

**St Patrick's Mission**  
**THREE PEAKS CHALLENGE**  
**Saturday 10<sup>th</sup> August 2024**  
**Risk Assessment**

**St Patrick's Mission Three Peaks Challenge: Risk Assessment/Briefing**  
**BACKGROUND**

St Patrick's Mission Yorkshire 3 Peaks Challenge route covers a total walking distance of approx 24.5 miles. Starting at Horton in Ribblesdale, ascending Pen-y-Ghent then on to Whernside before tackling Ingleborough and returning to Horton. The terrain is varied crossing two minor roads. The event is organised by the Friends of St Patrick's Mission, as a fundraising event, inviting entrants from people wishing to raise funds for the St Patrick's Mission projects or those wishing to take the challenge as part of an organised event for another charity.

**PEN -Y- GHENT**

The challenge starts at the Registration point at the Farmers field Carpark, Horton in Ribblesdale, The route to Pen-y-ghent is via the fields beyond Brackenbottom. The mixed terrain path leads steeply up the hill, before a small scramble to a plateau and then to the trig point at the summit. Descending on a steady decline to the base of Pen-y-ghent followed by a long undulating walk (approximately 10 miles) to the base of Whernside. The path goes south of Hull Pot to cross Whitber Hill, Sell Gill Beck, Sell Gill Hill, Jackdaw Hill and Penyghent Long Churn to re-join the original route on High Pasture.

**WHERNSIDE**

The paths eventually lead into the B6255 and Ribblehead Viaduct where checkpoint 1 is located on Gauber Road on the approach to the Viaduct. The path goes uphill from this point on and passes Blea Station. Walkers proceed along the Dales Way track before leaving it after Force Gill. The ascent is not particularly steep or hard but is long. From the summit trig point the downhill path, leading to Ivescar Farm, is very steep in parts. This area can be very wet and slippery. There then follows a short walk along a track passing a cafe and toilets to Checkpoint 2 nearby.

**INGLEBOROUGH**

From Checkpoint 2 the terrain becomes very marsh like and walkers will need to keep to the duct boarding and path provided. After a gentle incline the ascent to Ingleborough, becomes steep followed by a well worn and rocky path, which eventually leads to the trig point on the summit. The descent from Ingleborough, is quite gentle and again uses well defined paths, however, this area is often waterlogged and slippery. It eventually leads back into Horton in Ribblesdale after crossing the railway line where the final Checkpoint is located back at the Farmers field Carpark.

**EVENT VARIATION**

There is an option for walkers to take part in the first peak only. Transport will be available at checkpoint 1, back to Horton, when they have checked in and crossed off for the further 2 peaks.

**HAZARDS**

- 1) Slips and trips
- 2) Falls from height
- 3) Exhaustion

- 4) Dehydration
- 5) Medical issues; blisters, foot injuries
- 6) Extreme weather conditions
- 7) Poor visibility
- 8) Traffic and trains

#### **WHO MAY BE HARMED AND HOW**

- 1) Walkers slipping due to uneven, slippery ground causing twisted ankles, muscle strains, back injuries.
- 2) Walkers falling from height due to uneven paths near to summit of peaks. Injuries could be fractures of arms, legs, wrists, and bruising.
- 3) Walkers becoming extremely tired towards the end of the challenge, not used to walking these distances, and losing concentration.
- 4) Walkers becoming dehydrated through heavy physical exercise and a lack of water being taken. Headaches and general tiredness.
- 5) Rough terrain causing walkers to sustain blisters and foot injuries and exacerbating any medical problems.
- 6) Extreme hot or cold/wet weather can result in walkers (and support staff) sustaining sunburn, dehydration, or exposure.
- 7) Poor visibility causing walkers to stray from paths, become separated from their group and more vulnerable to injury through falls and slips.
- 8) Walking across roads and railway lines where walkers could be injured by

vehicles or trains.

#### **EXISTING CONTROL MEASURES**

- 1) The route taken uses good paths where possible, these are being continually improved by the National Park Team. Advice is given to wear supportive footwear designed for hillwalking. The walk having an experienced leader should help to ensure the safest routes are taken and walkers do not stray off the main route.
- 2) Again, the routes taken and awareness of the participants of the hazards should assist in limiting the number of falls sustained. Having support staff trained in First Aid available at each checkpoint can assist if injuries are sustained. Where serious injury has been sustained support staff will be able to contact Mountain Rescue and/or the emergency services for assistance. Vehicles will be on hand to transport people to base or to hospital if necessary.
- 3) Walkers are advised in advance (via the website) to undertake training for this challenge in order to build up strength and stamina. 3 Checkpoints will be available for walkers to take a rest, have food and drink and have any minor ailments attended by the support staff or to drop-out if they so wish.
- 4) To address dehydration walkers are advised to take a suitable amount of water with them at the start and then further bottles will be available at the checkpoints. The weather forecast is monitored leading up to the event and further advice given to participants if extreme adverse weather is forecast. If necessary, the event will be postponed.
- 5) A medical declaration forms part of the registration process to be completed by all those entering the challenge, this asks for information to assist support staff and provide information to emergency services. First aiders with first aid kits at checkpoints can assist with minor ailments and the emergency services can be summoned by support staff if necessary.
- 6) Advice is given via the website on the importance of wearing the correct kind of clothing to combat the extreme weather conditions which can change very quickly. Walkers are also advised to take a number of layers of clothing, sunbloc,

vaseline, plasters, and painkillers. At the Registration Point any walkers considered to be ill equipped will be advised not to undertake the walk.

- 7) Poor visibility can be caused by running out of daylight or by low cloud or mist/fog. The event and starting time have been arranged to maximise the availability of daylight hours and there will be information provided regarding local weather forecasts, it is not expected that walkers will take in excess of 12 hours to complete the challenge therefore minimising the risk of running out of daylight. Leaders will be asked to make decisions in conjunction with support staff as to the viability of proceeding with the walk if visibility (or weather conditions generally) become problematic, participants can opt to drop-out at any checkpoint. Marshals at checkpoints are authorised to stop anyone proceeding, if they are too slow and risk delaying the finish time beyond what is reasonably safe.
- 8) Walkers are advised to exercise caution when walking on roadsides or over

railway lines.

## **FURTHER ACTION TO CONTROL RISKS**

- 1) At the start walkers will be supplied with printed sheets showing the route of the walk. It will detail where the checkpoints are and highlight the location of the new route to avoid the boggy area.
- 2) Walkers will be instructed to register at the start and will be allocated a number and then at each checkpoint the walkers will be required to give their number against which they will be logged.
- 3) It is recommended that walkers are reminded of road safety and good practice when walking on roads this particularly applies at Grid Reference: 777781 where walkers emerge onto a narrow winding section of road.
- 4) The St. Patrick's Mission checkpoints will be easily identifiable with liveried vehicles. Walkers will be able to sit down and rest and there will be a first aider in attendance. First aid supplies, water, food and extra clothing and thermal blankets will be available, as will sun bloc if necessary. The first checkpoint is located at Ribblehead Viaduct.
- 5) The group leader will start the walk with the quicker walkers asked to set off in the lead and the final group consisting of the slowest walkers. The final group will contain a sweeper who monitors, supports and assists any 'stragglers'. The sweeper will consult with the support staff at each checkpoint to ensure all participants are accounted for.
- 6) At the conclusion of the walk refreshments will be provided.

## **EVENT MANAGEMENT**

Sufficient planning and preparation is conducted prior to the event to ensure the correct supplies, transport and personnel are available for the event.

The event is co-ordinated on the ground by a designated person with suitable experience who will put into practice the plan for the event and make decisions based on circumstances and information available on the day.

The event manager will ensure all participants are briefed prior to the event to highlight the hazards and controls detailed above.

Marshals will be briefed in a similar manner and be competent to carry out their duties and assist the participants.

The Walk manager will also be the single point of contact on the day to co-ordinate any response to un-planned incidences, transport and use of vehicles etc.

Marshals will be wearing hi-viz vests for ease of recognition at the checkpoints and safety. Risk assessments will be vetted by HASAW at Hinsley Hall.