

Oread Mountaineering Club Health & Safety Policy

This policy is intended to demonstrate the Club's commitment to good health and safety and to clarify procedures and areas of responsibility. It includes details of Risk Assessments, how to respond to an incident or accident and who is the Club's contact should a Health and Safety concern arise.

1. Statement

1.1 The objectives of the Oread Mountaineering Club (the Club) are mountaineering in every aspect and the Club also states that its aim is to encourage and further all aspects of mountaineering activities, but in particular rock climbing, ice and snow climbing, both in the United Kingdom and abroad. This aim is greatly encouraged and facilitated by regular club meets, social activities and informal meets. By their nature these are hazardous activities.

1.2 The Committee of the Club recognises that members of the Club, guests and others are faced with a variety of hazards whilst involved in club activities and whilst staying in club huts or helping to maintain them. The Committee also recognises that the Club has a duty of care to all members, guests and visitors to its premises as well as specific statutory obligations.

1.3 With regard to mountaineering related activities of members and guests, particularly when on organised club meets, the Committee and members recognise and endorse the British Mountaineering Council's (BMC) Participation Statement and expects guests to accept its principles:

"The BMC recognises that climbing and mountaineering are activities with a danger of personal injury or death. Participants in these activities should be aware of and accept these risks and be responsible for their own actions and involvement."

1.5 The Committee is committed to minimise the risks associated with such hazards, as far as is reasonably practicable and as they are within their control, and to ensure statutory obligations are addressed.

2. Aims of the Health and Safety Policy

- 1 To facilitate Club meets, social activities and ad hoc meets such that they are as safe as is reasonably practicable given the nature of the event, the role of the Club and the role of the Meet co-ordinator.
- 2 To provide Club premises that are safe for all members, guests, visitors, contractors and members of the public.
- 3 To encourage safe practices by those using the Club's huts.

2.1 To help achieve these aims, the Committee will appoint a Health and Safety Co-ordinator.

2.2 Where necessary guidelines will be in place to ensure that these aims are met, and these will be made available to all members, guests and visitors to our huts.

2.3 This policy, The Oread Mountaineering Club Fire Safety Policy and associated records will be reviewed annually by the H&S co-ordinator for suitability. The findings will be presented to the committee with any required amendments to the policies suggested.

3. Organisation

3.1 The affairs of the Club are managed by a Committee with Officers and Members elected annually at the Club AGM. Post-holders names can be found on the Club's website together with contact details. The Committee can appoint other members to undertake specialist tasks. The Committee steer Health & Safety policy and it is their role to promote a strong culture of safety in all aspects of club activities. The Committee appoint the Health and Safety Co-ordinator which is not a committee position and carries no vote. The Health and Safety Co-ordinator does not need to be a member of the Committee.

3.2 The role of the Health and Safety Co-ordinator is to facilitate the implementation of The Health and Safety Policy

3.3 Hut Committees are responsible for the safe running and maintenance of the Club huts and report to the Committee. Each hut has a Hut Custodian who is a member of the Club Committee. The Hut Custodian and the members of the Hut Committee are elected annually at the Club's AGM

3.4 Under the guidance of the Health and Safety Co-ordinator the Hut Custodians are responsible for Health and Safety matters within their huts.

3.5 The Oread organises regular club meets and social activities, usually facilitated by a Meet co-ordinator. The role of the Meet coordinator is that of a co-ordinator who looks after the administrative aspects, introduces participants, and acts as a focus during the meet.

3.6 It is not the role of the Meet co-ordinator or the Club to assess whether a not the activity is suitable or appropriate for a participant. This responsibility lies with each participant.

4. Membership

4.1 Membership is only open to adults aged 18 and over who satisfy points 4.2 and 4.3.

4.2 A criterion for membership of the Club will be that applicants are able to recognise their own level of mountaineering skill, competence and experience and participate in activities that are appropriate to that level.

4.3 Applicants for membership must recognise and endorse the BMC's Participation Statement.

5. Meets

5.1. Club meets are usually facilitated by a Meet co-ordinator.

5.2. In view of the criteria for membership (4.1 – 4.3) a Risk Assessment is not required and will not be carried out for the majority of meets.

5.3. The Meet co-ordinator will provide a brief description of the meet and this will normally be published in advance in the Club newsletter. This description and occasional additional information may also be available on the club website and is often sent by email to Club members or through social media.

5.4 It is not the role or responsibility of the Club, the Meet co-ordinator or participating Club Members to provide guidance and or tuition on a Club meet.

5.5 Participants in Club activities are required to act in a responsible manner conscious both of their own safety and of the impact of their conduct on the safety of others, and hold in mind their individual duty of care to all in their company.

5.6. Participants on Club meets are individually responsible for themselves, what they decide to do, and for arranging their own insurances.

5.7 Members' guests are not covered by the BMC third party insurance cover enjoyed by Club members, unless the guests are BMC members in their own right.

5.8 Any under 18 year olds on any meet must be accompanied by a responsible adult.

5.9 Meets are often held in climbing huts, campsites and other premises owned and managed by others. Members and their guests are expected to adhere to safety procedures that are in place at these venues.

5.10 Indoor meets including lectures and indoor climbing wall meets are usually held in premises owned and managed by others. Members and their guests are expected to adhere to safety procedures that are in place at the establishment.

5.11 Risk Assessments will be carried out by Meet co-ordinators for Meets that are specifically aimed at new, novice or less-experienced members, or if the main focus of the meet is an unusual activity. The consideration of potential risks should not be an arduous process. The Risk Assessment should only cover those aspects of the meet that are unusual and reasonably foreseeable. Meet co-ordinators will follow current Guidelines provided by the BMC when making the assessment.

5.12 Should an incident or accident occur on a Club meet the Meet co-ordinator should be informed as soon as practicable. The Health and Safety Co-Ordinator should also be informed, and details of the incident recorded. The Health and Safety Co-Ordinator should be sent the details which they then retain-

5.13 Risk Assessments shall be carried out for all Hut Working Party Meets by the Hut Custodian and or meet co-ordinator.

6. Huts

6.1 The Club owns a climbing hut, Tan yr Wyddfa in Wales, and leases another, Heathy Lea in the Peak District. Each hut is managed by a Hut Committee and has a Hut Custodian. The role of the Custodian includes promoting the safe use of the hut, assessing risk and ensuring safe systems.

6.2. Safety Management System

Safety in huts should be proactive, not reactive. Hut Custodians should be aware of and follow Guidelines provided by the BMC, especially those relating to Health and Safety, Fire Safety and hut maintenance.

6.3 Assessments

6.3.1 Risk Assessments will be carried out for the use of each hut-and for all Hut Working Party Meets. The findings will be available to all who may be affected by the residual risks. Risk Assessments will be available in the hut. Risk Assessments for huts will be reviewed at least every 3 years.

6.3.2 The Risk Assessments should be carried out using the current "Guidelines for Hut Managers" referred to in 6.2 above.

6.3.3 The Risk Assessments will be carried out by the Hut Custodian together with assistance from the Health and Safety Co-ordinator (and other Club members if required). Additional expert assistance must be obtained if an appropriate level of competence is not available.

6.3.4 The Club permits children (under 18's) to use their huts under supervision. Risk Assessments will endeavour to identify additional hazards and risks to which children could be exposed.

6.3.5 Hut Accessibility Assessments shall be carried out to identify any adjustments that might be required to enable disabled persons to make use of the huts in a manner no less favourably than persons who are not disabled. The Club will make reasonable adjustments to address issues identified taking into account the specific circumstances of the case, including the cost of the adjustment and club resources.

6.4. Fire Safety

6.4.1 The Club has a Fire Safety Policy that applies to both its huts.

6.4.2 For the purpose of fire safety the Hut Custodian will be the “responsible person” and carry out, and review at least annually, a fire risk assessment at each hut (The Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005). A suitably qualified “competent person” should be employed for this task if the Hut Custodian deems this necessary.

6.4.3 Under the direction of the Health and Safety Co-ordinator the assessment will be carried out by the Hut Custodian with assistance from the Hut Committee.

6.4.4 Expert advice must be obtained if considered necessary.

6.5. Accident and Incident Reporting

6.5.1 Accidents and incidents on Club premises shall be reported on an Accident/Incident form found in each hut, and details forwarded to the H&S Co-ordinator.

6.5.2 The first response is by the Hut Custodian who reviews these reports, takes action and/or advises the Hut Committee on action.

6.5.3 Accidents and incidents shall be reviewed by the Health and Safety Co-ordinator and the results taken into account when reviewing hut risk assessments.

6.5.4 All accidents and incidents involving injury or damage to a BMC member or third party whilst on Club premises must be reported to the Club’s insurers within 21 days.

6.6 Records

6.6.1 The Hut Custodians shall keep a schedule of planned maintenance and records of all planned and arising maintenance (including all gas and electric inspections) carried out.

6.6.2 Records of an annual check of the state and suitability of the structure, fixtures, fittings and furniture, not covered elsewhere, shall be maintained by the Hut Custodian.

6.6.3 All other safety related documentation such as copies of fire inspections is also maintained by the Hut Custodians.

6.6.4. All accident and incident reports shall be retained by the Health and Safety Co-ordinator.

6.6.5 Records relating to accidents involving children (under 18’s) must be maintained until the child has reached the age of 18 plus 3 years.

6.7 Electrical and Gas Safety

6.7.1 Fixed electrical installations must comply with relevant regulations, and must be tested by a qualified person at least every 5 years.

6.7.2 Portable electrical appliances should be visually inspected at least every 6 months by the Hut Custodian and withdrawn if deemed to be unsafe. Portable appliance testing (PAT) shall be carried out annually by a competent person.

6.7.3 Gas installations shall be tested annually by a ‘Gas Safe’ Registered fitter.

6.8. Hut Maintenance Meets

6.8.1 From time to time Hut Working Party meets are arranged to carry out essential and routine hut maintenance. The Club recognises this creates additional hazards for participants and others.

6.8.2 A risk assessment for the work to be carried out shall be completed by the Hut Custodian and the Meet co-ordinator prior to each maintenance meet, and all reasonable preventative steps shall be taken.

6.8.3 Only appropriate and serviceable tools, equipment and personal protection are to be used.

6.9 Young People (under 18's)

6.9.1 All persons under-18 shall be under appropriate adult supervision whilst using huts. Extra care should be exercised in hazardous areas, including stairs, kitchens, near fires, parking areas and water courses.

6.9.2 The Club and its officers have a duty of care, for example to make parents/specified adults and children aware of known hazards and risks. When children are present other hut users should respect the fact that there are children in the hut.

6.10 Contractors

6.10.1 Contractors working at Club huts must be suitably qualified and carry their own Third Party Liability insurance which should be checked by the Hut Custodian. They should additionally provide evidence of their Health and Safety Policy.

6.10.2 Hut Custodians should make them aware of any unusual hazards that they would otherwise be unaware of that could affect the work e.g. underground pipes or cables to enable them to follow their own work method statement and Risk Assessment for work undertaken.

6.11 Asbestos

6.11.1 The "duty holder" under the Control of Asbestos at Work Regulations 2002 (CAWR) at both huts is the Committee of the Club. The Health and Safety Co-Ordinator and Hut Custodians undertake the tasks required of the duty holder on behalf of the Committee.

6.11.2 No exposed asbestos is thought to be present at Tan yr Wyddfa or in the cottage and Barn at Heathy Lea. There may be asbestos in some of the decorative ceiling coatings at Tan yr Wyddfa and in the roofs of the out buildings at Heathy Lea, these areas should not be disturbed. However, before any construction / maintenance work the Club will check to ensure this is still the case. The findings will be recorded, filed and periodically reviewed by the hut custodian.

7. Insurance

7.1 The Oread MC is affiliated to the BMC and consequently the Club members are covered by civil liability insurance as a benefit of membership.

7.2 The Club insures its huts, buildings and contents via the BMC. There is no civil liability cover provided by this policy because Club Members are already provided with civil liability insurance.

7.3 As part of the BMC membership insurance package for clubs, Employers' Liability Insurance is provided by the insurers. Cover is not automatic and it is necessary to apply for this cover and to renew it annually by submitting the appropriate application form. The Club applies for and receives this cover.

7.4 Club members who use shared transport, give lifts, or allow others to drive their car are advised to check with their insurance company what their policy is on sharing fuel costs.

8. Club Status

8.1 The Club is an unincorporated association (Ordinary climbing club). One effect of this is that it has no legal personality of its own and any uninsured liabilities are borne by the members. The status is subject to regular review and advice of alternatives including that from the BMC and other similar clubs. The Club's Constitution and Policies include measures intended to ensure proper management of responsibilities and liabilities, particularly with this issue in mind.

Declaration

This Policy was approved and adopted by the Committee on 13th February 2024
January 2026 – 'Meet leader' changed to 'Meet co-ordinator' throughout.

Signatories (resigned to reflect changes of people in roles)

M. Moss

President

L. Mason

Health and Safety Co-ordinator