Chester Great Outdoors Club Risk Assessment

Generic Risk Assessment – Hill Walking in Winter Conditions

Activity: Hill Walking – Winter Conditions

Environment: UK upland / mountainous terrain

Participants: Volunteers, volunteer walk leaders, club and prospective club members

Assessment Type: Generic – Volunteer Led (to be supported by dynamic risk assessment on the day)

Useful References:

Members Area - Chester Great Outdoors Club – includes Insurance and Accident Reporting Statement; CGOC Leaders Notes; CGOC Safety Participation Guidelines, etc

BMC Into the Hills - A guide for new hill walkers.pdf

Countryside Code

Get to know British weather on the Hills - The British Mountaineering Council

Mountain Weather Information Service

Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999

All volunteer activity leaders are strongly encouraged to recce the route / activity prior to the event in order to identify potential hazards.

Version 1 – October 2026

CHESTER GREAT OUTDOORS CLUB

Hazard	Who is at Risk	Potential Harm	Control Measures (Volunteer-Led)	Residual Risk
Adverse Winter Weather Snow, ice, wind, freezing temperatures, rapid weather changes	Volunteers, participants	Hypothermia, injury, disorientation	Weather forecasts checked in advance; routes adapted or cancelled; escape routes planned; walk curtailed if needed	Medium
Slips, Trips and Falls Ice, snow, hidden hazards, steep ground	Volunteers, participants	Sprains, fractures, head injuries	Winter footwear required; crampons and ice axes where appropriate; controlled pacing	Medium
Cold-Related Illness Prolonged cold exposure and wet clothing	All participants	Hypothermia, reduced coordination	Layered clothing; spare layers; regular breaks; group shelters; monitoring by volunteer leader	Low–Medium
Navigation Errors / getting lost Poor visibility; snow-covered paths; whiteout conditions	All participants	Becoming lost; prolonged exposure	Competent navigation; maps/compass/GPS; group kept together; head counts	Medium

Medical Emergencies Illness, injury, existing medical conditions	Participants	Serious injury; worsening condition	Medical declarations encouraged to be disclosed; emergency procedures known	Medium
Remote locations / delayed emergency response	All participants	Worsening of injuries or conditions	Volunteer leader aware of access and escape routes; emergency procedures known (999/112 – Police – Mountain Rescue); group remains together	Medium
Roads, parking and access points	Participants, public	Collision with vehicles	Safe parking used; road safety briefing provided; high awareness near traffic	Low

Emergency Procedures (Volunteer Led)

1. Stop activity and ensure scene safety
2. Provide first aid and prevent heat loss and exposure
3. Call 999 or 112 – ask for Police then Mountain Rescue
4. Provide clear location, weather conditions and casualty details
5. Follow emergency service instructions and keep group together
6. Report incident to CGO Secretary

CHESTER GREAT OUTDOORS CLUB

Review Date	Reviewed By	Comments / Changes Made
27th Oct 2026	CGOC Committee	1st Issue