

Embercombe Risk Assessment

General Site

Description of main hazards and hazardous events:

Embercombe is a working site and as well as having many risks a traditional farm would have there are often numerous small building or maintenance projects being undertaken. These risks are compounded as the site is visited by thousands of members of the public every year. There is also a number of volunteers on residential programmes. Many of the people coming to Embercombe are unfamiliar with the rural environment and the risks it presents.

The site is 50 acres and there are significant areas that do not have mobile phone reception. The risk level of some activities is automatically increased due to the remote nature of the site and the difficult access to the woodland.

Important note;

This General Site risk assessment covers the general risks anyone may experience at Embercombe. It does not cover specific activities. For example, it covers being in the workshop but it does not cover using the workshop. Please see the activity specific risk assessments for your activities.

Moving vehicles pose a risk of serious injury to pedestrians and cyclists. Vehicles may be a hazard even when stationary as they can roll and cause crushing injury or death. Heavy machinery such as the tractor trailer or implements may cause injury if stored incorrectly. The children's play area is adjacent to the main track way through the site where vehicles pass and often perform reversing or turning manoeuvres. In some areas there are blind corners where foliage obscures the view for both pedestrian and motorist.

The **trackways** around the site are uneven and have pot holes and the surface can be made up of loose material. Some of the **pathways** around the site are uneven and become very muddy and unstable during wet weather. There are **other surfaces** that can be slippery these include timber decking and tiled floors. If care is not taken then people may slip or trip on these surfaces causing injuries including broken bones or head injuries. The rough surfaces can cause laceration of the skin in some cases.

The potential of harm from a slip or trip may be greatly increased if the person is carrying a sharp tool, a heavy object or hot liquids. In these cases there is the risk of serious cuts or burning injuries.

Across the site that is steep in places, there are **stacks of timber** and often trees that have been felled. The stacks or felled timber may become unstable if they were climbed upon or disturbed causing crushing injuries or broken bones. In the **woodlands** low branches could cause injury to eyes and face. Fallen branches, leaf litter steep and uneven ground are all trip hazards. Sharp sticks causing eye injury. Woods have poor access for emergency services. Falling branches or trees can cause injury.

The level of risk regarding moving around the site is increased at night when large areas become very dark.

The **workshop** has a selection of hand tools and power tools including bench machinery. If workshop guidelines are not followed there is a risk of serious injury or death. Injuries would include, burning, bruising, laceration, electrocution, loss of fingers or limbs, head injuries, eye injuries, crushing injuries, poisoning or broken bones.

The **woodyard area** contains large stacks of firewood that could collapse if guidelines are not followed. Such a collapse could cause bruising, crushing injuries or broken bones. There is a diesel tank and a petrol and oil store. LPG is stored in this area. There is also a lot of timber and other combustible material in the area. A fire in this area would present a real risk to health and safety. Risks would include, burning injuries or asphyxiation.

Strimmers and tractor-driven equipment is used frequently around the site. There is a risk that missiles may be projected by the rotating blades. This could cause injury to the eyes, laceration to the skin or serious head injury.

The **kitchen** contains various hazards. Sharp knives can cause cutting injuries. Burning injuries

from hot liquids hot surfaces and steam. Slips and trips, causing physical injury or if combined with hot liquids burning of the skin.

Food poisoning and illness, caused by the ingestion of food that has been improperly prepared or stored. Illness could also be caused if hands are not washed sufficiently before eating or after using the toilet. **Choking**, small objects or broken glass going into food.

There is a variety of parasitic infestations or infections that can be passed between **animals** through direct contact or via faeces or urine. There is a risk of illness as a result of such contacts. There is a Panther that frequents the local area and one one occasion has been seen on Embercombe land. An attack from a Panther although unlikely would most likely result in serious injury or in some cases death. Dogs are much more likely to attack humans and an attack may cause serious injury or in the case of children death. **Insect bites** can cause irritation to the skin and in the case of ticks may lead to complications such as limes disease.

The risk of being bitten by ticks is increased during the late Spring and Summer and is greater in areas frequented by deer. Embercombe has several bee hives. In the Summer there are often wasp and hornet nests. A sting can cause injury to the skin and in some cases death. Poorly maintained or damaged electrical equipment can cause **electrical contact** that can cause serious burning of the skin or death.

Areas where there is a risk of a **fall from height** include the stair well leading to the mezzanine area, the stairs up to TRAGO, the roof of the kitchen, the barn doors opening out from TRAGO and the roofs of the food stores. Falling in these places could result in bruising, broken bones, serious head injury, laceration of the skin or impalement.

There are places where there is a risk from **falling objects**. This includes the lean to area where there is a lot of equipment stored on the racks. There is also a lot of building materials and large hay bales. The items stored on the high shelving behind the kitchen and in the food store could cause injury if they fell. Injuries could include crushing, bruising and laceration of the skin or head injuries.

There is a risk of **violence or assault** either for people attending Embercombe programmes or for Embercombe staff. There is the risk of **fatigue or stress** resulting from excessive working hours or an intensive working environment.

In **hot weather** prolonged exposure to the sun combined with physical excursion could result in heat stroke, heat exhaustion or sunburn. In **cold weather** prolonged exposure could result in muscular injury.

Woodburners are in many locations across the site. A smouldering fire combined with a poorly maintained or badly fitted flu pipe can cause carbon monoxide to be created. Excessive inhalation of carbon monoxide can cause nausea or death. All parts of a woodburner and flu pipe become very hot and will burn skin if touched. Placing objects near or on the woodburners to dry may create a fire risk. Injury could occur as a result of an uncontrolled fire.

Persons exposed: Employees Volunteers Clients / Public
Contractors Vulnerable groups

Existing controls:

All people coming to Embercombe are given a brief health and safety talk covering the main risks on arrival. The risk assessments are available online for staff, volunteers, contractors and clients to see. There is a central file with copies of the risk assessments. Health and Safety information is provided in the volunteer handbook and in the yurts. Some risk assessments are displayed in relevant places around the site.

The site is covered by a 5mph speed limit. Tractor work is covered by an additional risk assessment. All round observation is practised by tractor drivers. Blind corners are reduced by cutting the hedge growth back.

Children under the age of 13 are accompanied at all times in all places on the site. There are several first aid kits around the site and a central first aid store in the office lobby. Emergency contact information is provided in the yurt villages and by the emergency phone in the office lobby. Embercombe has several staff and volunteers who have received first aid training. If trackways, pathways or become dangerous they are avoided or improved. Decking is cleaned

regularly to improve traction. Timber is stacked safely.
 People using the workshop are aware that there is an agreement that covers safe use and a specific risk assessment. People using the trimmers and other cutting equipment are made aware of the risks they pose to other people. The correct use of this equipment is covered by a specific risk assessment. Specific guidelines are provided for people using the kitchen. The storage and cooking of food is managed by the Kitchen Manager.
 Hand washing facilities are provided in various locations across the site and when cooking or eating in the woods mobile facilities are provided. Staff and volunteers are aware when it is necessary to look for ticks and how to remove them. Electrical equipment is visually inspected before being used. All electrical installations meet current safety requirements.
 Where there is a risk of a fall from height there is a warning sign.
 Items stored on the shelves are not stored in a way that could be dangerous to others. Staff and volunteers at Embercombe are encouraged to take personal responsibility to ensuring they get adequate rest periods.
 In hot weather working in the midday sun is avoided. During cold weather work patterns and practice is adjusted suitably.
 Carbon Monoxide alarms are fitted in all locations where there is a woodburner in a sleeping place. People are told about the correct use of a woodburner and are warned of the dangers. Guards are not provided around woodburners as this encourages people to hang clothing on them.

Are there any further controls recommended?

There needs to be wet floor signs for the areas that are regularly moped. Some pathways need converting to hard standing to handle pedestrian traffic. The main track needs re-profiling after the Linhay build is completed. Isolation switches for bench machinery would improve the safety in the lower workshop. The woodyard needs to be fenced off and signs need to be provided to warn people about the timber stacks.
 Safety barriers should be provided on the kitchen roof. Key staff should undertake some basic training in dealing with violent or challenging behaviour.
 There needs to be an explicit policy about children and their use of woodburners.

Summary of Safety Advice

5mph is the speed limit for vehicles on site.
 Children under 13 should be supervised at all times.
 First Aid kits are provided around the site and at the office lobby.
 Take care on the trackways, paths and decking.
 Embercombe is dark at night, take extra care.
 Please wash your hands before eating and after touching animals.

List of other risk assessments;

Bees, Campfires, Drum Stalk, Earthball and Field Games, Felting, Forge, Gardening, Green Woodwork, Log Splitting, Off-site Walks, Swimming in the Lake, Trust Exercises, Using the Kitchen, Wild Meat Preparation, Woodland Activities.

Assessment by: Rob Kendall

Job title: Site Manager

Signed:



Date: 6th February 2013

Review date: 6th February 2014

