

Safety

The Hurst Water Meadow has a very good safety record. Possible hazards are:

1. Alighting from coach in Manor Farm Road. **Watch out for traffic.** No pavement.
2. No hazards on access lane.
3. Bridge over river Thame has a good double rail. The river is about 2 metres below the bridge, and not usually more than 45 cm (18 inches) deep and slow-running. It should present no serious hazard, **but teacher should be on bridge when pupils cross**, or if speed of flow is measured.
4. Footpath by river bank. This is about two metres from river, and mown. The bank is about 1.5 m at its highest, and the river mostly shallow with a gravel bottom. There are, however, some deeper places, especially in Buck pool. **Pupils are recommended to keep to mown footpath and avoid contact with nettles, thistles and hogweed.**
5. Buck pool. The western bank is safe, but care is needed.
6. Buck pool spinney. If the group is visiting the eastern bank of Buck pool (Buck pool spinney), they will have to cross two bridges. Both have good rails, and are wide enough to take wheelchairs. The first bridge over the weir is safe, unless the river level is very high and the overflow stream is going over the weir. The second bridge over the sluice is a hazard, as there is **fast flow of water into the deep part of the pool. A guide should stand on each side while pupils are crossing. The pool bank is slippery and should be avoided.** The footpath continues over a footbridge crossing a shallow flood drain which is not a hazard. The bypass is near, and **pupils must be supervised not to stray off the path.** However, if the weather is showery, there is good shelter under the bypass bridge.
7. The scrapes. These should present no hazard. The deeper one is securely fenced and neither is likely to contain water.
8. The millstream. This runs downstream of Overy Mill, and the south western boundary is a 'meander' with a steep bank about 2 m high. The water is very shallow and sluggish, but **pupils should keep to the mown footpath.**
9. The meadow. There are no hazards, but hay-fever might be aggravated

A more detailed table of Risk Assessment is available.

Accidents/emergencies OS Map reference SU 522 946

The host guide will have a first aid kit and a mobile phone. The emergency numbers are given below.

Police:	emergency 999.
Police:	non-emergency 08458 505 505
Fire:	999
Ambulance:	999
Trust hon. secretary:	01865 340008
Trust administrator:	01865 340753

The Countryside Code

Relevant points of the code can be raised while walking round the meadow, such as keeping to footpaths, not picking wild flowers nor harming wildlife, taking litter home (and picking up other people's litter) not starting fires, closing gates, not disturbing birds particularly nestlings, thinking about safety, and wearing suitable clothing and shoes. Guides can explain the reasons for the suggestions in the Countryside Code which are summarized as:

- **Be safe – plan ahead and follow any signs**
- **Leave gates and property as you find them**
- **Protect plants and animals**
- **Take your litter home**
- **Keep dogs under control**
- **Consider other people**

For full details see leaflet.

www.countrysideaccess.gov.uk/countryside_code/educational_resources.php