



Hazards & Risks on Dartmoor and other moorland terrain

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A HAZARD is anything that has the potential to cause harm. A RISK is the likelihood and severity of that harm. All team managers and staff have a duty prior to training to identify and record significant hazards and to ensure that any risk involved is reduced to an acceptable level.

RISK ASSESSMENT

The Team Manager must conduct a risk assessment (or update an assessment made previously) **prior to any team setting out** to train for Ten Tors or to participate in the Event itself. This is a legal requirement for schools and recognised best practice for any other establishment. Potential hazards specific to the programme of training should be identified and analysed, the likelihood and severity of risks considered, and appropriate control measures put in place to reduce any risk that is unacceptable. This is achieved either by eliminating it altogether or by applying adequate control procedures to ensure that it is at an acceptable level. The assessment should focus essentially on those aspects for which the manager has prime responsibility and should as a minimum cover staffing, the nature of the activity, the participants (age, ability, experience), the terrain, transport arrangements.

Prior to any training, the Manager must ensure that the team has been carefully

HAZARD Terrain

RISKS

Incurring **physical injury** through falling from rocks, slipping on clutter (especially when covered by heather), sliding on slimy stream boulders or tripping over grass tussocks.

Becoming stuck in a **bog**: Dartmoor is notorious for its bogs, but they are not that numerous and should present a threat only to the unobservant.

Selected, is walking fit, has the right equipment and knows how to use it, and is properly trained in navigation, first aid, risk management, safe cooking methods and emergency procedures. Notwithstanding, having ensured that the team is competent, the Manager remains responsible for supervising the training and for having a fall back plan in case, for example, the weather worsens or assistance is required. Before the Challenge the Team Manager is required to certify that the team is competent to participate.

During training the Manager, trainers and/or team leaders should continue to assess the hazards and risks, informed by their route plan. This dynamic, or ongoing, risk assessment is assisted by having rehearsed procedures that can be implemented to reduce the risk back to an acceptable level.

HAZARDS AND RISKS

The hazards of Dartmoor and other wild areas are numerous and can be life threatening to the untrained and inexperienced, especially the young. However, even allowing for time of year and prevailing weather conditions, none should endanger a team that appreciates the hazards and risks involved. Education and training should be designed to ensure individuals are competent to avoid or overcome them.

HAZARDS Flooded Rivers and other water hazards

RISKS

Dartmoor rivers rise very rapidly after rain. **Crossing a swift-flowing river is extremely dangerous.** A river/stream is safe to cross if the main consequence of falling in would be greater than simply getting wet. In all other circumstances avoidance is the key. If safe to cross, rucksack straps should be loosened and chest and hip belts undone. If there is no bridge, go upstream to a safe crossing then, if necessary, return to a point on the opposite bank that allows you to resume your route

Weather	<p>Suffering from exhaustion: Walking with a pack on Dartmoor for many hours is extremely demanding for anybody whose fitness level or intake of energy-giving food is inadequate or whose navigation skills are poor.</p> <p>Becoming lost in inclement weather; Morning mists can be dense, and even in clear conditions visibility can deteriorate rapidly as cloud rolls in across the moor.</p> <p>Facing a moorland fire: Dry weather, even in spring, can lead to extensive fires.</p> <p>Being struck by lightning. While thunder is unnerving, the risk from lightning is very real.</p> <p>Suffering from heat illness (hyperthermia): Whatever the weather, there is always a risk of heat-related illness due to the nature of the exercise. The risk is far greater in full sun.</p> <p>Suffering from cold injuries (hypothermia and non-freezing and freezing injuries) most typically arising from a combination of strong wind and rain: A cold wind, a downpour, or a snow storm can rapidly catch out a walker who is inappropriately clothed or unfit or ill-equipped for an overnight camp.</p>	Adders	Being bitten by an adder: Adders are plentiful but timid. In spring they may be slow to escape the approaching boot and, through feeling threatened, could bite.
		Ticks	Being bitten by a tick: Ticks are exceedingly small and similar to mites. Adults have eight legs and beaklike mouths adapted for sucking blood: In this country they are parasitic on sheep and deer. Ticks can latch on to exposed skin or get into body folds and transfer disease. Dress appropriately and be aware of the signs and symptoms of Lyme Disease.
		Live Firing	Entering a live firing range danger area when it is in use: Dartmoor continues to provide vital training for the Armed Forces. Check for firing times on https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/dartmoor-firing-programme and if warning signal red flags are hoisted to not enter.
		Unexploded Ordnance	Being injured by unexploded ordnance : Dartmoor has been used for military training for over 140 years, and during the Second World War both north and south moors were used to prepare forces for the D-Day invasion. Unexploded ordnance that works its way to the surface could, if touched, explode and kill.
Drinking Water and Hygiene	<p>Becoming ill through drinking impure moorland water. Although the streams may look refreshing, the presence upstream of a rotting animal carcass could soon bring an early end to the day's walking!</p>	Vehicles	Being struck by a vehicle : On narrow Devon lanes and moorland roads vehicles can present a hazard to pedestrians.
Overnight Camp	Stoves are an essential part of an overnight expedition: To avoid the potential for serious burns, be familiar with their safe use in all weather conditions, especially siting and re-fuelling.	Medical emergencies	Incidents may arise that involve a member of staff or the group. A group's remote location may make the management more demanding.

BE PREPARED

With forethought and proper preparation, thousands of people venture safely across Dartmoor every year. Even those who do have problems are normally able to help themselves through their own experience or through knowledge acquired during training. Team Managers have a duty to ensure not only that their walkers know the hazards that exist and the risks that may arise but also they know how to counter them. The *Aide Memoire For Teams (The Green Card)* lists the hazards and describes some actions that can be taken to reduce the risks: The Ten Tors Rules require the card to be carried by every team while on Dartmoor.