

# Risk Assessment – Site Specific – Peacehaven Heights

(This specific Risk Assessment is an addition to our current Risk Benefit Analysis)



Relevant Publications / Resources:		Assessor	Mark Sinclair (Operations Manager)
www.gov.uk/coronavirus www.outdoor-learning.org/Covid-19 www.thebmc.co.uk www.ahoec.org Department for Education Guidance (GOV.UK)	www.mountain-training.org Association of Mountaineering Instructors (AMI) www.activitiesindustrymutual.co.uk/covid-19 HM Government – Covid19 Response Spring 2021	Date	20 <sup>th</sup> June 2021
		Review Date	Ongoing IAW various guidance

## Covid-19 Statement

Following the outbreak of the Coronavirus pandemic, we have been continually reviewing our Risk Benefit and Management process in order to deliver activities that are as 'Covid Secure' as practicable. The following risk assessment explains how we intend to manage the risk of not only Covid-19, but other relevant aspects of the activity. These updates are in addition to our current Risk Benefit Analysis on roped activities - Please note that these are under constant review and will be amended as Government guidelines continue to be reviewed or there is a change in legislation. Participants must not attend this activity if they have any Covid-19 symptoms, are living with someone with symptoms or have been advised by NHS Track and Trace to self-isolate in the last 14 days. Our activities fully comply with government guidance on adhering to a Covid Secure setting, with the majority of the course possible whilst keeping a safe distance from others and being run outdoors. At times where this may not be possible, such as for safety reasons, we will aim to use other control measures such as the use of face coverings or visors.

We are of the view that encouraging people to continue with outdoor activities is very important to help promote mental and physical wellbeing. The combination of fresh air and sunshine has been stated by the Prime Minister to be 'bad for the virus' making the outdoor environment 'safer for everyone'.

A Dynamic Risk Assessment will be completed each day in addition to the Additional Control Measures noted in the table below.

No	Activity	Hazards Identified	Additional Controls / Measures	Risk Rating	Residual Risk Acceptable
1	Abseiling	Dropped Items	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- All items near the edge to be clipped to a belay.</li> <li>- Participants will be briefed not to have any loose items on them when approaching the abseil.</li> <li>- All eyewear such as glasses for guests and instructors must be secured against being dropped.</li> <li>- Landing area to be kept clear except for staff once an abseiler has left the area.</li> <li>- Helmets to be worn throughout.</li> <li>- Cordon provided around ground safety area.</li> <li>- The organiser of the event to be informed of these requirements for guest information.</li> </ul>	Low	Yes
2	Abseiling	Equipment Failure / Instructor Error	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- All PPE used will be CE approved, in date, fit for purpose and have a recorded regular inspection.</li> <li>- Instructors will be appropriately qualified, experienced and knowledgeable. – Participants must use the PPE provided and not items of their own.</li> </ul>	Low	Yes
3	Abseiling	Incorrect Fitting of PPE	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Two formal checks of PPE fitting will be made prior to descent.</li> <li>- Participants will be informed that if they need to adjust their PPE, they must inform their instructor.</li> <li>- Harnesses to be fitted outside of any clothing for ease of inspection.</li> </ul>	Low	Yes
4	Abseiling	First Aid	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- All 4<sup>th</sup> Dimension staff will hold relevant and current First Aid certificate and First Aid kits will be readily available.</li> <li>- Needs and outcomes cannot be predicted, but risks are low and treatment opportunities are very available.</li> <li>- Event organisers are asked to provide separate First Aid cover.</li> </ul>	Low	Yes
5	Abseiling	Steps	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Participants will be sent up in separately maintaining a 5-step gap between them.</li> </ul>	Low	Yes
6	Abseiling	Rescue	Should a guest become injured during the abseil, or a rope jammed in descent, a rescue procedure is in place. Instructors are trained to deal with this scenario.	Low	Yes
7	Abseiling	Weather	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Weather will be constantly monitored before and throughout the activity.</li> <li>- A Dynamic Risk Assessment will be carried out throughout the activity.</li> </ul>	Low	Yes



## Peacehaven Heights Charity Abseil – July 2021 COVID 19 Statement and FAQs

### **Coronavirus (COVID-19) Decision Making and Client Information**

Coronavirus is a threat to us all, no matter where we go or what we do. However, SAGE evidence suggests that outdoor activities present a lower risk of virus transmission. 4<sup>th</sup> Dimension Ltd will base its activities on the following principals:

Safe	Activity provision will be informed and guided by a public health assessment of risk. (Government advice through PHE, HPS etc.)
Lawful	We will adhere to government guidance and legal restrictions.
Evidence-based	We will use the best available activity-specific evidence and analysis to guide our decision making.
Socially responsible	We recognise that there must be a balance between economic growth and the welfare of local communities, society and the environment. We are accountable for fulfilling our civic duty; the actions of an individual must benefit the whole of society.
Clear	We will provide clarity to our clients and staff to enable compliance, engagement, and accountability.
Realistic	We will consider the viability and effectiveness of activity delivery options through discussions with our staff and clients.

We will ensure we meet the requirements of our Insurers, Activities Industry Mutual (AIM), and follow advice from our Professional Associations. Activities will require a pragmatic and mutually agreed approach between 4<sup>th</sup> Dimension Ltd and our clients. Some objectives may not be feasible. The dynamic nature of being in the outdoors means that there may be occasions when ideal Covid Secure practice (in, for example, social distancing) cannot be maintained e.g. to deal with an immediate safety concern that takes priority.

4<sup>th</sup> Dimension Ltd have been operational since August 2020 when our risk management procedures for Covid-19 were deemed 'Covid Secure' and we were issued the 'We're Good To Go' badge from Visit England which is a scheme backed by UK Government that recognises measures put in place to protect the safety of our clients.

### **What safety and social distancing measures have 4<sup>th</sup> Dimension Ltd put in place?**

- 1) Peacehaven Heights is a large area of open space where social distancing can easily be managed.
- 2) Participants will be given a specific start time and we would ask that you adhere to these where possible. Once you have completed your abseil, we would ask you to leave the abseil site to maintain social distancing from the next participants.
- 3) We ask that you wear long sleeved clothing and bottoms to keep any skin covered.
- 4) Our instructors will be wearing a visor or face covering when working in close proximity to our clients. We would ask that you wear a face covering when partaking in the abseil.

5) 4<sup>th</sup> Dimension will supply disposable 'single use' latex gloves to be worn under the abseil gloves.

6) Alcohol based hand sanitiser will be available at the top of the abseil which we ask that you use before touching any equipment.

7) We will ask you to complete a Covid-19 specific medical questionnaire on arrival. This is for Test, Track and Trace purposes and will be held in accordance with our GDPR policy.

8) Can family and friends come to support? Yes, they can! However, please be mindful on the numbers of supporters you invite. 4<sup>th</sup> Dimension will be following current Government guidance on the number of people allowed to meet outside at the time of the abseil.

9) In addition to our comprehensive risk management procedures, a daily risk assessment will be conducted at the site by our event coordinator.

### **Additional Frequently Asked Questions:**

**Q:** What are the qualifications of your staff, what is your insurance cover and what equipment do you provide?

**A:** *Our staff will hold a combination of the following National Governing Body awards: Mountaineering and Climbing Instructor (or training), Rock Climbing Instructor (formerly the Single Pitch Award) for providers of rock climbing and abseiling on single pitch crags and Climbing Wall Instructor with Abseiling accreditation module. Our ground Instructors will have at least 2 seasons experience as an outdoor provider, including abseiling. All hold a 16 hour Rescue and Emergency Care first aid certificate and will all carry first aid kits. 4<sup>th</sup> Dimension is insured for £10 million for Public Liability claims should we make criminally wrong decisions or provide inadequate safety provision or equipment. It is NOT a personal accident policy. All our equipment is CE approved and has regular, recorded inspections. We cannot allow guests to use their own equipment because we do not know the history.*

**Q:** What are the first aid facilities?

**A:** *All 4<sup>th</sup> Dimension staff hold current first aid certificates and first aid kits will be readily available. We carry radios to ensure communication in any situation. The organising charity will arrange specific first aid cover.*

**Q:** I have never abseiled before and it looks high!. Will I be OK?

**A:** *Yes you will. The hardest physical part is climbing back up the steps to the top but there are landings en route. While it is a long abseil the surface of the wall is textured which provides excellent grip, and there are absolutely no obstructions to negotiate after you get started. Our Instructors will agree that even experienced climbers are nervous as they trust their weight to an abseil anchor, but once they get going, this disappears. You will receive lots of coaching at the top and a member of staff will be waiting on the ground. The middle part is down to you!*

**Q:** What if I lose my grip on the rope or slip? Will I fall?

**A:** *NO you will not fall. If you slip, or lose control of the abseil rope your Instructor will lock off your safety rope, so you cannot fall. You will merely dangle where you are while you re-establish position and control. If this is not possible, we have a rescue which involves the Instructor lowering you slowly to the ground on your safety rope: you have to do nothing but smile! Last year, in over 10,000 abseil descents, we never had to do this once!*

**Q:** What clothing and equipment do I need?

**A:** *Dress according to the prevailing weather and the forecast. Please wear a long sleeved top and long bottoms such as jogging bottoms. Footwear must be of a lace up variety: please check the security of laces. You cannot*

wear flip flops or open toed sandals, slip on shoes or wellington boots! Trainers or walking style boots are ideal. Nothing may be carried up in pockets except a handkerchief or tissues. This means no keys, coins, wallets/purses, phones, cameras, water bottles and more. Water will be provided at the top. Finger rings and small ear rings are fine but jewellery that dangles and could present a hazard must be removed. Simple band type rings are fine. Rings with large stones or ingots should be removed. We must consider loss or damage to your possessions as well as possible injury to people below from falling items. Glasses may be worn if their arms are secured with a tape or string so they cannot fall off: please organise this before arrival. 4<sup>th</sup> Dimension will provide gloves to all participants.

**Q:** Is there a weight limit?

**A:** No, but there is a waist size consideration.

**Q:** What if I lose my nerve at the edge?

**A:** Think of the sponsorship! But if you really feel unwell or lose your nerve, you can simply step back and away from the edge.

**Q:** I may have a health issue; what should I do?

**A:** Consult your GP. Explain that the event involves a fairly long abseil followed by a walk back up of approx 100 steps and then go by what s/he says. Health conditions should be declared on your medical consent form provided.

**Should you have any further questions, please contact the charity event coordinator.**



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