

Training Overview



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Amended 29 Jan 19

Qualifying requirements

As the Ten Tors Event takes place on Dartmoor, it is always demanding and conditions can be exceptionally tough. TMs' (TM) training programmes are expected to ensure that their teams attain the Ten Tors Qualifying Requirements at Para 15 of the Ten Tors Rules. Teams successfully completing the Event have invariably undertaken far more comprehensive programmes than the bare minimum.

Furthermore, prior to the Event, the TM is required to assure the Director that all participants are eligible to participate, agree to abide by the Ten Tors Rules, Charter and ethos, and are sufficiently trained, physically prepared and suitably equipped to complete it unaided even in adverse conditions.

Every TM must decide how this is best achieved with their Establishment and their participants. Whilst we've set out how we do our best to ensure that our teams attain the 'qualifying requirements' – we're not offering a definitive Ten Tors training guide.

Our training reflects evolving Scout Association requirements, best practice and the experience of our respective training teams. We're not claiming originality as we've been happily adopting the insights of others and their good ideas for years and, should you wish to do so, you're more than welcome to do the same.

Clarity

Effective training requires clarity about what you're trying to achieve. As Scouting is about access to adventure, our rationale for involvement in Ten Tors is simple. The wild country challenge provides a demanding platform for developing leadership, team work, problem solving, resilience and hill walking skills. The skills learned via Ten Tors provide an exceptional grounding for lifelong adventure – including the development of expeditioning and leadership opportunities.

What's your shared vision?

- Why has your Establishment entered a team in the Ten Tors event?

- Does everyone have a shared vision of the outcome to be achieved?
- Everyone – the head of establishment, TM, staff, parents/carers and participants – all need to buy into the shared vision as it underpins the collective investment for success.

The Duty of Care

For us, implementing of the 'duty of care' necessitates completing a Risk Assessment with respect to our Ten Tors training. Whilst the details of the Risk Assessment process are addressed in greater depth in *TMs' and Group Leaders' Competence and Responsibility and Hazards and Risks on Dartmoor*, the quality and quantity of the training staff relative to the numbers and experience of the young people being trained is the cornerstone Ten Tors operation. Training a Ten Tors team to the 'Qualifying Requirements' starts with well-trained experienced TMs and leaders, as a duty of care is owed to the participants, their parents/carers and to our respective Establishments.

We treat the ratio of qualified staff to the numbers of teams sought in the Ten Tors team application process as bare minima, preferring to underpin the strength of our training operations via a robust ratio of qualified and experienced leaders for each of our walking groups – not just the individuals accepted for the Event.

TMs and Group Leaders training teams for Ten Tors, whether volunteer or paid, should:

- be technically competent – hold the relevant qualifications
- have sufficient relevant experience
- possess the necessary training skills
- be suitable individuals to work closely with young people, with DBS disclosure
- be appointed by their Head of Establishment to undertake Ten Tors training activities – compliant with the applicable LEA, School, Cadet or Scout Association requirements.
- if paid, meet the requirements of the relevant legislation.

Both Teignbridge and Gordano leaders hold the requisite Scout Association Permits - the former's Permits are based on MT Mountain Leader, Hill and Moorland Leader Awards and Expedition Skill module and the latter's mainly on Scouting training and assessment provision; all also hold the required Scout Association 'Nights Away Permits'.

Young people will learn to handle the challenges of life and avoid becoming risk averse if they have opportunities to assess risks and learn how to manage them. The risks and benefits in outdoor activities can be balanced by a proportionate approach to both safety and adventure, drawing on the Scout Association's and Mountain Training's guidance - <http://www.mountain-training.org/downloads>. *TMs' and Group Leaders' Competence and Responsibility* and *Hazards and Risks on Dartmoor* offer more detailed discussion.

Who do we train?

Adventure is beneficial for young people's development, and Scouting seeks to offer everyone the opportunity to train, especially those who are not athletes or potential mountaineers.

Recruitment for Ten Tors needs to be set in the context of demanding training, uncertainty of selection for the Event, academic expectations and family commitments. Whilst taking part offers significant short and long term benefits, would-be participants and their parents/carers need to be up for:

- the duration and intensity of the commitment, as it's above all a team event and teams can't be built around absent members, and
- the demands of the incremental fitness programme and the considerable challenge of long-distance backpacking in difficult terrain in adverse weather in winter and spring.

Given that the demand for places usually exceeds supply, all who want to take part – and their parents/carers - need to understand and accept our team selection criteria. Whilst Scouting criteria such as commitment and perseverance are considered, only competent participants who meet the Ten Tors qualifying requirements are entered.

Our selection rationale and processes are made clear to walkers and parents/carers at the start of training, resulting in fewer surprises when the teams are selected. Consideration and support for those who aren't selected is critical.

How do we train?

Scouting informs our training model – see *A Progressive Training Model* for our methodology.

As Ten Tors training is demanding for most candidates, there is little room for ambivalence. Whilst academic demands and competing interests can make it tempting to select only young people who are already fit, if the adventure and developmental opportunities offered by Ten Tors training are of value, it's worth investing in a more extended inclusive training regime offering time to develop the necessary stamina. There is no single right approach but to be sustainable, the model adopted must be consistent with the respective Establishment's priorities.

Make sure your walkers are actually enjoying the experience – preferably at the time, but at least in hindsight; if they aren't, they have little reason to continue. If your leaders are enjoying the experience, they will communicate their enthusiasm to the walkers; if the leaders aren't enjoying themselves, your operation is at risk.

As the demands of Ten Tors training can be somewhat daunting, it's easier to deliver quality training via a consortium working with several teams across a Scout District or similar. This offers the economies and resilience of scale, widens the leadership skill base available to the walkers, gives opportunities to mentor less experienced team staff and provides greater team selection flexibility. Self evidently, the partners must be compatible if a consortium model is to work.

Seeking to maximise the benefits for participants implies willingness to learn from mistakes or failure in the context of both training and the Event. In the latter context, non-compliance citations, fallouts and crash-outs all need to be treated as learning opportunities.

Participation

Scouting also informs our Ten Tors training approach. Safeguarding, DBS checks, the size of training groups, the ratio of adult trainers to participants and the trainers' competencies are all covered within Scouting. This makes it easier to agree training practice and integrate the delivery of our pre-Ten Tors' activities and planned Ten Tors specific training programme.

Walkers need to be highly motivated, to have at least a basic level of fitness, and be ready to become resilient, committed team players who want to be a part of the training programme.

Parental/carer support has to be developed beyond acquiring the necessary personal kit and transport to/from training venues. Helping parents/carers to understand the commitment expected of their child will ensure readiness to provide emotional support as training becomes more arduous.

Potential conflicts of commitment are usually best resolved early, preferably by the beginning of January; these may include academic issues, especially if critical exam dates fall immediately after the Ten Tors Event, sporting or family plans. If it's apparent that there are too few candidates to fill a team, the problem needs to be addressed with the Ten Tors organisers before the end of January to minimise the risk of an adverse impact on your Establishment's team allocations in subsequent years.

Training Practice

Whilst every would-be team member is expected to acquire these skills and the knowledge, 2 or 3 members in each team need a really good grasp of navigation, given the demands presented by Dartmoor.

Although most of the topics listed can be taught, at least in part, indoors, all need to be practised in the Hills. Whilst wild camping skills need to be developed in more remote self-supported locations, outdoor training starts in more forgiving terrain before moving to the higher parts of Dartmoor or similar upland areas as experience develops and competency is demonstrated. Teams review their previous training events, identify what worked, as well as what didn't and plan how to avoid repeating any mistakes. Team leaders and deputies are identified either in the light of experience during training and/or their known strengths and weaknesses.

Training in groups of six works for us. Whilst it may be attractive to start the formal phase of Ten Tors training with a significant excess of walkers, larger groups can be unwieldy, risk losing cohesion and be potentially hazardous in more challenging conditions. Whilst a spare walker or two per allocated team may be prudent, too many may be problematic.

Some Establishments provide larger numbers with the outdoor skills and wild country experience. Holding a mini event celebrates the success of the participants before the difficult task of selecting who will participate in the Event. Our penultimate training weekend enables participants to test themselves against Challenge-length training routes.

Teams need to understand pace, time, distance and Saturday night stop times and Sunday crash times. The Event starts at 0700 on Saturday and finishes at 1700 on Sunday, but only allows around 24 hours of 'walking time' in which to complete the respective distances. No team, at any distance, will be checked through the 8th tor on their route, as shown on their Control Card; this Tor falls near the 3/4 point on all routes.

In practice, the 35 mile teams may have less than 11 hours on Saturday, as they have to allow for the impact of the 'Night Stop Time' on their route. On Sunday they'll have up to 11 hours available, assuming they leave their overnight stop promptly at 0600.

On the Saturday evening, 45 and 55 mile teams may choose to continue walking but may not be checked through any Safety Control or Check Point [including their eighth Tor] after 2200. As 45 and 55 mile teams may not camp within 1km of any Safety Control or Check Point, prudent teams will plan accordingly and aim to camp at least 1.5 or 2 km from a Safety Control or Check Point.

Given the challenges of walking in wild country, building a contingency buffer of 2 or 3 hours into Ten Tors route planning will help to assure success. Casualties can only fall out at a Safety Control. If a casualty is immobile, the team must stay with them – even if they're at a Check Point - pending the casualty's evacuation. Route plans should allow for such contingencies.

Many teams plan to complete in about 20 hours 'walking time', aiming to make about two thirds of their overall distance on the first day. A similar model can be used during overnight training so that the walkers become used to achieving two thirds/one third of the planned activity on the 1st and 2nd days respectively.

Given a 'real world' total distance approaching 60km, 35 mile teams should be able to sustain 4km/hr for several hours after the start, gradually dropping to 3km/hr later in the day and continuing at the same speed on Sunday. Good planning with respect to the Saturday Night Stop Times can be the key to success on 35 miles routes. Subject to their stamina, 45 and 55 mile teams have rather more walking time available to them on the Saturday evening or prior to 0600 on Sunday morning.

Teams need to tackle incrementally more demanding training routes and to become accustomed to completing their training routes successfully. For 35 mile teams, this will involve a transition from being accompanied, shadowed and finally being remotely supervised by their adult trainers as the team's skills, competence and confidence develop during training. Experienced 45 and 55 mile teams are more likely to be training in check pointing mode, enhancing their existing night navigation, hillwalking skills and stamina and managed accordingly.

Teams new to Ten Tors need close adult leader supervision initially to enable them to implement and develop their hill walking and back packing

skills in a challenging yet safe environment. This is covered in depth in *A Progressive Training Model*.

Emergency Procedures must ensure that team safety is not mobile phone-dependent as they can't be used on the Event other than in a genuine emergency. However, 'phones can offer a useful added support during the check pointing phase of training but over dependence should be avoided. Mistakes during training are learning opportunities, focusing on the avoidance of repetition, with teams being supported in devising successful responses to the challenges encountered.

TMs need to ensure that their teams are compliant with the Ten Tors Rules and the Green Card guidance, both during training and the Event. The current Out Of Bounds (OOBs) areas must be marked up accurately on the maps which the teams are using as well as the safer river crossings indicated in Annex A. Teams should expect to meet Compliance Monitors during training and respond to their queries appropriately. Self-evidently, teams which are used to being Ten Tors Rule compliant during training are far more likely to be so during the Event.

We aspire to a challenging but safe training regime, which emphasises the importance of all team members having the right clothing and equipment, and knowing when and how to deploy it. Detailed guidance is given in *Clothing and Equipment*.

Whilst Ten Tors training in the hills has the potential to be hazardous, the risk of accidents during homeward travel can be mitigated by ensuring the minibus drivers are fresh to drive by not having a significant role in the walking training programme.

Training Event Leader

A competent adult leader is designated as the Training Event Leader, in Scout parlance 'leader in charge', for every training event. They are tasked with the oversight of the activity as whole and its safety. All the other leaders are informed who is holding the role for each training event.

The Leader in Charge is responsible for

- ensuring that all the adult leaders understand their own roles, and
- coordinating the response to any incident, deploying resources and manpower as required, and
- determining the progress of the event in the light of changing circumstances

Qualifying Requirements

All TMs have to sign a Certificate of Competence for each of their teams on behalf of the Head of Establishment, confirming that the team members have qualified for Ten Tors. This explicitly requires teams to have experienced a structured and progressive programme of training together, including team experience of independent walking and wild camping on Dartmoor. In addition, the team must be sufficiently trained, physically prepared and suitably equipped to self-sufficient and safe, and to complete the Event unaided, even in adverse conditions.

Both Teignbridge and Gordano are content to sign our teams' Declarations, knowing that our training programmes deliver participants who are more than compliant with the Ten Tors Qualifying Requirements.

Legacy

The skills learned on Ten Tors provide a solid grounding for lifelong adventure – including the development of expeditioning and leadership opportunities. Our ex-55 milers are valued highly - they're our 'seed corn' – potentially our next generation of capable, qualified inspirational leaders. This is reflected via developmental opportunities including early access to formal hillwalking and mountain leader training programmes resulting, resulting in numerous leaders gaining their HML or ML Awards and Scout Terrain 1 or 2 permits in recent years.

After thought

The training practice described above works well for us. Much of what we do will be familiar to many experienced team staff. Please feel free to utilise and adapt any of our ideas and methods to suit your own training operation. Whilst we aspire to run successful Ten Tors training, our ideas should not be read as definitive guidance.