

Newcastle District Mountain Activities Team Policy for Mountain Activities Newcastle-u-Lyme District

Outline. The purpose of this document is to set out a clear policy for Mountain Activities by Groups and Leaders within Newcastle District, it seeks to make it simple and practical for leaders to take Scouts walking in the countryside at all levels. It will do this by empowering Leaders at the “Sharp End” to take responsibility for the safety of their activities whilst still retaining the security of a strong District Team backup.

Definitions. As a result of several incidents over recent years involving Scouts in the mountains, also with Parents and Society in general no longer accepting what the Chief Scout described as a “Cavalier attitude” to safety rules, a new authorisation scheme was introduced, this divided hill walking terrain into three areas as follows:

Terrain zero – Routes that fulfil **all** the following criteria: - below 500 meters, within 30 minutes walking time of a building which is occupied, a landline telephone or tarmac road and involves no scrambling.

Terrain one – Routes that fulfil **all** of the following criteria: - between 500 meters and 800 meters, within 3hours walking time of a building which is occupied, a landline telephone or tarmac road and involves no scrambling.

Terrain two – Routes that fulfil **any** of the following criteria: - above 800 meters, more than three hours walking time from a building that is occupied, a landline telephone or tarmac road or involves scrambling.

The District Commissioner is responsible for approving all activities but has agreed to delegate this approval and has decided that a radius of 10 Km from a Group’s H.Q. is to be defined as the home area. The details are as follows: -

Hillwalking Terrain zero within 10 Km, radius of H.Q.

Informal approval of G.S.L.

Using the following forms: -

- One Day Activity Form (F.S.120081 Parental Consent).
- Home Contact Form (F.S.120078).
- Route Plan (F.S.120409) or similar, providing sufficient information to identify route and safety precautions.
One copy to be left with responsible person (This could be Camp Warden or Home Contact), at least one other copy with the party.
- Fact Sheet 120000 (Risk Assessment).

Hillwalking Terrain zero outside 10 Km, radius of H.Q.

Formal approval of G.S.L.

Using the following forms: -

- One Day Activity Form (F.S.120081) **OR** Camp Information Form (F.S.120082) (both of which give Parental Consent).
- Home Contact Form (F.S.120078).
- Route Plan (F.S.120409) or similar, providing sufficient information to identify route and safety precautions.
- One copy to be left with responsible person (This could be Camp Warden or Home Contact), at least one other copy with the party.
- Emergency Card (F.S.120077) One for each member of the party.
- Fact Sheet 120000 (Risk Assessment).

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If the area proposed is not well known to the G.S.L. he should seek advice from the D.C. / D.M.A. and the leader in charge should allow ample time for this.

Hillwalking Terrains one and two.

Must only be undertaken by fully authorised leaders who have been assessed to the appropriate level.

The D.C. has given approval for such authorised leaders to plan and conduct these activities without further reference. However the following rules apply: -

They must act strictly within their authorisation

Using the following forms: -

- One Day Activity Form (F.S.120081) OR Camp Information Form (F.S.120082 (both of which give Parental Consent).
- Home Contact Form (F.S.120078).
- Route Plan (F.S.120409) or similar, providing sufficient information to identify route and safety precautions.
One copy to be left with a responsible person (This could be Camp Warden or Home Contact), at least one other copy with the party.
- Emergency Card (F.S.120077) One for each member of the party.
- Fact Sheet 120000 (Risk Assessment).
- The G.S.L. must be kept informed.

Authorised Leaders may also use this method for Terrain zero.

Climbing and Abseiling.

Must only be undertaken by fully authorised leaders who have been assessed to the appropriate level.

The D.C. has given approval for such authorised leaders to plan and conduct these activities without further reference. However the following rules apply: -

They must act strictly within their authorisation

Using the following forms: -

- One Day Activity Form (F.S.120081) **OR** Camp information Form (F.S.120082) both of which give Parental Consent.
- Home Contact Form (F.S.120078) if more than 10 Km Radius from H.Q.
- Fact Sheet F.S.120000 (Risk assessment).
- If in Terrains one or two then hill walking rules also apply and appropriate Hill-walking authorisation is required.
- The G.S.L. must be kept informed.

Weather Conditions.

These rules and guidelines cover only “summer conditions” which in mountaineering terms has little to do with the time of year, sunny days with a good weather forecast can and do occur in February; equally blizzards can occur well into summer in mountain areas. “Winter Conditions” are usually defined as when snow and ice prevail or are forecast but the prudent leader will also take into account severe cold, high winds and shortened daylight hours. These conditions require special training and permission for “Winter” Mountain outings will only be given by the D.C. on an individual basis.

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General.

- The appropriate A.D.C. should be used in place of the G.S.L. in case of absence etc.
- Explorer Leaders should use the D.E.S.C. or D.C. in case of absence etc.
- Route Cards should be cancelled and the Home Contact informed on completion of the activity.
- Confidential enquiry is required for any non-member supporter involved.
- All adults attending require a "Young People First" card.
- The above rules are to ensure the safety of the young people in our care and to give the security of clear guidelines for Leaders. With yet another activity leader (not a Scout) recently being charged with manslaughter as the result of an accident, it would be folly in the extreme to ignore the risks involved.