils and ensures no one stands or walks through this area. • When removing the kettle from the base pot, the handle should be held horizontally, with one hand on either side • Boiling water should be poured with one hand on the handle and one hand pulling up the chain. 	LOW	LOW

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Cups should always be placed on a flat/sturdy surface rather than being held in case of spillage. 		
Cuts from tools	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Instructor to judge whether tool use is appropriate for the group. Where tool use is deemed appropriate, they should initially be used on a one to one basis Only when the instructor is confident about the participants abilities should the ratio be gradually increased Tool safety talk and demonstration to be given before using any tool with a group All tools to be kept in protective covers whilst not in use Tools to be regularly checked, maintained and kept in good condition. All tools should be visually checked before being taken onto session Group members should be encouraged to visually check a tool before use Instructor to account for all tools at the end of the section/session. 	LOW	MEDIUM
Entrapment / cuts when opening and closing of folding saws	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Instructor to demonstrate safe opening and closing of the saws When opening a folding saw, the tool should be orientated so that the blade faces away from the individual When closing the saw, care should be taken to ensure that fingers are not overlapping the slot where the blade will close into 	LOW	LOW
Injury through inappropriate carrying of tools	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Tools should always be carried one at a time, in the appropriate manner (usually at the point of balance) – see individual tool information sheets Where lots of tools need to be transported, they should be placed in an appropriate bag / container with safety guards on 	LOW	LOW
Tools being left unaccounted for	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> All tools taken onto session should be stored in an appropriate receptacle 	LOW	LOW

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Tools should always be counted in and out; before, during and after use When using tools with participants, the instructor should always be aware of how many tools are in use at one time 		
Injury when sawing due to an unstable sawing base	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Where ever practical, the item being sawn should be raised off the ground onto a saw horse The non-sawing hand should be placed away from the line of cut, on the side that will remain once the cut has been made 	LOW	LOW
Food poisoning and germs contracted from unclean hands and food preparation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Make sure all of the group wash and disinfect their hands before participating in any cooking or eating activities Instructor to ensure all food is prepared in a hygienic way on cutting boards Instructor to ensure food is cooked thoroughly and is hot when served Instructor to ensure all food is stored in cool dry containers in a secure cabinet Ensure all participants wash their hands at the end of the session 	LOW	LOW

Reference to other manuals assessments:

[UK Youth Health and Safety policy](#)

When was the assessment reviewed and by whom?

November 2018 Chief Instructor

Date of next review and to be done by whom?

November 2019 Chief Instructor