


RISK ASSESSMENT

LOCATION/ACTIVITY/ISSUE BEING ASSESSED:	Dinton Activity Centre, Outdoor Climbing, High Ropes Activities and Zip Wire		
SERVICE/TEAM:	Countryside Service		
NAME OF ASSESSOR(s):	Mike Bennett		
DATE OF ASSESSMENT:	01 December 2025		
DATE FOR REVIEW:	December 2026		
APPROVED BY:	Signature:	Date: 01/03/2026	
			
	Name: Gemma Wilford		

SUMMARY (* delete as appropriate)	
Risk level without additional controls:	HIGH / MEDIUM / LOW
Additional control measures required:	YES / NO
Risk level with additional controls:	HIGH / MEDIUM / LOW

What are the significant hazards?	What could go wrong? Who could be harmed and how?	What is being done to control the risks?	Amendment notes
Fall from Height	<p>Injury due to a fall or swing.</p> <p>Incorrect belaying.</p> <p>Participant on abseil or zip wire attach to safety system incorrectly.</p> <p>All participants and staff liable to injury.</p> <p>Injury due to incorrect lowering technique.</p>	<p>PPE and all equipment checked prior to ascent.</p> <p>Belaying groups directly supervised by a staff member, with a maximum of 2 ropes, and limitations set by Technical Advisor (TA).</p> <p>Belayed ropes will be tailed by instructor unless belayer is deemed competent by a climbing authorised member of staff. This is with more experienced repeat clients or those training for GCSE PE Climbing. Ropes must still be tailed by other participants.</p> <p>When lowering participants, the instructor must supervise all lines to prevent accidental lowering.</p> <p>For beginner groups the instructor must tail all lines during lowering of any participant.</p>	<p>Lowering phase added – Instructors to tail as well as participants while first participant (bell ringer) to operate lever on Rig.</p>

		<p><i>Petzl Rig</i> used exclusively for belaying for benefits of auto-locking function and durability.</p> <p>Ground anchors used for bell-ringing style belaying of participants.</p> <p>Climbers must be belayed by at least 2 participants, one participant operating the belay device and a second participant tailing the rope. They must also be tailed by climbing authorised member of staff unless deemed competent by the staff member. Younger participants might require 2 to tail the rope if stiff going through the belay device.</p> <p>Due to risk of inversion chest harnesses to be used during all high roped activities (this excludes climbing and abseiling, unless the participants physical build increases the risks of inversion e.g. large chested – top heavy, or having little / no hip definition, or if that person requires extra support e.g. additional needs, wheelchair user etc)</p> <p>Routes set to guide participants up a single, vertical line.</p> <p>Area around and under participants climbing to be kept clear while climbing is in progress.</p> <p>Closed toe footwear essential. (e.g. trainers or boots)</p> <p>When working on the tower top all staff and participants to maintain at least one point of rope access connection at all times.</p> <p>Instructor at wall top will visibly check and require a physical check by participant of carabiner attachments to prove correct positioning and locking of equipment prior to ascent.</p>	
<p>Falling</p>	<p>Rock wall failure, holds spinning, incorrect use of equipment, incorrect belaying, controlled fall</p> <p>Participants Staff Members of Public</p>	<p>Climbing tower serviced annually by the manufacturer.</p> <p>Tool kept available for tightening spinning holds.</p> <p>Staff ratios, training, and qualifications according to NGB guidance</p> <p>Reduce distractions and limit the number of people who have access to the working area beneath the wall.</p> <p>Loose holds tightened at the earliest and safest opportunity.</p> <p>Communication between belayers and climbers to ensure rope is tight before leaving the ground, and that communication continues so that no slack rope occurs whilst participant climbing.</p>	

Injury on ground	<p>Care taken when lowering last 1m of descent, especially on crate stack above toppled tower.</p> <p>Items falling from climbers or tools during maintenance.</p> <p>Trip over with the crate stack platform when not paying attention around it.</p> <p>Slip on the crate stack platform when it is wet as it can be very slippery.</p>	<p>Instructor to manage rope handling during lower off phase.</p> <p>Pockets in clothes to be emptied pre-ascent, shoes secured, and all tools attached with lanyards where possible.</p> <p>First Aid Kit carried by Instructor and left at bottom of Climbing Tower.</p> <p>Communicate to participants about the slip hazards from the crate stack platform and to take extra care when wet.</p>	
Head injury	<p>During a fall participant hits head.</p> <p>Falling object hits someone on ground.</p> <p>Participants Staff Members of Public</p>	<p>Everyone to wear helmets when inside fenced area around tower.</p> <p>Zip wire area kept clear, checked pre-descent, <i>clear</i> signals given from Zip Bottom Instructor.</p> <p>Everyone to ensure shoes are tight and pockets are empty or secured.</p> <p>All tools to be secured when working at height.</p> <p>Cultural exceptions to helmet policy or alterations to adjust helmet in order to accommodate cultural headwear and hairstyles.</p> <p>Lead Instructor must carry a radio when on session.</p>	
Injury caused by collision with another participant	<p>When on High Roped activities: All Aboard, Jacob's Ladder, Crate Stack or Static Climbing Tower, participants may slip and pendulum into another person</p> <p>Participant's Staff</p>	<p>Participants briefed that this might happen and to not stray from their route.</p> <p>Rope lines managed by instructors and participants ascent/descent is staggered to prevent collision occurring.</p>	
Harnesses	<p>Not fitting correctly, coming loose or undone by participants, wear and tear, failure.</p> <p>Participants Staff</p>	<p>Harness fitting checked by instructors at start of session and monitored throughout session. Students asked to tell instructor if harness feels loose.</p> <p>Participants do not leave the ground until harness checked by a climbing authorised member of staff.</p>	

	Members of Public	<p>Range of harness styles and fits available including full body harnesses for both children and adults.</p> <p>Only centre kit to be used for participants.</p> <p>Chest harnesses worn for zip wire and high ropes or if physical build requires extra support when climbing or abseiling.</p> <p>Instructors to use harnesses provided by the centre.</p>	
Metalwork	<p>Failure or incorrect use</p> <p>Fingers or hands pinched by karabiners and/or belay device.</p> <p>Karabiner screw gate not done up correctly.</p> <p>Participants Staff</p>	<p>Visual inspection before every use.</p> <p>Participants to be fully briefed on correct use of carabiners if needed, otherwise warned not to touch.</p> <p>Participants' karabiners MUST be checked by climbing authorised member of staff to ensure gate is closed before allowing them to leave the ground.</p> <p>Only centre metal work to be used, no instructor personal kit.</p>	
Ropes	<p>Failure, incorrect attachment knots.</p> <p>Participants Staff Members of Public</p>	<p>Climbers are to be tied into harness using a rethreaded figure of 8 with a stopper knot only or captive eye carabiner.</p> <p>Ropes checked before every use and in scheduled checks.</p> <p>Participants to stay clear of ground anchor and stand aside rope to avoid trip hazards or being hit in the groin area.</p>	
Equipment failure	<p>Injury due to equipment failing due to damage, incorrect usage, incorrect set-up, or tampering.</p> <p>All participants and staff liable to injury.</p>	<p>BI-Annual and pre-use checks.</p> <p>Staff to be inducted by SI and signed off by outside technical advisor in the correct rigging and set up of climbing ropes and metal work before operating climbing/high ropes/zip wire.</p> <p>Hand Holds to be checked bi-annually. Any loose hand holds reported during session to be tightened at earliest convenience by climbing authorised member of staff.</p> <p>Any failed equipment removed and disposed of appropriately.</p> <p>Pre-ascent checks by staff.</p>	

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Catastrophic structural failure	Ground anchor failure. Tower failure All participants and staff liable to injury.	Annual site inspection by a party recommended by the manufacturer. Bi-annual checks by Senior Team. Pre- use checks by Instructor. Tower built and inspected to conform to EN 15567 (2015).	
Manual handling	Injury moving crates. Lifting Jacobs Ladder rungs and climbing wall screens. Poor belaying technique, trying to hoist participants.	Four crates carried as a maximum. Recommended two people set up and pack down for Jacobs Ladder and Climbing Wall. Briefing to include proper technique. Any participant belaying inappropriately will have further tuition by climbing authorised member of staff. If behaviour continues the participant will no longer be allowed to belay.	
Rescues	Participant scared to descend, trapped helmet, hair, clothing, fingers etc. Participants Staff Members of Public	Participants asked to tie hair back, and remove loose clothing, jewellery where appropriate and wear sensible closed-toe footwear. Helmets checked before ascending. Participants coached on descending while close to the ground to learn trust in the equipment and process. Built into session. Participants not pushed beyond their own limits (challenge by choice). Rescues can be done utilising the second rope on the wall. Only trained staff can rescue participants.	
Entrapment	Entrapment: physical or mental. Harness loop, clothing, body parts caught on holds. Clothing or hair caught in belay system.	Pre-activity checks by staff. Session structured to ensure participants learn descent technique while low to ground. Practise coming down from about 2-3m.	

	<p>Clothing or body parts caught in zip wire pulley.</p> <p>All participants and staff liable to injury.</p>	<p>Participants to remove or securely tape jewellery. Rings must be removed on children and adults will be strongly advised to remove rings. Risks clearly outlined including de-gloving or indeed losing a finger. Tape can be provided, but participants must be advised that this will not stop such an injury, but merely reduce the potential for it to happen</p>	
Collision during Zip Wire	<p>Member of public on Lea Heath struck by Zip Wire participants, or trailing ropes.</p> <p>Zip Wire Participant strikes a vehicle on Lea Heath.</p> <p>The public and participants liable to injury.</p>	<p>Instructor at Zip Bottom to give <i>all clear</i> sign to staff at wall top before descent commences.</p> <p>Participants on Zip Wire remain above head height until stationary.</p> <p>Zip Bottom Instructor to request people not on session, who approach zip wire, once participant have departed the tower, to wait while the participant comes to a complete stop.</p>	
Splinters	<p>All staff and participants at risk from wooden boards of climbing tower and wooden beams of Jacob's Ladder.</p>	<p>Wooden structures monitored during bi-annual checks.</p> <p>Participants briefed at start of the session to use climbing holds not the small holes. Wooden parts checked quarterly and smoothed if needed.</p>	
Cuts from sharp wires	<p>Exposed wires can be sharp, liable to cut staff using ground anchors and climbers of Jacobs Ladder</p>	<p>Ground anchors taped to cover exposed ends.</p> <p>Participants briefed to not hold wires in Jacobs Ladder.</p>	
Unauthorised access	<p>Access on wall when not supervised.</p> <p>Participants on other sessions during free time and the public are at risk.</p> <p>Vandalism.</p> <p>Tracer lines removed.</p> <p>Dog walkers & uncontrolled dogs entering climbing tower area during session.</p> <p>Public walking through DAC garden to and from Lea Heath</p>	<p>The wall is built to EN15567 standards to uphold standards of security of facility.</p> <p>Pre-use and bi-annual checks by staff.</p> <p>Staff or guardians, e.g., teachers and parents, to supervise visitors during free time.</p> <p>Gates to be kept locked.</p> <p>Access tracer line and trapeze bar ropes tied off at such height that tampering is not readily available.</p> <p>Ladders and Jacobs Ladder rungs (lower two) stored, locked under the climbing tower.</p>	
Adverse Weather	<p>Snow and ice increase slip hazard on platforms (Zip wire, Abseil, Leap of faith, all aboard.)</p>	<p>Instructor to monitor platform, zip wire and climbing holds during snow or icy conditions with consideration to increased risk of slips and effects of cold. Activity to be stopped in severe snow / ice.</p>	

	Zip wire becomes sheathed in ice increasing speed dangerously. Bright sunlight causing visual difficulty. All participants, staff and public liable to injury.	Positioning or group and staffing with consideration to position of sun during session. Lightning striking tower, all activities cease Public advised by signage to remain 20m from Zip Wire end pole and cables during electrical storms.	
Ratios	Increased participants make supervision challenging.	Ratios laid out in Centre Operations not to be exceeded.	
Animal faeces	Health implications of contact with animal faeces.	Ground surrounding wall and track of zip line to be checked for faeces and cleared before session.	

REVIEWS AND REVISIONS					
Review date	Name of Assessor	Is assessment still valid?	If not, list adjustments with details of who will action and by when	Approved by Manager	Date of next review
Feb 2020	Nicola Dennis	Yes	Notes added about participants belaying (two plus instructor tailing), Splinters and Rescues to bring RA in line with the COP's. Added mitigation – cones to visualise to public that zip wire is in use. Added mitigation around wedding rings, and other rings.	Tanya Lee	Feb 2021
March 2021	Sophie Wooldridge	Yes	Updated references to COP's	Jack Walling	Feb 2022
Feb 2022	Nicola Dennis	Yes	Updated references to COPs		
Feb 2023	Isabel R.S.	Yes	Updated The Reference to COP's Traverse wall sections removed as outdoor traverse wall removed. Instructor harnesses now provided by the centre	Richard Ashwell	Feb 2024
Sep 2023	Richard Ashwell	Yes	Updated lowering and supervision of multiple lines (falling from height) Updated Rescue section in line with current CWI training. Removed requirement for SI to check personal kit as kit now provided by the centre. Updated references to Screwgates as majority of carabiners in use are now tri-lock where appropriate. Update catastrophic failure checks as pre-use were required to be done by Annual Tower Inspector instead of appropriate staff. Removed route separation when using multiple lines as route setting, briefing and instructor checking will mean climbers don't stray and only go vertically up and down.	Reviewed by Mike Bennett and Isabel R.S	Feb 2024
Dec 2023	Mike Bennett	Yes	Updated COPs references. Added 2 ropes requires 6 participants minimum for beginner groups.	Richard Ashwell	March 2025

Dec 2024	Mike Bennett	Yes	Helmet area edited to within fenced area. Inspection frequency updated	Mike Bennett	Dec 2025
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