

The Christian Adventure Centre  
Inspiring Growth Through  
Adventure

HIGH ROPES  
Activity Risk Assessments

January 2026



Date	Review Date	Person completing RA	Signature
1/02/25	1/2/26	Jon Holden	<i>Jon Holden</i>

## Risk Assessments

- Participant and Public Safety
- Sloping and Vertical Climbing Wall
- Abseiling
- Freefall
- Gladiator Challenge
- Abseil (Stoney Green)
- Jacobs Ladder
- All Aboard
- Leap of Faith

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## Participant and Public Safety

<b>Activity</b>	All activities on the HRC to be read in conjunction to the operating procedures and specific risk assessments of the individual elements.  The hazards detailed below are relevant to each of the elements of the HRC and therefore will not be repeated on the individual risk assessments
Instructor Qualification	ERCA Instructor Award Minimum of CWA and one day in house training and subsequent shadowing before being signed off by CM / SI
Brief Description	The High Ropes Challenge is a purpose built on site activity that is located at the bottom of the field in Cross Meadow. The facility has security fencing around the perimeter. Elements on the course includes:  Sloping climbing wall Vertical climbing wall Abseil Quick Jump All aboard Leap of Faith Jacobs Ladder Gladiator Course
Approach	Access to the site for day groups/ Residential groups staying in The Old Vicarage will be down the side of the Low Ropes area. For groups staying on Cross Meadow the access to the site will be a gate on the bottom of the field
Nearest Tel	Reception area
Nearest Hospital	Minor injuries: Forest of Dean Community Hospital, Steam Mills Rd, Cinderford GL14 3HY, 0300 4212121 Major injuries: Gloucester Royal Hospital, Great Western Road, Glos, GL1 3NN, 0300 4222222

Generic Hazards	Control measures
Equipment falling from height	All participants to wear a CE approved climbing helmet as soon as they enter the HRC area. Participants who are not taking part in the session will also need to wear a helmet
Slippery approach due to weather conditions	Ensure all participants are wearing adequate footwear with a good tread
Hair and jewellery may get caught in equipment, pulleys, infrastructure etc.	People with long hair must have it tied back and tucked away, jewellery etc., must be removed before the session commences. Hair bands are available
Equipment correctly fitted. Knot/Carabiner correctly attached.	Instructor to check each participant's harness and carabiner or knot (figure of eight knot with a stopper) are correctly attached.
Medical conditions of the participants	Ensure that you know of any medical conditions that may impede the participants progress on the HRC. Some elements in particular the QuickJump may exacerbate underlying medical conditions such as pregnancy, heart or spinal conditions
Slips, trip and falls	Ensure briefing covers uneven ground coverings that may cause a slip or fall
Participants may not belay correctly, potentially causing injury to the climber	Give thorough briefing on how to belay correctly. Instructor supervision at all times during session.
Wet/hot weather	All participants to dress appropriately to the current weather conditions.
Extreme weather	HRC will be closed if there is a risk of thunder or the facility (including the tower) gets covered in snow and ice.
Items falling out of unsecured pockets etc.	All loose items to be securely fastened on persons or removed
Structural failure of the course	Course is inspected by competent persons who have completed the ERCA High Ropes Inspection and Maintenance Course. Course is also inspected by an outside agency once a year
Persons panicking or becoming stressed on the elements of the course	Instructors are aware that the course and individual elements are classed as 'challenge by choice'

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## High Ropes Challenge

Activity	Sloping and vertical climbing wall
Brief Description	<p>The climbing elements consist of 2 faces which are each approx. 13m high. Each of the faces have 3 ground-based belay stations.</p> <p>We have 12 routes on 2 sides of the tower where participants use climbing holds to negotiate the way up the wall. Participants are then lowered to the ground by the Instructor when they reach the top or when they feel that they cannot climb any further.</p> <p>Participants to wear an appropriate harness and helmet</p>
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Nearest Telephone	Reception area
Nearest Hospital	<p>Minor injuries: Forest of Dean Community Hospital, Steam Mills Rd, Cinderford GL14 3HY, 0300 4212121</p> <p>Major injuries: Gloucester Royal Hospital, Great Western Road, Glos, GL1 3NN, 0300 4222222</p>

Hazards	Possible Outcomes	Those affected	Degree of Injury	Control measures
Bouldering/Traversing on climbing tower	Falling to the ground resulting in injury	Participants	Serious	All participants to be given clear instructions on how far up they can go on the wall. Generally, its no more than 1M above the ground with a spotter
Spinning holds on wall	Equipment falling from tower	Participants	Serious	Loose holds are identified and reported as needed. Tower is inspected for loose holds at periodic intervals
Incorrect belaying	Participant falling from the tower	Participants	Serious	Group briefing on how to belay, continued instruction and observation by Instructor
Slipping on the wall	Participants hitting the wall	Participants	Moderate	Participants shown how to correctly ascend and descend from the climbing wall
Helmet suspension	Participant hanging from their helmet strap	Participant	Serious	Slow lowering practice, Instructor to visually look where the climber is

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Activity	Abseiling
Brief Description	<p>The abseiling element consist of 1 vertical face of the climbing tower that is shared with the 'QuickJump' activity. QuickJump cannot take place at the same time as abseiling.</p> <p>Participants (max 2) climb the inside of the tower where they are attached to the abseil and safety rope they then lean out of the tower where they lower themselves to the ground with the instructor controlling the safety rope.</p> <p>When abseiling and lowering instructor to be always controlling safety rope.</p> <p>Participants to wear an appropriate Harness and helmet</p>
Approach	Access to the site for day groups/ Residential groups staying in The Old Vicarage will be down the side of the Low Ropes area. For groups staying on Cross Meadow the access to the site will be a gate on the bottom of the field. Access to the top of the tower is via an internal stairwell with a security gate at the top.
Nearest Telephone	Reception area
Nearest Hospital	<p>Minor injuries: Forest of Dean Community Hospital, Steam Mills Rd, Cinderford GL14 3HY, 0300 4212121</p> <p>Major injuries: Gloucester Royal Hospital, Great Western Road, Glos, GL1 3NN, 0300 4222222</p>

Hazard	Possible Outcome	Those affected	Degree of Injury	Control measures
Participants getting clothing/hair/fingers caught in descender	Entrapment	Participants	Serious	All abseils to be rigged as releasables. Instruction (demo) given on how to abseil safely and in control
Participants letting go or descending too fast on their rope	Injury/death	Participants	Serious	All abseiling activities requires a safety rope that the Instructor is controlling at all times
Slipping on the wall	Participants hitting the wall	Participants	Moderate	Participants shown how to correctly descend from the climbing wall
Descending too quickly on the rope.	Rope burns	Participants	Moderate	Grouped briefed on proper speed of descent Instructor to always maintain vigilance and control the speed with the safety rope
Landing awkwardly when reaching the ground	Injury	Participants/other people	Moderate	Instructor to give a demonstration on how to descent and reach the ground safely

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Activity	Freefall
Brief Description	<p>The Quick Jump element consist of 1 vertical face of the climbing tower that is shared with the abseiling activity. abseiling cannot take place at the same time as the Quick Jump.</p> <p>Participant climb the inside of the tower where they are then attached to the QuickJump device, when they step off the ledge there is a freefall distance of 1M before they are lowered to the ground.</p> <p>Participants to wear an appropriate harness and helmet, if a separate chest harness is being used a sling connector should also be used.</p>
Approach	Access to the site for day groups/ Residential groups staying in The Old Vicarage will be down the side of the Low Ropes area. For groups staying on Cross Meadow the access to the site will be a gate on the bottom of the field. Access to the top of the tower is via an internal stairwell with a security gate at the top.
Nearest Telephone	Reception area
Nearest Hospital	<p>Minor injuries: Forest of Dean Community Hospital, Steam Mills Rd, Cinderford GL14 3HY, 0300 4212121</p> <p>Major injuries: Gloucester Royal Hospital, Great Western Road, Glos, GL1 3NN, 0300 4222222</p>

Hazard	Possible Outcome	Those affected	Degree of Injury	Control measures
Participants weight	Participant may be too light for the device to work or may malfunction due to excessive weight	Participants	Serious	Participants must weigh between 20 – 120 Kg
Malfunction of the Quick Jump	Death	Participants	Death	<p>Tower and Quick Jump device is checked quarterly. Quick Jump is sent away for external inspection as per manufacturers recommendations.</p> <p>Instructors to perform a visual check of the Quick Jump before each use</p>
Equipment being dropped from the top of the tower	Injury/death	Participants Onlookers	Serious	All equipment to remain attached to the QuickJump. Ensure that all loose items on participants or items on top of the tower are secured appropriately
Landing awkwardly when reaching the ground	Injury	Participants/ other people	Moderate	Instructor to give a demonstration on how to descent and reach the ground safely
Participants grabbing hold of the platform or anything else when jumping	Injury	Participants/ Instructor	Moderate	Instructors to brief on how to jump and being committed to the jump
Instructors incorrectly clipping HighJump into the harness	Injury	Participant	Low	Instructors trained in it's use. Observations carried out on Instructors periodically.

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Activity	Gladiator Challenge
Brief Description	<p>Participant (maximum of 4) climb a vertical obstacle course consisting of ladders, tyres and cargo net to get to the top of the activity. Instructor then lowers each participant to the ground</p> <p>Participants to wear an appropriate Harness and helmet with a separate chest harness.</p>
Approach	Access to the site for day groups/ Residential groups staying in The Old Vicarage will be down the side of the Low Ropes area. For groups staying on Cross Meadow the access to the site will be a gate on the bottom of the field.
Nearest Telephone	Reception area
Nearest Hospital	<p>Minor injuries: Forest of Dean Community Hospital, Steam Mills Rd, Cinderford GL14 3HY, 0300 4212121</p> <p>Major injuries: Gloucester Royal Hospital, Great Western Road, Glos, GL1 3NN, 0300 4222222</p>

Hazard	Possible Outcome	Those affected	Degree of Injury	Control measures
Participants working too closely together	Crush injuries (fingers etc.)	Participants	Low	Group members warned of working in close proximity to others and the potential for injuring one another.
Ascending/descending through the elements of the course	Entanglement/rope burns	Participants	Moderate	Group briefed to stay on side of the course during the ascent and descent
Hitting the ground due to rope stretch	Injury/death	Participants Onlookers	Serious	Instructor to supervise the belaying, keeping the ropes as tight as possible
Participants becoming detached from the rope and falling to the ground	Injury	Participants	Serious	Participants are tied into the rope and harness using a reweoven figure of eight and stopper knot
Over exertion of participants	Muscle sprains/strains	Participants	Low	Ensure a thorough warm up takes place before the activity commences
Participants getting rope burn or cuts from holding the rope/wire	Burns or cuts	Participants	Moderate	Group members to be briefed beforehand not to hold each other's rope or wire

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Activity	Jacobs Ladder
Brief Description	Jacobs Ladder consists of wire and long pieces of timber that are attached together, as the participant climbs higher the pieces of wood becomes further apart.  Participants to wear an appropriate harness and helmet with a separate chest harness.
Approach	Access to the site for day groups/ Residential groups staying in The Old Vicarage will be down the side of the Low Ropes area. For groups staying on Cross Meadow the access to the site will be a gate on the bottom of the field.
Nearest Telephone	Reception area
Nearest Hospital	Minor injuries: Forest of Dean Community Hospital, Steam Mills Rd, Cinderford GL14 3HY, 0300 4212121 Major injuries: Gloucester Royal Hospital, Great Western Road, Glos, GL1 3NN, 0300 4222222

Hazard	Possible Outcome	Those affected	Degree of Injury	Control measures
Participants working too closely together	Crush injuries (fingers etc.)	Participants	Low	Group members warned of working in close proximity to others and the potential for injuring one another.
Ascending/descending through the timber of the course	Entanglement/rope burns	Participants	Moderate	Group briefed to stay on side of the course during the ascent and descent
Hitting the ground due to rope stretch	Injury/death	Participants Onlookers	Serious	Instructor to supervise the belaying, keeping the ropes as tight as possible
Participants becoming detached from the rope and falling to the ground	Injury	Participants	Serious	Participants are tied into the rope and harness using a rewoven figure of eight and stopper knot
Over exertion of participants	Muscle sprains/strains	Participants	Low	Ensure a thorough warm up takes place before the activity commences

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Activity	All Aboard
Brief Description	All Aboard is a vertical climbing challenge where up to 4 participants need to climb a fixed pole to the top of a small platform  Participants to wear an appropriate harness and helmet with a separate chest harness.
Approach	Access to the site for day groups/ Residential groups staying in The Old Vicarage will be down the side of the Low Ropes area. For groups staying on Cross Meadow the access to the site will be a gate on the bottom of the field.
Nearest Telephone	Reception area
Nearest Hospital	Minor injuries: Forest of Dean Community Hospital, Steam Mills Rd, Cinderford GL14 3HY, 0300 4212121 Major injuries: Gloucester Royal Hospital, Great Western Road, Glos, GL1 3NN, 0300 4222222

Hazard	Possible Outcome	Those affected	Degree of Injury	Control measures
More than one person climbing at a time hitting each other	Ropes crossing causing ineffective belaying and risk of falling to participant	Participants	Low	Instructor to ensure one person at a time to climb the pole to the top of the platform
Ropes crossing/twisting when coming down	Entanglement/rope burns	Participants	Moderate	Instructor to include in the briefing about the participants untwisting ropes before and during their descent
Hitting the ground/pole due to rope stretch	Injury/death	Participants Onlookers	Serious	Instructor to supervise the belaying, keeping the ropes as tight as possible
Participant hitting the trapeze when jumping	Injury	Participant	Moderate	Ensure that the trapeze is tied off and cannot move
Holding onto other participant ropes when coming down	Rope burns	Participants	Low	Instructor briefing to include holding onto their own rope
Participants becoming detached from the rope and falling to the ground	Injury/death	Participants	Serious	Participants are tied into the rope and harness and chest harness using a reweoven figure of eight and stopper knot
Over exertion of participants	Muscle sprains/strains	Participants	Low	Ensure a thorough warm up takes place before the activity commences

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Activity	Leap of Faith
Brief Description	Leap of Faith is an activity where participants climb a vertical pole to a platform. The participant then jumps for a 'trapeze bar' that can be moved towards or away from the platform. When ready the participant lets go of the bar where they are lowered to the ground by the Instructor. This activity can be done with one or two participants  Participants to wear an appropriate harness and helmet with a separate chest harness.
Approach	Access to the site for day groups/ Residential groups staying in The Old Vicarage will be down the side of the Low Ropes area. For groups staying on Cross Meadow the access to the site will be a gate on the bottom of the field.
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Hazard	Possible Outcome	Those affected	Degree of Injury	Control measures
More than one person climbing at a time hitting each other	Ropes crossing causing ineffective belaying	Participants	Low	Instructor to ensure one person at a time to climb the pole to the top of the platform
Ropes crossing/twisting when coming down	Entanglement/rope burns	Participants	Moderate	Instructor to include in the briefing about the participants untwisting ropes as they come down
Participant hitting the pole after jumping	Injury	Participants	Moderate	Instructor briefing, participants to have their toes over the platform edge before jumping
Hitting the trapeze when jumping	Injury	Participants	Moderate	Trapeze must be secured in position before the participant leaves the ground
Holding onto other participants ropes when coming down	Rope burns	Participants	Low	Instructor briefing to include holding onto their own rope
Participants on a double Leap not letting go of the trapeze at the same time	Wrist/arm injury	Participants	Low	Briefing to include that participants must let go of the trapeze at the same time
Participants becoming detached from the rope and falling to the ground	Injury	Participants	Serious	Participants are tied into the rope and harness using a rewoven figure of eight and stopper knot
Over exertion of participants	Muscle sprains/strains	Participants	Low	Ensure a through warm up takes place before the activity commences

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