

NATURE TRAIL, INGLEBOROUGH ESTATE, CLAPHAM

SUMMARY OF RISK ASSESSMENTS FOR VISITORS (2011)

This popular walk follows a permissive path through woodland and more open terrain between the village of Clapham and the entrance to Ingleborough Cave. It is visited by individuals and parties of walkers, together with a large number of school and other organised groups. The environment is largely a natural one and is therefore both scenic and invigorating for those seeking healthy outdoor exercise. The limestone scenery and wildlife also provide many educational opportunities. As with any outdoor venue there are a few hazards which must be borne in mind by visitors. The estate management performs detailed risk assessments, the most recent of which was completed in January 2011. These reveal the continuing general reduction in the levels of risk. Recent major works have included, for example, refurbishment of the Victorian “grotto” building, some resurfacing of the middle section of the path and completely rerouting the entrance area (which now avoids the woodyard). Full documentation in respect of all risk assessments is kept at the Ingleborough Estate Office, Clapham, Lancaster, LA28HR.

The estate management is committed to doing everything reasonably practicable to minimise the risk of accident or injury to the many visitors who enjoy this walk. One important control measure has always been to inform visitors of the main hazards and to ask them to co-operate with advice on how to reduce the risk of accidents happening. This information is provided on notices at both of the access points. The current safety notice contains the following items:

SAFETY NOTICE

Welcome to the Ingleborough Estate. We continue to do all we can to make your visit safe and enjoyable. However you are in a natural environment so please be aware of the following -

WEATHER

The weather can change quickly – please wear stout shoes and carry waterproofs and warm clothing

FOOTPATH

Please keep to it! Please remember it can be slippery when wet or icy, rough in parts and is unlit, but greater hazards such as deep or fast flowing water and steep banks exist away from it.

CHILDREN AND VULNERABLE PEOPLE

Please keep children and others in need of care in sight and under control at all times.

DOGS

Please keep them on a lead. We know you love your dog but the young and the old can be frightened of them.

PLANTS

Please do not pick or eat any plants growing in the woods – some are poisonous and others have sharp thorns or leaves.

TREES, BUILDINGS AND ROCK FACES

Please do not climb them.

ANIMALS

Please keep away from farm animals.

WATERSPORTS

Watersports of any kind on the river and lake are strictly forbidden.

CYCLING / MOUNTAIN BIKING

These are forbidden for safety reasons.

VEHICLES

Various vehicles sometimes use this track.

WHEELCHAIRS

The path is rough in places and the top gate is locked at the close of business at the cave. Further advice is available at the cave or Sawmill Cottage.

TELEPHONES

In case of an EMERGENCY, landlines are available at the cave during opening hours and at Sawmill Cottage most of the time. Mobile phone coverage is patchy hereabouts.

All visitors have a duty to ensure their own safety, which includes co-operation with the instructions and information provided above; if this advice is followed it is unlikely that anyone will experience problems. Some individuals may be at greater risk from natural hazards, such as the young, disabled and those with learning difficulties. For this reason it is very important that parents, carers, teachers and anyone else in a supervisory role should familiarise themselves with the information given above before entering the Nature Trail. Those with responsibility for group safety are unlikely to meet with problems if the above advice is followed. Enjoy your visit!