

Bloody Bridge Charter



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MOURNE HERITAGE TRUST



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The Bloody Bridge River is a very heavily used and important site for Bouldering and Gorge Walking by many of the outdoor activity providers in South Down and beyond.

The river lies in a “Special Area of Conservation” (SAC) which is owned and managed by the National Trust.

The area is designated as an SAC because of its important heath land habitat which the National Trust are bound by European legislation to maintain in a favourable condition.

The site used is also a key visitor attraction and there are often large numbers of on-lookers and members of the general public.

Adventure activities involve an element of risk - and this sense of risk is exactly what many people crave in an increasingly “safety conscious” society. Furthermore these activities can provide people, especially young people, with extremely enjoyable and

rewarding learning opportunities that can improve self esteem, build confidence, develop a sense of team cohesion and even transform lives.

Finding the balance between accepting and embracing risks and being safety conscious is critical and there is no excuse for being reckless about safety or causing undue stress and fear in people. However, if there is too little perceived risk, the activity becomes mundane, loses its challenge and the resulting rewards are greatly diminished. Poorly managed risk can cause participants to be put off the activity, left emotionally scarred, or even suffer injury and loss.

This charter sets out the commitment by local activity providers to operate at Bloody Bridge in a responsible, safety conscious and **sustainable** manner without diminishing the challenge and sense of adventure for their group.





THE BLOODY BRIDGE CHARTER

1. A suitable risk management document will be developed for the activity with consideration given to the prevailing weather and conditions, the nature of the group, the experience and ability of the instructor / leader and the suitability of the equipment.
2. Defined operating procedures for the management of risk and for the impact on the environment are understood and applied to the activity by staff.
3. Numbers in any one group should be kept to a maximum of 12 people.
4. The maximum number of groups from any one organisation should not exceed 3 at a given time.
5. Groups will be separated on the river to lessen the impact.
6. Access to the river shall only be via durable surfaces avoiding bog and heath land.
7. Consideration will be given to the level of use any one site is receiving at any time from a number of different groups
8. Staff and instructors will at all times demonstrate the highest level of responsible behaviour given that onlookers with less experience and expertise may try to emulate their activities.
9. The jump at the top of the river will only be accessed from the durable granite rocks on river left.
10. All staff involved in running bouldering at Bloody Bridge will have undertaken a robust and rigorous training regime and have been approved by the management as being competent to deliver a safe and high quality session.

Mitigation work to ensure the durability of the environment and the sustainability of this activity has been undertaken at Bloody Bridge by the Mourne Mountain Landscape Partnership through funding from the Heritage Lottery Fund.

This document is available in other accessible formats on request, and online at www.sportni.net

Published: February 2017

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