


Activity Risk Assessment

Activity	Tomahawk Throwing				
Address of premises	Hesley Wood Activity Centre, White Lane, Chapelton, S35 2YH				
Author of this risk assessment	Megan Hughes				
Issue Date	09/04/2024				
Review	This document is reviewed annually, Or more frequently as required				
Reviewed by	Alyssa Jordan	Date	22/11/2024	Changes?	Yes, see review log
Reviewed by	Luke Joseph / Alyssa Jordan	Date	11/11/2025	Changes?	Yes, see review page
Checked by Operations Director	 Andy Moore	Date	14/11/2025		

Explanation of Risk Rating: Risk Rating = Probability x Severity			Probability			Rating	Actions resulting from Risk Rating
			Unlikely 1	Likely 2	Certain 3		
Severity	1	Minor injury or damage	1	2	3	1-3	Low Risk: Carry on, ensuring controls are in place. No further controls required.
	2	Major injury or damage	2	4	6	4-6	Medium Risk: Implement extra controls if practical to reduce risk to low. Monitor risk level to ensure no increase.
	3	Severe injury or damage, Serious illness or death.	3	6	9	7-9	High Risk: Stop activity immediately. Implement further controls to reduce risk if possible. Find alternative method.

The Hesley Management Team will monitor and review the controls to reduce risk in accordance with South Yorkshire Scouts Health & Safety Policy.

The information contained within this Risk Assessment should be taken as the minimum requirement and is not to be considered exhaustive.

What is the hazard? How might people be harmed?	Risk Level (with existing control measures)			Who is at risk?	What are the control measures?
	Probability	Severity	Rating		
Hazards arising from the actions of the instructor(s).	1	2	2	All Involved	Instructors must have successfully completed the Hesley Wood in-house training and assessment program, which adheres to the standards established by the UK Knife, Axe, and Tomahawk Throwing Association and incorporates the site's best safe practice guidelines. Alternatively, instructors holding acceptable certifications in throwing from recognised organisations may also qualify, provided they complete a site-specific induction prior to leading sessions.
Hazards arising from the actions of group members i.e. Overcrowding and Disorderly Behaviour.	2	2	4	All Involved	<p>To avoid overcrowding at the throwing line there must only be one thrower per target, on sessions where participants require extra help, one helper per participant may stand in line with or slightly behind the thrower.</p> <p>To prevent overcrowding in the range and ensure safe supervision, maintain a maximum group size of 12 participants with 2 observers for sessions lasting up to one hour. For sessions extending to 90 minutes, group size may increase to 15 participants, provided additional observers are available to maintain effective oversight and participant safety throughout. During events where no set time session takes place instructors are to ensure waiting participants are out of the way of the throwers and that the number of throwers never exceeds one per target.</p> <p>The Group Leader needs to be present during sessions.</p> <p>If a group members behaviour becomes dangerous follow the Emergency Action Plan (EAP) for Disorderly Behaviour.</p>
Equipment failure.	2	2	4	Participants	Only Hesley Wood equipment to be used on Hesley Wood sessions. Hesley Wood equipment is inspected and logged in accordance with its current inspection policy

Equipment failure groups own equipment.	2	2	4	Participants	Where the session is being led by an instructor provided by the group using equipment not provided by Hesley wood it is the duty of the instructor to ensure equipment is suitable and appropriately maintained.
Hazards arising from the actions of non qualified assistants.	1	2	4	All Involved	Staff responsible for leading the sessions need to delegate responsibility appropriately to competent persons whilst still overseeing general safety.

What is the hazard? How might people be harmed?	Risk Level (with existing control measures)			Who is at risk?	What are the control measures?
	Probability	Severity	Rating		
Weather: Thunder storms, high wind and heavy rain.	1	2	2	All involved	Session may have to be cancelled or delayed due to lightning storms, high winds or heavy rain, where operation can become dangerous. See weather policy for more details.
Risk associated with Outdoor range.	2	2	4	All Involved	Unauthorised access: Safety netting surrounds the back and sides of the range, with a fence on the left and an embankment on the right to control access. The instructor must monitor the surrounding area to ensure no unauthorised individuals approach the range. Unattended equipment: Angel Axes / Tomahawks must never be left unattended on the range. The instructor is responsible for counting all items in and out to ensure none are left behind. Slips trips and falls: See general site risk assessment
Structural failure.	1	2	2	All Involved	Net and associated rigging: Monthly checks for movement in addition to passive pre use checks.

Structural failure. Continued.	1	2	2	All Involved	<p>Trees: Trees in range are considered high risk and as such are covered by the site tree risk assessment.</p> <p>Fence: Instructors to ensure participants do not swing/sit/push on the fence.</p>
Risk arising from free standing targets.	1	2	2	Participants	Targets are secured with ropes anchored to the ground to prevent tipping. Target fixings are checked during monthly inspections and logged following the site fault reporting and maintenance procedure. Targets are inspected prior to each use to ensure operational safety.
Injuries resulting from handling axes.	1	2	2	Participants	<p>Angel Axes are not kept sharp enough to break the skin.</p> <p>Angel Axes are inspected by the instructor for burrs caused by clashing and for splinters on Tomahawk wooden handles. Full-coverage footwear must be worn to protect feet in case of dropped Axes.</p>
Retrieval of axes from target/ground.	2	2	4	Participants	<p>The correct method of retrieving Angel axes, prioritising removing from the target before picking up from the floor, is demonstrated and monitored throughout the session.</p> <p>Participants must carefully remove axes to avoid pulling them into their body.</p> <p>Axes should be carried to the side of the body to reduce the risk of injury if they trip.</p>
Clashing axes.	2	2	4	Participants	Only one thrower is allowed per target, and only one axe may be thrown at a time. Any axe that clash must be inspected for burrs or sharps before further use.
Sharp edges.	1	2	2	Participants	Any edges on axes that could cause injury will be filed down to ensure safety.
Rebounding axes.	1	2	2	All involved	<p>Participants must wear suitable footwear that fully covers the foot (e.g., no flip-flops, crocs, or sandals).</p> <p>The throwing line is clearly marked and set at a safe distance from the target, following current guidelines.</p>
Muscle strain.	2	2	4	Participants	Adequate rest between throws must be ensured by alternating participants to avoid overuse or strain.
Loose Tomahawk head.	2	2	4	All involved	Tomahawks must be checked prior to use and continuously monitored throughout the session. Any tomahawk heads that become loose should be secured back into place before further use.

Accidental realise of axes.	1	2	2	All involved	Participants must be given clear instructions on proper grip and throwing techniques to reduce the risk of accidental release. Throwing should only occur when the designated area is clear. A designated waiting area must be established and used by participants who are not actively throwing, ensuring they remain safely away from the throwing zone.
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Related Risk Documents

Standard Operating Procedure (SOP) for Tomahawk Throwing, Inspection and Replacement Policy, Weather Policy, EAP for Overcrowding, EAP for Disorderly Behaviour, RA for General site and Tree RA.

Review Log

Reviewed by	Date of review	Reason for review	Changes made	Actions required	If actions have been completed insert date completed
Alyssa Jordan	22/11/2024	Standardise and quality control	See Historic Review Log for full details: Page numbers added for navigation. Common target activity risks in green, session-specific risks in blue. Language simplified for clarity.	Re-issue RA to all instructors signed off or in training for Axe Throwing.	20/12/2024
Michelle Lambert	26/03/25	Scout HQ review	Amend Axe to Tomahawk (Hawk) to coincide with Scout POR.		26/03/2025
Luke Joseph / Alyssa Jordan	11/11/25	Previous changes introduced ambiguity.	The collective term for the items being thrown has been changed to axes. Hawk has been changed to Angel Axe to eliminate the risk of confusion between Hawk and Tomahawk.	None	

See Review Log – Tomahawk throwing for previous reviews and changes.

Version 2 publication date: