

Droitwich Spa & District u3a Risk Assessments – General Advice

A risk assessment is about achieving a balance between a reasonable level of risk and being able to get on with organising your activities. The Third Age Trust strongly advise that all group leaders complete one. In the very unlikely event of having to make an insurance claim you may need to provide evidence that you did everything you could reasonably be expected to do to avoid the accident. Having a written risk assessment can help to provide this evidence. As a group leader it is your responsibility to ensure the safety and welfare of members of your group.

Hazards – what dangers are there and what risks do they pose?

Potential Risk – draw attention to a potential for harm to public health and welfare.

Control Measures – importantly, actions that are taken to prevent, eliminate or reduce the occurrence of a hazard.

We at **Droitwich & District u3a** have one simple template to use for both **Indoor** and **Outdoor Activities**.

Taking the time to write a risk assessment provides a structure in which to focus on what the **Hazards** are, and what, if anything, can be done to decrease their likelihood or severity (**Control Measures**). Sharing the outcome with the group provides an opportunity to make joint decisions and take shared responsibility for them.

To create an **Indoor Venue** risk assessment, use any existing venue risk assessment as a starting point. Think about all the things that could cause problems, trips, slips, and falls and what could be done to minimise the risk. For instance, a risk assessment for a group **meeting indoors** may include:

- The **equipment** that will be used (is the Group providing their own equipment?)
- **Seating/tables** – will the venue lay out the furniture beforehand?
- The **people** attending. Are there particular needs which may make individuals vulnerable?
- The **activity** itself. In what ways could people be hurt participating in the activity?

Outdoor activities: undertaken at a regular site should only require one initial risk assessment (unless facilities / arrangements change): existing site risk assessments should help leaders direct their thoughts when drafting their version. Also, visiting similar types of setting may only require one, over-arching risk assessment.

Visiting different sites may require individual risk assessments for each session. Sites with similar outdoor environments may only require a re-jigging of existing risk assessments – i.e., garden venues; walks on similar surfaces, etc. will potentially have similar hazards and therefore a generalised risk assessment may be acceptable.

Remember, no activity is completely risk free, and a risk assessment is about reducing risk. With the best will in the world, no one can predict everything that might happen. Even if there is a written risk assessment, as group leader you must continue to make use of your judgment about danger and hazards if they become apparent on the day.

Below are examples of hazards and the potential risks they may occur that you might like to consider when completing your risk assessment. **This list is not exhaustive and there may be other hazards that pose risks that have not been considered here.**

Hazards/Dangers	Potential Risk	Control measure
Uneven/worn surfaces	Trips and falls	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Avoid areas, look for alternative routes. • Step with care where unable to avoid. • Take care crossing undulating ground, i.e., fields, footpaths crossing fields, furrowed farmland, etc. • Take care stepping from grass areas to prepared paths/walkways - particularly where there is raised edging between.
Slippery/wet surfaces	Slips/strains	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Walk carefully: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • if the weather is/has been wet • over potentially slippery stone surfaces. • Muddy / grassy areas • Avoid puddles, wet areas; water over flows. • Take care climbing up/ stepping down steps, use alternative sloping walkway if available.
Steps/kerbstones	Trips/falls	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Note where steps are worn / uneven. • Note varying depth of steps. • Take care when stepping down/up kerbstones. • Point to lowered kerbstones for pedestrians, etc.
Poor lighting	Trips, falls & knocks	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Advise need to adjust eyes to areas of poor lighting. Take care: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • walking in woods. • entering / leaving archways; tunnels; underpasses, shaded areas etc. • be alert to low ceilings
Outdoor sports/activities	Trips, falls, knocks, personal injury	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Observe governing body guidance on rules of play/organising activity
Hired rooms/halls – obtain sight of owner’s risk assessment: <u>note any Control Measures in operation.</u>		
Covid 19 Observe all Government guidelines in operation at the time		
Covid 19	Catching Covid 19	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Attendees should confirm that they have completed a Personal Checklist considering the health risk category of themselves and anyone else in their household. <i>N.B. They are not obliged to show this to the group leader</i> • Attendees should wear face coverings • Ventilation - windows and doors open

Crowded spaces	Catching Covid 19	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Avoid bottlenecks or creating bottlenecks • Suggest members allow others to pass • Retrace steps to less congested areas • Indoors restrict to number allowed under HMG guidance • Record name and contact details
Lack of social distancing	Catching Covid 19	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 1m+ to be maintained • Attendees should stay in designated seats • Attendees should observe hosts instructions on entering/leaving
Hygiene on surfaces	Catching Covid 19	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Host to sanitise all surfaces prior to/after the session • Hand sanitiser to be available on entry/exit • Only host to touch equipment • Toilets to be sanitised after use by user with materials provided • Paper towels for hand drying