

## Risk Assessment

### Keyworth Meadow Local Nature Reserve

*This Risk Assessment is publicly available on the nature reserve's website and visitors' attention is drawn to it on the Home Page.*

Keyworth Meadow is a rural, semi-natural plot of land that has minimal human intervention. The only man-made features are the stiles, gates, fences and two benches. There is open water in the form of a brook, and seasonal ponds which are enhanced, deepened or otherwise changed from time to time both naturally and through management. There are steep slopes to the east which can be slippery and there is a nearly vertical bank of about 1.5 metres along one section of the brook. There are brambles, wild rose, hawthorn and stinging nettles present, all of which have well-known natural defences in the form of thorns and stings. Some plants and fungi are poisonous and anyone handling or intending to consume wild plants or fungi should be competent in the identification.

The meadow is open to all visitors at all times and it is accepted that unaccompanied visitors should be aware of such natural features and behave accordingly.

Organised groups of visitors such as cubs or school parties that occasionally make arranged visits under the supervision of qualified leaders may or may not be in the company of a warden or reserve manager. If present, wardens or the reserve manager should draw the group's attention to these natural hazards and to any extraneous ones that are present. If pond (or brook) dipping is undertaken, participants are briefed on the potential for leptospirosis and advised to cover open cuts and not to eat or touch the mouth before hand washing. It is advisable but not essential to carry basic first aid (for self treatment) and anti-bacterial wipes.

Volunteer work parties, undertaking habitat management provide their own personal protective clothing including strong gloves and footwear. Basic hand-tools such as bow-saws, slashers and bill-hooks are provided or brought along and it is taken that the volunteers are competent in their safe use. The manager advises of less obvious risks such as springy vegetation and the risk to eyes but it is not considered that eye-protection is needed for hand tools.

Power tools that are sometimes used are the chainsaw and the strimmer/brush cutter. Only the manager uses these tools and he is self-taught using the principles of risk assessment and PUWER regulations. Full protective clothing (including helmet and face-guard) is worn when using these power tools and volunteers are warned of the dangers and are instructed to keep well clear. If practical, other workers are instructed to undertake tasks on other parts of the reserve at these times. The chain saw is never used whilst working above ground level.

Volunteer work sessions are undertaken occasionally and generally last no more than three to four hours. No welfare facilities are provided and volunteers are free to cease work at any time. Mobile phones are normally carried and the area is within reception.

Neil Pinder (Manager) 17/03/14