

Safety Notice

To promote good safety practices

This safety notice is issued to learn from a recent near miss on 19 January 2025

Low Ropes and Slack Lines

Concern: The low ropes activity was set up too high.

Risk: A fall from height.

Possible Consequences: Depending on the severity of the fall and the condition of the ground. Impact and puncture injuries with the potential for long-term disabilities and medical needs.

Observations:

The slack line was not set up in accordance with the organisations own risk assessment. The risk assessment prescribed '*...for the Squirrels this would be around knee height*'.

The risk assessment required the arrangements to be reviewed prior to each planned activity. It was unknown if the risk assessment was 'to hand' at the activity to review against.

There was no mention of compliance with manufacturer's instructions for use of the equipment or the advice on how the equipment should be set up including pre-use checks.

The risk assessment did not require the wearing of head protection. head protection, such as a helmet, is usually required when participating in low ropes courses.

The risk assessment did not include guidance to when the circumstances become too hazardous to continue, and the activity should be stopped (dynamic risk assessment).

The risk assessment did not include reference to emergency arrangements.

The risk assessment had no author or reviewer. The risk assessment was downloaded from www.onlinescoutmanager.co.uk dated 07/01/2025. It is not known if this was reviewed for completeness and adapted to meet local circumstances and briefed to the leaders delivering the activity.

A risk assessment author is the person responsible for creating a risk assessment document, identifying hazards, evaluating risks, and proposing control measures, while a risk assessment reviewer is an independent individual who checks the completed risk assessment for accuracy, thoroughness, and effectiveness, often providing feedback and ensuring the assessment meets required standards.

Controls are actions to prevent a risk from occurring.

Mitigations are actions to reduce the impact of harm.

Reference:

- [Scout Safety Policy](#)
- [Scout Risk Assessment](#)
- [Planning and Assessing Risk](#)
- [Activity & Safety Updates](#)