

	Title of risk assessment	<b>TOMAHAWK / THORS HAMMER AXE THROWING</b>			Current risk rating	<b>LOW</b>
	Site / Location / address	Lees Wood Scout & Guide Activity Centre Fir Tree Hill, Chandler's Cross, Rickmansworth WD3 4LY			Date of assessment	<b>22 Jan 2025</b>
People who have contributed to the detail of this risk assessment (continue on separate sheet if necessary): All those who may be affected including, where applicable, people supported have been consulted with during the completion of this document and arrangements.				Risk assessment reference number		<b>LW_A_001_TAAT</b>
				<a href="http://www.scouts.org.uk">www.scouts.org.uk</a> POR 9.1 Activities POR 9.7 Adventurous Activities Permit Scheme POR 9.11 Target Sports POR 9.11.6 Tomahawk Throwing		<b>FS120011</b>
<p>Tomahawk throwing is a sport where participants throw a specially-designed tomahawk or small hawk at a target from a distance, trying to get it to stick into the wooden target.</p> <p>It's similar to darts and is often played in lumberjack competitions. Tomahawk throwing can help build hand-eye coordination.</p> <p>You'll throw the tomahawk at a target from a distance, trying to get it to hit the target and stick into the wood.</p> <p>People of any age can get stuck in, as long as they can safely lift and throw the tomahawk or small hawk.</p>						
Name	Role / Position	Signature	Name	Role / Position	Signature	Short description of the task or activity
<b>Bruce Scott</b>	<b>Assistant Warden (Risk)</b>	<i>BDS</i>				<b>Specific Risk assessment:</b> <b>Tomahawk / Thors Hammer Axe Throwing</b> <b>This is an Instructor Led Activity</b>
<b>Ian Leach</b>	<b>Lees Wood Activity Centre Deputy Warden</b>	<i>IL</i>				
<b>Graham Raven</b>	<b>Lees Wood Activity Centre Head Warden</b>	<i>GR</i>				

Identify the hazards, who & what could be harmed and how				Assess the likelihood and risk					
Hazard	Who / What Could be harmed / damaged	Hazardous event	Reasonably foreseeable worse case injury	Existing controls: i.e. Safe systems of work, training, equipment instructions, support plans (be specific), other risk assessments i.e. COSHH, work at height, manual handling, etc.	Accidents, near-miss events, frequency of task/activity, gaps in existing controls, etc.	Likelihood (L) 1-5	Severity (S) 1-5	Risk Rating Score 1-25	
1	General lifting and carrying targets	Instructors / Campsite Crew	Incorrect lifting techniques	Cuts / abrasions, muscular skeletal and other physical injuries	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Manual handling minimised as far as possible, broken down into smaller loads / assistance sought, 2 Person lift. All made aware of correct lifting techniques to reduce risk of injury. Appropriate footwear worn</li> <li>Mobile lifting aids available (wheel barrows etc.)</li> <li>Good housekeeping and range layout. Floor surfaces unobstructed and slip free.</li> <li>Do not overstretch when using equipment.</li> <li>Targets weighted and secured to prevent toppling onto person retrieving equipment.</li> </ul>	None Recorded	3	3	9
2	Uneven Ground	Instructors / Campsite Crew / Participants	Slips, trips and falls on uneven surfaces	Cuts / abrasions, muscular skeletal and other physical injuries	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Full inspection of range prior to use. Debris / grass cuttings stemming from weather / maintenance to be cleared as quickly as possible.</li> <li>Make sure activity area does not become untidy. Check activity area before starting. Suitable warning signs in place.</li> <li>Suitable footwear to be worn. <b>Feet must be covered.</b></li> <li>Report any damage to range to enable inspection and repair.</li> <li>Safety line and throw line boards partially submerged in ground to</li> </ul>	None Recorded	3	2	6

					<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>remove trip hazard.</li> <li>No running allowed.</li> <li>There will always be a responsible adult member of the visiting group present to support the children/young people. This adult will be responsible for the behaviour of the group. This adult will ensure the instructor leading the session knows about any medical conditions or additional needs the group members may have.</li> <li>Instructors should not start the session until this adult is present. Visiting groups should provide first aid cover as they are responsible for the young people, however, Lees Wood will provide additional first aid cover on sessions run by Lees Wood instructors.</li> </ul>				
3	Defective Equipment	Instructors / Campsite Crew / Participants	Damaged handles / Axe Heads / Targets / Stands	Cuts / abrasions Impact injury	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Condition of ALL equipment checked before &amp; after use.</li> <li>Participants deemed competent to use. Equipment not left unattended.</li> <li>Equipment is appropriate (being used for its intended purpose), restricted to authorised users and securely stored.</li> <li>Report any damage of equipment to enable replacement.</li> <li>Long hair must be tied back; jewellery should be removed or covered and loose clothing secured.</li> <li>Suitable footwear to be worn.</li> </ul>	None Recorded	3	2	6
				Axe wound from handling axes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Axes checked for burs and damage</li> <li>Participants trained to only hold the axe by its handle and how to pass an Axe.</li> <li>Use of axe supervised by trained instructor Participants shown how to retrieve an Axe from the target.</li> </ul>	None Recorded	3	2	6
4	Weather	Instructors / Campsite Crew / Participants	Extreme Weather (Heat, Cold, Wind, Lightening, Snow, torrential rain etc)	Sessions may have to be cancelled during periods of heavy rain and storms.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Instructor to be aware. Appropriate clothing to be worn by all involved.</li> <li>It may be appropriate to stop activities due to some extreme weather or if the group is not appropriate clothed for the</li> </ul>	None Recorded	3	1	3

					environment.				
5	Actions of group members	Instructors / Campsite Crew / Participants	Unauthorised entry into the activity/danger area	Cuts / abrasions, muscular skeletal and other physical injuries	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Activity area cordoned off when in use ensuring no possible entry whilst activity is being carried out.</li> <li>Waiting area is clearly marked. Area fenced off and group warned of any hazards.</li> <li>Visual checks of area by instructor throughout the session.</li> </ul>	None Recorded	3	1	3
			Retrieval of Angels / Axes from target/ground		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Correct method of retrieving Angel Axes / Tomahawks, demonstrated and monitored throughout session. <b>Target before floor!</b></li> </ul>	None Recorded	2	2	4
			Improper use of equipment		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Members not using the equipment appropriately will be asked to leave the throwing area.</li> </ul>	None Recorded	2	2	4
			Participant lack of knowledge	Risk of injury	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Safety talk to be given by activity instructor before each session commences.</li> </ul>	None Recorded	1	2	2
6	Unfamiliarity of the equipment	Participants	Improper use of equipment	Cuts / abrasions, muscular skeletal and other physical injuries	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The instructor leading the session must be familiar with the equipment they are using.</li> <li>Lees Wood instructors are trained in the use of the equipment on the session.</li> </ul>	None Recorded	2	2	4
7	Improper use of equipment	Instructors / Campsite Crew / Participants	Axe being let go at the wrong point – including being hit by an axe	Cuts / abrasions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Instructor to demonstrate at the beginning of the session of 'how to throw the axe'.</li> <li>Instructor to assist participants that are struggling with the task.</li> <li>Barrier around range to prevent members of public walking into range – to be risk assessed locally</li> <li>Barrier of suitable height and distance from target and throwing area as to contain all axes; bounce off and miss throws.</li> <li>All participants must be physically able to throw an axe at the target safely, those under the age of 16 must be accompanied by an adult over the age of 18.</li> <li>All participants must not be under the influence of Alcohol or drugs.</li> </ul>	None Recorded	3	3	9

					<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Instructor to always reinforce safety information.</li> <li>• Instructor to always use clear commands</li> <li>• Axe's only to be thrown from the firing line and at the say so of the instructor towards the target.</li> <li>• Participants not following the instructions or misbehaving will be asked to sit out.</li> <li>• Participants will be invited into the range by the instructor.</li> <li>• Only participants throwing and instructors to be within the range during throwing.</li> <li>• Maximum of 3 throwers simultaneously throwing in range area.</li> <li>• Standard operation one axe thrown at a time.</li> <li>• Safety line marked on the ground no participants to cross during throwing.</li> <li>• Throwing area marked on ground controlling distance from where an axe is thrown.</li> <li>• Participants trained to aim at target and only throw straight down the range</li> <li>• Range supervised by trained instructor</li> <li>• Safety line a suitable distance (4.0m NATF) from targets to reduce likelihood of being struck by rebounding axe.</li> <li>• No go zone behind throwing area to prevent spectators being stuck by axe that is let go during backswing.</li> <li>• Axes only to be retrieved when all axes have been thrown – any spare, axes to be secured as required when axes are being collected.</li> <li>• No open toed footwear.</li> <li>• All participants will undergo a safety briefing prior to taking part in activity.</li> <li>• The instructor will control all safety during the session.</li> <li>• Instructors to stand to the left of the</li> </ul>				
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					<p>throwers watching down the lane when participants are throwing.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Correct method of retrieving Angel Axes / Tomahawks, demonstrated and monitored throughout session. Target before floor!</li> <li>• Participants deemed to be deliberately throwing too aggressively should be managed appropriately by the activity leader to ensure their own and others safety.</li> </ul>				
8	Wildlife	Instructors / Campsite Crew / Participants	Animals straying onto range	Risk of injury to animals	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• No food permitted in the range.</li> <li>• Range checked before/during use.</li> <li>• Activity temporarily closed until wildlife has moved on.</li> </ul>		2	1	2

For Information

## Emergency Procedure

1. There must be a first aider and first aid kit present amongst the Activity Users, when this activity is in progress, and there must be a functioning mobile phone carried by Instructor/ Group leader.
2. If a serious injury occurs that requires help from the emergency services, the following procedure is to be followed:
  - a) The activity is to cease.
  - b) Initial triage of the casualty is to be carried out.
  - c) 999 called with a full description of location of incident/injury given.

Address: Lees Wood Scout & Guide Activity Centre, Fir Tree Hill,  
Chandler's Cross, Rickmansworth WD3 4LY

What3Words: **BOUNTY.HOLDS.LUNGS**

3. Participants are to be sent to an alternative site.
4. Camp Crew to be notified immediately.
5. Main gate to be manned to receive and give directions to emergency services.
6. Ensure that the equipment is not left unsupervised.
7. Warden to be informed.
8. Group to start InTouch procedures.

Additional arrangements required to reduce risk:									
No	Recommendations and actions required to reduce risk	Residual risk with additional controls			Deadline for action (Date)	Action to be completed by (name)	Monitoring arrangements Active and Reactive	Action Complete (date)	Comments / additional information
		S	L	R					

To add more rows to this section, place the cursor to the left of the line above until you see a + sign and 'click'

**Management ownership** - I confirm that this risk assessment is suitable and sufficient, and that I will ensure the implementation, monitoring and review of the arrangements as stated.

Managers Name	Graham Raven Head Warden Lees Wood	Manager's Signature	<i>G. RAVEN</i>	Date signed	31 Jan 2025	Next review due (based on risk level)	Feb 2026
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Reviewer Name	Role	Date of Review	Reason for Review	Signature	Next Review Date
		09 Feb 2025	Annual		Feb 2026

5 x 5 Risk Matrix								
Risk Rating Guidance	Likelihood (L)	5	5	10	15	20	25	Likelihood (L) x Severity (S) = Risk Rating (RR).
		4	4	8	12	16	20	
		3	3	6	9	12	15	
		2	2	4	6	8	10	
		1	1	2	3	4	5	
				1	2	3	4	
<b>Severity (S)</b>								
Acceptability of Risk Guidance	<b>High Risk: 15-25</b>	High-risk activities should cease immediately. Further effective control measures to mitigate risks must be introduced.						
	<b>Medium Risk: 8-12</b>	Medium-risks are an acceptable level based on the reduced likelihood after sufficient control measures are implemented.						
	<b>Low Risk: 1-6</b>	Low-risks are largely acceptable. Where it is reasonable to do so, efforts should be made to reduce risks further.						
Guidance. When completing a risk assessment, you should:	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Identify the persons at risk and the significant hazards.</li> <li>2. Calculate an initial RR for the activity.</li> <li>3. Identify risk control measures that reduce the risks to an acceptable level.</li> <li>4. Calculate a revised RR - you should consider how much safer the task will be if the control measures are followed. Here, you should consider changing both the likelihood (L) and the severity (S) ratings.</li> </ol>							
<b>Note.</b> Ideally, you should look to reduce the risks so that the task can be classified as "low-risk".								

Likelihood (L)	Definition	Points rating	Severity (S)	Definition	Points rating
<b>Inevitable</b>	If the work continues as it is, there is almost 100% certainty that an accident will happen, for examples: A broken stair or broken rung on a ladder, Bare, exposed electrical conductors, Unstable stacks of heavy boxes	5	<b>Very high</b>	Causing multiple deaths and widespread destruction e.g. fire, course/building collapse.	5
<b>Highly likely</b>	Will happen more often than not. Additional factors could precipitate an incident but it is still likely to happen without this additional factor.	4	<b>High</b>	Causing death, serious injury or permanent disability to an individual.	4
<b>Possible</b>	The accident may occur if additional factors precipitate it, but it is unlikely to happen without them.	3	<b>Moderate</b>	Temporary disability causing injury (to member of the public, contractor or employees) or disease capable of keeping an employee off work for seven days or more and reportable under RIDDOR (Reporting of Injuries, Diseases and Dangerous Occurrences Regulations 1995).	3
<b>Unlikely</b>	This incident or illness might occur but the probability is low and the risk minimal.	2	<b>Slight</b>	Minor injury (to member of the public, contractor or employee), which would allow the individual to continue work after first aid treatment on site or at a local surgery. The duration of the stoppage or treatment is such that the normal flow of work is not seriously interrupted.	2
<b>Remote possibility</b>	There is really no risk present. Only under freak conditions could there be any possibility of an accident or illness. All reasonable precautions have been taken - This should be the normal state of the workplace.	1	<b>Nil</b>	Very minor injury, bruise, graze, no risk of disease.	1

**The Review Process.** This risk assessment will be reviewed when it is suspected that the assessment is no longer valid or there has been a significant change. In addition, it will be reviewed annually.

# Tomahawk Throwing Technique

## The thrower should:

- Stand on the throwing line and adopt their most comfortable throwing stance. Usually a right-handed throw would mean positioning the left foot forward of the right and vice versa to ensure stability when throwing.
- Hold the throwing axe in the preferred throwing hand by the base of the handle.
- Place the thumb of the throwing hand to the side of the handle, not on the top.
- Face the target keeping your eye on the bulls-eye.
- Keep their wrist stiff, raise the throwing arm until the throwing axe is just over the shoulder. They should not take their eye off the target.
- Throw the throwing axe overarm keeping the wrist straight. Do not flick the wrist.
- Release the throwing axe as their arm comes forward in a similar position to throwing a ball overarm.
- Do not throw too hard.
- Depending on the resulting throw and angle of embedding the activity leader may decide on adjustment for successive throws.

## Important Safety Measures to follow for throwing axe sessions:

- Only purpose made throwing axes and throwing tomahawks should be used as outlined above.
- Only use the Axes provided.
- Axe throwing must only take place under the supervision of an appropriately knowledgeable activity leader.
- Participants should wait until instructed by the activity leader before retrieving the axe.
- When transporting a throwing axe, the participant should walk and hold the axe to the side of their body with sharp edges downwards and away from the body and other people.
- Sheave the axe for transporting.
- The activity leader is the only person who can instruct a thrower to remove a throwing axe from a target unless they have explicitly delegated or shared this responsibility.
- Any observers should be instructed to stand in a safe location by the activity leader as per the range diagram.
- Participants deemed to be deliberately throwing too aggressively should be managed appropriately by the activity leader to ensure their own and others safety. The age, maturity and ability of each participant should be considered. Min age 10. Those under 16 should wear a helmet to reduce risk on pulling the arm back for targeting.
- To avoid accidental head or upper body injury when retrieving throwing axe, it is important to remove those items that are embedded into a target before those lying on the floor.
- If any equipment is damaged it must not be used - either repair or replace the damaged item in accordance with the manufacturer of the device.
- A throwing axe should be offered handle first to another person.
- The transport of equipment to and from a throwing area should be managed by the activity leader.
- Throwing axes must be stored in a locked toolbox or similar secure place when not in use and when in transit between throwing sessions.

# Axe Throwing Range Layout

