



Activity Operating Procedures V2025-1

Climbing Abseiling



1. This Document

1.1 Who is this document for:

- This document should be read by all instructors leading or assisting with the activities included in this document.
- All staff members providing access to the activities included in this document.
- Any person involved in the management, maintenance or documentation of the activities included in this document.

1.2 Using this document

- The activity operating procedures included in this document cannot be deviated from without written permission from the Centre Manager.

1.3 Companion Documents

- This document should be read in conjunction with the following documents:

 [Activity Risk Assessments](#)

 [Accident, Incident and Near Miss Procedures](#)

1.4 Terminology and Roles

- **Bentley Copse Staff** - A paid or volunteer person working at Bentley Copse in a role as authorised by the Centre Manager or a member of the Surrey Scouts Bentley Copse Management Sub Committee
- **Bentley Copse Centre Manager** - The member of Bentley Copse staff with overall management of activity and site management.
- **Bentley Copse Duty Activities Manager** - A member of Bentley Copse staff assigned aspects of daily activities management by the Centre Manager.

2. Activity Overview

2.1 Abseiling : Definition

- Abseiling takes place on a purpose built Climbing and Abseiling tower.
- The top of the tower has three abseil points (Two on the south side, one facing west).
- The top of the tower is accessed via an internal ladder.
- All persons ascending or descending the ladder must use the *ALF Climb Assist Pulley System*.

2.2 Climbing : Definition

- Climbing takes place on a purpose built Climbing and Abseiling tower.
- The tower has two sides that are used for climbing with two routes per side.

3. Qualifications

3.1 Instructor Qualifications : Abseiling

- The following qualifications can be used for this activity (or equivalent):
 - Mountain Training Climbing Wall Instructor with abseil following induction.
 - Mountain Training Rock Climbing Instructor or higher following induction.
 - Girlguiding Level 1 Climbing/Abseiling following induction.
 - Scout Association Climbing Permit (Leadership or above) following induction. - *Only valid when participants are members of the Scout Association*
 - In House Training, Assessed by Technical Advisor.

3.2 Instructor Qualifications : Climbing

- The following qualifications can be used for this activity (or equivalent):
 - ERCA High Ropes Instructor following induction.
 - Scout Association Climbing Permit (Leadership or above) following induction.- *Only valid when participants are members of the Scout Association*
 - Mountain Training Climbing Wall Instructor (or higher) following Induction.
 - Girlguiding Level 1 Climbing/Abseiling (following induction.
 - In House Training, Assessed by Technical Advisor.

3.3 Alternative qualifications

- If you hold an alternative qualification, please contact the Centre Manager to confirm its suitability before booking a session.

3.4 Providing Evidence

- A copy of the instructor's qualification must be provided to Bentley Copse one week before the session date.
- All Scout Association permits will need to be verified via Compass.

3.5 Scout Supervisory Permits

- For leaders holding a supervisory permit, they may supervise more than one climbing group up to the limit of their permit. Each group being one safety rope on an activity (EG climbing)
- When supervising a group they will assess the competencies of those in the group, and can designate someone with appropriate skills to be the *Rope Leader* of their group.
- The instructor should remain in a position to be able to effectively supervise and assist all rope systems.
- A designated *Rope Leader* of the group, may perform the actions that are otherwise restricted to the instructor, such as belaying or lowering.
 - Example : A supervisory permit holder may determine that “Sam” is a competent belayer and assign them as *Rope Leader*. “Sam” can then perform pre-commitment checks, belay and lower participants within their group without the instructor tailing for them.

4. Activity Location

4.1 The Climbing and Abseiling Tower

- The tower compound is kept locked when unattended.
- The structure must be inspected by an approved contractor annually.
- The structure must be inspected by a competent member of Bentley Copse Activity Centre Staff every 2 months.

5. Ratios and Group Sizes

5.1 Ratios and Group Sizes

- At least two adults must be present to run these activities, one of whom will be the qualified instructor who will be leading the activity session and in charge of overall safety.
- Where there is more than one qualified instructor on a session, one must be designated to be the person in charge of the session.
- The ratio is 1 Instructor to 12 Participants, unless lowered due to the qualifications / permit held.
- For groups greater than 12 and no more than 16, the instructor may use adults from the group to supervise a portion of the group to reduce the participant count down to 12.

5.2 Instructor to Rope Ratios

- If permitted by their qualification an instructor may supervise a maximum of two ropes when using peer belaying.
- An instructor may not supervise other ropes if belaying themselves.

5.3 Climbing Compound Ratios:

- There must be no more than two groups in the climbing tower compound at one time. This could be two groups climbing, one group climbing and another group abseiling or a single group doing either activity.

5.4 'Queue and Do' Events

- Events such as Frost Camp, Beavers Go Wild and others may operate not in groups, but with a queuing system.
- Harnesses and helmets will be fitted at the gate or as part of the queue and do queuing system inside the compound.
- A designated lead instructor will check the fitting and sizing of all harnesses and helmets.
- Participants are limited to one go each if there is a queue.
- For belayed roped activities:
 - One instructor will belay on each rope.
 - No group belaying is permitted.

6. Own Instructor Sessions

6.1 Overview

- The term *Own instructor* is used to differentiate an activity being run by a suitably qualified instructor, but not a Bentley Copse Instructor - from a “Self led” activity that can be run by any competent adult who is familiar with the activity operating procedures.
- All *Own Instructor* sessions are booked at the discretion of the Centre Manager.

6.2 Scout Permit Training and Assessment

- If a session is used for permit training or assessment it must be booked for this purpose.
- The techniques taught / assessed must be provided to Bentley Copse in advance of the session, with these being used only when confirmed back by Bentley Copse.
- If non Bentley Copse equipment is to be used alongside Bentley Copse equipment (EG Alternative belay devices), the responsibility of this equipment and their use rests with the instructor in charge.

6.3 Own Instructor Familiarisation / Induction

- If using Bentley Copse equipment, the operating procedures in this document **MUST NOT BE DEVIATED FROM.**
- It is not permitted to mix and match Bentley Copse equipment with equipment from other sources - *Unless training and assessing for scout permits - see above.*

6.4 Safety

- Instructors leading *Own Instructor* sessions assume responsibility for the safe set up and running of the activity.
- Where hirers are using their own equipment, the responsibility for equipment and procedures rests with the instructor in charge.
- *Own Instructor* sessions may only take place at times when a member of Bentley Copse staff is on site.

6.5 Activity : Instruction to Stop

- If a member of Bentley Copse Staff believes there is a valid reason to stop the activity, or prevent it from starting, they may issue an **Instruction to Stop** to those leading the activity.
- If an **Instruction to Stop** has been given, the activity must be immediately stopped in a safe manner.
- Valid reasons, include, but are not limited to:
 - Unauthorised deviations from the activity operating procedures.
 - Running the activity in a way that may be damaging to the activity area or equipment.
 - Activity being undertaken in a way deemed unsafe.
 - Activity is being disruptive to others.
- Once an **Instruction to Stop** has been given, the activity may only be resumed with permission and directions from the Duty Activities Manager.

6.6 Climbing & Abseiling

- Unless using your own equipment, when using the Climbing Compound you will be provided with equipment and PPE suitable for your group. You may not enter the climbing store to access other equipment not allocated to you.
- For *Own Instructor* climbing bookings, the equipment provided will be discussed with the lead instructor at handover. *EG if teaching proper belay technique, friction devices may be provided.*

7. Safety

7.1 Risk Assessments

- This document must be read in conjunction with the activity risk assessment.
- A digital copy of the risk assessment can be found on the Bentley Copse Activity Centre website.
- A printed copy of the risk assessment can be provided by Bentley Copse on request.

7.2 First Aid Kit requirements

- Those leading the activity are required to have a valid first aid qualification and close access to a First Aid kit.

7.3 Accidents / Near misses

- If any accidents/near misses or first aid takes place as part of the activity:
 - The Duty Activities Manager of Bentley Copse Activity Centre must be contacted and the procedures from the Accident and Near Miss Procedures followed.
 - An appropriate reporting form must be completed as soon as possible, no later than the end of the working day and handed to the Duty Activities Manager
 - The activity must be stopped while the first aid is taking place.

7.4 Weather conditions

- The instructor must check the weather conditions prior to starting the activity.
- The Duty Activities Manager will inform the instructors of any conditions that might stop the activity.
- Instructors must inform the Duty Activities Manager of Bentley Copse Activity Centre if the activity has been stopped due to weather conditions.
- The activity must not take place under high wind conditions (over 30mph according to Met office data)
- Should audible thunder or visible lightning be experienced:
 - The Instructor should pause the activity and bring everyone to the ground until the Duty Activities Manager says the activity can continue.

- The Duty Activities Manager should check the weather forecast and lightning strike locations and determine whether the activities should be paused for up to thirty minutes after the last audible thunder or visible lightning. The instruction to pause, or permission to continue should be communicated to all instructors.
- Example sources:
 - <https://www.lightningmaps.org/#m=oss;t=3;s=0;o=0;b=;ts=0;z=12;y=51.1833;x=-0.4247;d=2;dl=2;dc=0;>
 - <https://www.metoffice.gov.uk/weather/forecast/gcpe7p302>
- Even with permission to continue from the Duty Activities Manager, the instructor may pause the activity until thirty minutes passes since the last audible thunder or visible lightning.
- A shortened activity may be extended at the discretion of the instructor, but not if the extension impacts other sessions.
- A cancelled activity may be rescheduled at the discretion of the Duty Activities Manager, but not if the rescheduling impacts other sessions.

7.5 Stopping the activity

- The instructor has the final say in whether an activity takes place or must be terminated.

8. Equipment

8.1 Equipment Contamination

- All equipment must be protected from contamination from liquids, drinks, food and chemicals.
- Is it essential to keep the following away from equipment such as ropes, harnesses, helmets and slings:
 - Sunscreen
 - Drinks (Including tea, coffee, squash)
 - Food
 - Hand sanitiser
 - Cleaning products including soaps, sprays and wet wipes.

8.2 Participant Equipment

- The following equipment is required for each participant:
 - Windproof/coat (weather dependant)
 - Sunscreen/water bottle (weather dependant)
 - Closed Shoes

8.3 Instructor Equipment

- The following equipment is required for the instructor leading the session.
 - Radio (For Bentley Copse Staff)
 - Mobile Phone
 - First Aid Kit

8.4 Equipment : Climbing, Abseiling, High Ropes, Zip Wire

- All equipment must be inspected by a competent member of Bentley Copse Activity Centre Staff at intervals not exceeding 2 months.
- The following equipment is required to run the session:
 - Harness : Suitable in size, type and number for the group as detailed within the *Equipment : Harnesses* section of this document.
 - Helmet : As detailed within the *Equipment : Helmets* section of this document.
- All equipment must be purchased from reputable retailers and conform to the appropriate safety standards.
- Equipment will be replaced in accordance with manufacturer guidelines.

8.5 Equipment Tubs

- The following 12 buckets of equipment are stored in the climbing compound store.
- All equipment is coloured with bands of electrical tape.

Bucket	4x Climb	2x Abseil	Gladiator	Jacobs	Pirate Climb	Leap Of Faith	Crate Stack	Zip
Colour	Blue	Red	Yellow	Pink	Black	Purple	Green	Orange
Rope	18m dynamic	18m dynamic 18m low stretch	20m low stretch	24m low stretch	20m low stretch	25m dynamic	2x 20m low stretch	
Adjustable belay sling	1		2	2		1	2	
Steel oval carabiner	1		2	2		1	2	
Nylon tyre sling							2	
Petzl Rig	1		2	2	1	1	2	
Petzl S'md (Gold)	1		2	2	1	1	2	
D shaped biner	1	2	2	2		1	2	
DMM belay master	1	2	4	4	1		4	
Pin Lock biner						2		
DMM Boa (Steel)		2						
8 Descender		2						
Full body Harness					2x Green 2x Red	2x Green 2x Red		
Petzl Omni					2	2		
Chest Harness			2	2			2	
Chest bridge			2	2			2	
Petzl Connect		1						1
Platform tether								1
Petzl Trac Set								6
Zip Safety								6

8.6 Equipment : Zip Wire

- A rake is kept within the fenced zip-wire compound.
- The Zip Wire PPE equipment is stored in two orange duffel bags.
- One bag contains:
 - 15x Petzl Panga helmets
- Second bag contains:
 - 12x DMM Centre Harness (Regular)
 - 2x x DMM Centre Harness (XL)
 - Trolley Systems
 - 6x Petzl Trac Guide with Petzl Progress Adjust and DMM Belay Master
 - 6x Petzl Jane Lanyards with DMM Belay Master and Petzl Triple Lock Oval
 - Participant Safety System
 - Safety Tether (Rope)
 - Steel Triple Lock Carabiner (attaches to the wire rope anchor)
 - Aluminium triple lock carabiner (attaches to the participant)
 - Petzl Connect (Instructor Tether)

9. Equipment : Harnesses

9.1 Harness Selection

- Use the manufacturers sizing guide to select a correctly fitting harness for each individual.
- It is possible to use a full body harness for all roped activities WHERE A FULL BODY HARNESS IS SPECIFIED IN THE OPERATING PROCEDURE A SIT HARNESS MAY NOT BE USED.
- The instructor leading the session has the final say on the harness selection for each individual.
- An instructor must give clear instructions to all participants on the correct fitting and wearing of harnesses.
- Sit harnesses may be used for the following activities. All other roped activities **must** use a full body harness:
 - Climbing
 - Abseiling
 - Zip Line (Only size 0 for small participants)
- A full body or sit harness & chest harness may be used instead of a sit harness alone for any participant with a greater risk of inverting or not having a pronounced waist.

9.2 Sit Harness Sets:

- DMM Sit Harness are stored in sets of fourteen regular sized harnesses and one size harnesses are available.

9.3 Sit Harness Fitting

- Adjust the waist band before adjusting the leg loops.
- Threadback all buckles, and secure the webbing tail using the elastic loops.

**ALWAYS
THREAD BACK!**



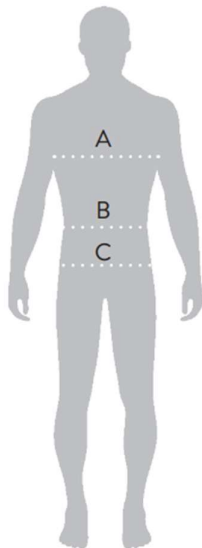
9.4 Full Body Harnesses

- If using a full body harness, the following attachment points must be used for each activity.
- Where full body harnesses have front attachment points but the rear dorsal attachment points are used for the safety rope **THE FRONT ATTACHMENT LOOPS MUST BE SECURED WITH A PETZL OMNI**

Crate Stacking	Rear dorsal
Jacobs Ladder	Front sternum
Gladiator Challenge	Front sternum
Abseil	Front sternum
Climbing	Front sternum
Zip Line	Front sternum

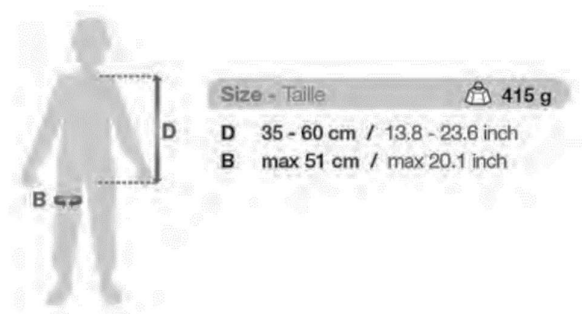
9.5 Full Body Harnesses : Sizing

- The following sizing chart should be used for the Ridgegear RGH14 full body harness.



Size	0 (RED)	1 (GREEN)	2 (BLUE)
HEIGHT	42 - 54" 107 - 137cm	51 - 73" 130 - 185cm	69 - 81" 175 - 205cm
A Chest	20 - 28" 51 - 71cm	26 - 42" 68 - 106cm	38 - 58" 89 - 147cm
B Waist	18 - 25" 46 - 64cm	23 - 37" 58 - 93cm	34 - 55" 86 - 140cm
C Hips	20 - 29" 51 - 74cm	27 - 42" 69 - 107cm	40 - 60" 101 - 152cm

- The Petzl Simba Full Body Harness is sized to fit most 5 to 10 year olds weighing less than 40kg



9.6 Chest Harness

- When a chest harness has been selected to pair with a sit harness for a participant it may be attached in either of two ways:
 - With a rethreaded figure of eight and a stopper knot. The rope should:
 - Pass down through one side of the correctly adjusted chest harness
 - Through the belay loop
 - Then back through the other chest harness side.
 - Secured with a rethreaded figure of eight with a stopper knot.
 - With a bridge. The rope should:
 - Clipped to the top of the Bridge with a DMM Belay Master Carabiner and double figure 8 knot with stopper, the lower 'tails' of the bridge must be connected to the harness belay loop using a DMM Belay Master Carabiner.

10. Equipment : Helmets

10.1 Helmet Sets

- Helmets are stored in sets of 14.

10.2 Religious / Cultural Allowances

- If a participant cannot wear a helmet for religious / cultural reasons, their participation in the activity cannot be refused.
- Explain to their group leader (An adult operating in loco parentis) that a helmet is required to reduce the likelihood of injury.
- For activities where the risks of a head impact are higher, their participation in an activity may be altered.

10.3 Fitting

- Equip each participant with a helmet and adjust its chin strap and back strap to ensure it is secure:
- For a secure fit, start by placing the helmet on your head, with the front rim across your forehead. After you adjust the fit, but before you buckle the chin strap, shake your head from side to side and move your head slightly back. The helmet should remain snug.
- Now check and adjust the chin straps. After they're buckled you should have no slack and the front and rear straps should form a "Y" around each of your ears.
- The chin strap should be snug enough to prevent the helmet moving from a correct fit, but not so tight as to restrict breathing or talking.



Helmet adjustment method may vary

10.4 Cave Maze and Adventure Course Helmets

- Cave Maze and Adventure Course helmets are marked on the rear using a tough-tag and reflective strip.
- Cave Maze and Adventure Course helmets may only be used on these activities and may **not** be used on any roped activity.

11. Equipment - Ropes

11.1 Equipment Technique : Rope Tracer Cord

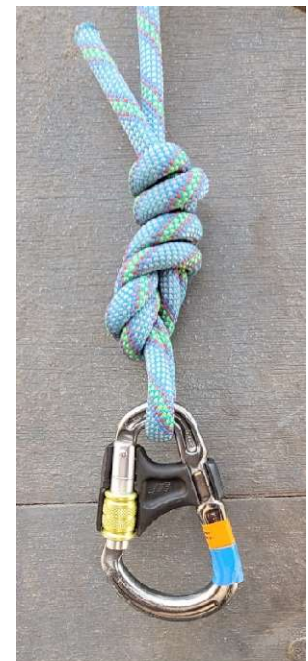
- Rigging the rope
 - The rope is set up using a *tracer cord*. A thin line is in place from the ground to the top anchor. Tie the *tracer cord* to the loop in the end of the rope and pull the rope through the anchor (carefully) and back to the ground.
 - Stack the *tracer cord* behind the anchor, keeping it tied to the anchor point.
 - Use the end of the rope **without** the loop in to attach to the climber
- De-Rigging the rope
 - Reverse the process for rigging.
 - Secure the tracer cord using a slippery hitch back to the alpine butterfly loop.



All safety ropes pass over a sheer reduction block.

11.2 Equipment Technique : Safety Rope

- Climber End
 - The belay master carabiner should be clipped to a neat figure of eight knot with a stopper knot above as shown in the below picture
 - Avoid twisting the rope to help the rope run through the top anchor smoothly.
- “Other End”
 - If needing to tie into a body harness, or to use a chest harness, the “other” end of the rope may be used, and thus avoid untying and retying the figure eight.
 - Tie into the harness (or harness and chest harness) using a rethreaded figure of eight and stopper knot.
 - Swap the rope around in the belay device.
 - Ensure the correct configuration is restored once this method is no longer needed.



Well dressed figure eight with stopper knot. Belay Master Carabiner

12. Equipment - Ground Anchors

12.1 When to use ground anchors

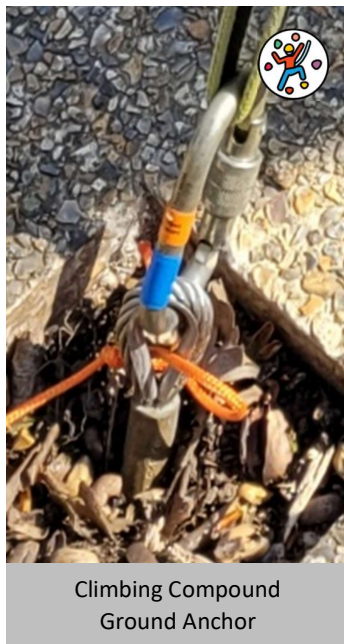
- Ground anchors must be used when using peer belaying.
- Ground anchors must be used when the instructor determines there is a significant weight differential between the belayer and the participant.

12.2 Ground Anchor : Anchor wire, ring or tyre

- The ground anchor should be set up as the pictures, and one of these methods:
 - Attach the steel oval to a ground anchor tyre using a nylon sling. **DO NOT GIRTH HITCH THE SLING.**
 - Attach the steel oval to a ground anchor wire or ring.
- Ensure carabiners are *gravity loaded* with the gate facing down.

12.3 Do not direct belay from ground anchors.

- GROUND ANCHORS MAY NOT BE USED FOR DIRECT BELAYING. ENSURE THE BELAYER IS ATTACHED (SEE BELOW) AND IN THE SYSTEM.

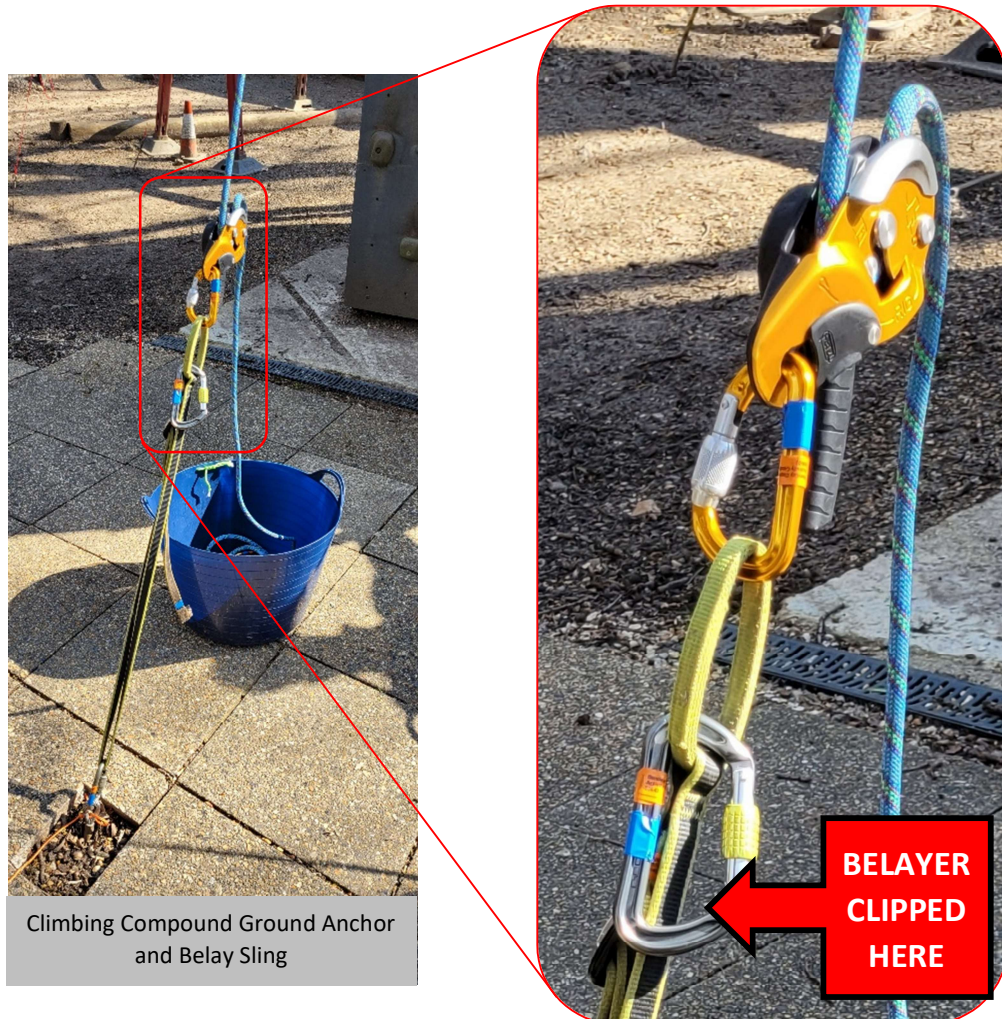


Climbing Compound
Ground Anchor

13. Equipment - Belay Slings

13.1 Belay sling

- Attach the adjustable belay sling to the steel oval:
 - Make sure the gate is screwed shut and the carabiner is orientated with the screw at the lowest point, this helps to prevent the carabiner undoing itself whilst being moved around.
- Attach the belay device using the gold D shaped carabiner (Petzl Sm'D) to the small loop on the belay sling.
- Attach the belayer to the belay sling using the D shaped carabiner using their belay loop. **NEVER BELAY WITHOUT SOMEONE CLIPPED IN THE SYSTEM!**
- Adjust the position of the belayer and the length of the sling to maintain a suitable straight line ABC positioning of Anchor, Belayer and Climber.
- Ensure all carabiners have their gate closed and are not cross loaded.



Climbing Compound Ground Anchor and Belay Sling

14. Belaying and Lowering

14.1 Group suitability

- The instructor must evaluate the competency of the group and use an appropriate supervisory belay technique from the following:
 - **Instructor Belaying** - The instructor belays using a rig.
 - **Bell Ringing** - Team belaying with peers tailing and using a *Petzl Tibloc progress capture system* or backup knots under supervision of the instructor.
 - **Peer Belaying (climbing only)**: Peers belay under supervision of the instructor - *For those deemed suitably skilled and competent to operate under this level of supervision EG while teaching participants correct belay technique as part of a planned training / development session.*

14.2 Single belay and lowering method

- If multiple rope lines are run within a single activity session, it is not permitted to use peer team belaying while other lines are used for those being instructed on single rope belay technique.

14.3 If peer belaying is being used:

- The belaying process must be closely supervised by the instructor.
- Clear instructions and demonstrations must be given to those belaying.
- Monitor belay technique while the climber is on the ground - have them walk slowly to the climb while the slack is taken up by the belay team.
- There **MUST** be a pre-commitment physical check of the climber and belayer(s) before the climber leaves the ground to ensure all equipment is fitted and secured correctly.

14.4 Backup during peer belaying.

- A system of backing up the belayer must be used, this can be either
 - Progress capture system, utilising the Petzl tibloc.
 - Back up knots at suitable intervals.
 - The instructor tailing both ropes at all times, and maintain control of both ropes when performing a lower.
- Instructors not familiar with one of these systems must not use peer belaying.



- Only groups sufficient in age and competence (as assessed by the instructor in charge of the session) can be used for group peer belaying.
- The Bell Ringing technique should be used for Group Peer Belaying and can only be used with a backup system in place.
- A maximum of two ropes can be supervised by one instructor using peer belaying. *Even if their permit says they may supervise three ropes.*

14.5 Pre-Commitment Checks

- No participant may leave the ground unless all PPE and safety system are checked by an instructor, the belayer(s) are confirmed as ready and the instructor gives the belayer(s) and participant clear instructions to climb.

14.6 Lowering

- All lowering must be undertaken by the instructor unless lowering is included within a session teaching proper belay technique.
- If anyone other than an instructor is lowering, the instructor should tail the rope.

14.7 Tibloc Progress Capture System

- These are stored in the climbing store on hooks on the wall should you wish to make use of them.
- The system should be set up as per this description and picture. No deviation from this is allowed.
- The first in line tailer should stand as close as possible to the person belaying, while providing them room to bell ring correctly.
- Additional tailers may be used and positioned closely behind the first while providing them sufficient room to use the tibloc system correct.
- The Grivel twin gate carabiner is attached to the first in line tailers belay loop, with the captive end attached to the dogbone / sling.
- The tibloc should be orientated correctly to allow the rope to flow freely.
- The Petzl triple locking carabiner should be attached to the tibloc, with it clipped around the rope.
- A full grip should be maintained using one hand around the rope and the dogbone /sling.
- The other rope should be used to pull rope through the system ensuring no slack is present between the tibloc and the rig belay device.
- The instructor should position themselves so they may closely supervise everyone involved both in the belaying and the activity.

14.8 Teaching Proper Belay Technique

- Sessions may be led where proper belay technique is being taught.
- When teaching belaying a friction plate, gri-gri or rig may be used for belaying.
- All lines used for instructing must be tailed by an instructor at all times.

14.9 Tibloc Progress Capture System Configuration

- This system enforces the safety rope can only move in one direction unless an instructor removes the tibloc from the rope.
- When used correctly it allows the instructor to supervise *Hands Off* but does not negate the need to maintain supervision and be able to step in.
- Ensure the tibloc system is attached correctly. Include a functional check as part of your pre-commitment checks.



14.10 Bell Ringer / Tailer Positioning

- Position each belayer and tailer in a suitable position to maintain close supervision of both them and those participating in the activity.



15. Equipment : Routine Checks and Quarantine Procedure

15.1 Routine Checks

- Equipment must be checked at the beginning and end of every session .
- Before any person uses the activity all safety equipment and systems must be visually checked.
- Before closing the activity all equipment must be away and then the activity compound secured to prevent access.

15.2 Quarantine Procedure

- Any equipment suspected of having a defect must be **IMMEDIATELY** removed from use and tagged marking it as requiring quarantine. Climbing / High ropes equipment should be placed into the red 'Quarantine Box' in the Climbing Store.
- Red tamper proof tags are available for identifying equipment for quarantine.
 - These tags are available in the climbing store and rifle range cupboard. If you do not have access to either of these, call 07563 044 832 for access to quarantine tags.
- Tags must be attached to the equipment in such a way so they cannot become detached without tampering. EG on the trigger guard of a rifle, the hand grip of a bow or the belay loop of a harness.

15.3 Physical Removal of Quarantined Equipment

- Once tagged, Quarantined equipment must be **IMMEDIATELY** separated from all other equipment.
- Quarantined roped activity equipment should be put into the red postbox in the climbing store to prevent accidental use. Other activity equipment must be handed to the Duty Activities Manager (call 07563 044 832).

15.4 Record Keeping for Quarantined Equipment

- There is a quarantine exercise book in a folder within the climbing store. Record details of all equipment quarantined in this book. Include:
 - The date and time
 - Your name
 - The item being quarantined (Make, mode, size etc)
 - The numeric code from the orange Bentley Copse tough tag
 - The reason you are quarantining the item



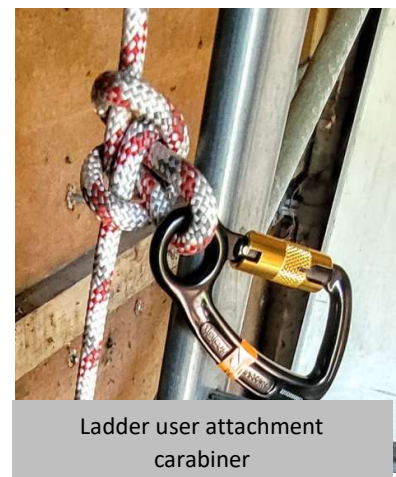
15.5 Decommissioning / Reinstatement of Quarantined Equipment

- Quarantined equipment will be inspected by Centre Manager or Senior Instructor.
- If the item can be repaired this will be actioned and the item reinspected.
- If the item is beyond repair it will be retired from service, this will be recorded in 'GearLog' by the Centre Manager or Senior Instructor.
- When decommissioning equipment, it must be ensured the item cannot re-enter service or be re used. This may be achieved by either destruction of the item or permanently marking the item 'RETIRED'.

16. Accessing The Tower Top

16.1 Ladder Access

- The top of the tower is accessed via an internal ladder.
- All movement on this ladder, both ascending and descending must be protected using the *ALF Climb Assist Pulley System*.
- The instructor must instruct the group in ladder climbing technique, always keeping 3 points of contact, not rushing and the need for caution in wet weather.
- The hatch at the top of the ladder must be clipped open when the ladder is in use.
- The instructor will be at the top of the tower providing safety and instruction to one participant at a time.



16.2 ALF Climb Assist Pulley System

- Twist lock carabiners are attached to a tensioned rope right of the ladder.
- This rope runs through the *ALF Climb Assist Pulley*, providing fall arrest protection to both sides in either direction.

16.3 Functional Checks

- The locking function of the system must be checked prior to each session starting. A sharp tug on the rope will trigger the brake.

16.4 Clipping In

- All ladder users must clip the twist lock carabiner to their belay loop.
- At the top of the tower the instructor should make themselves safe before unclipping from the ALF.
- An instructor should make a visible check that all participants have clipped the twist lock carabiner to their belay loop and that the gate is fully closed.

16.5 Instructor and participant safety

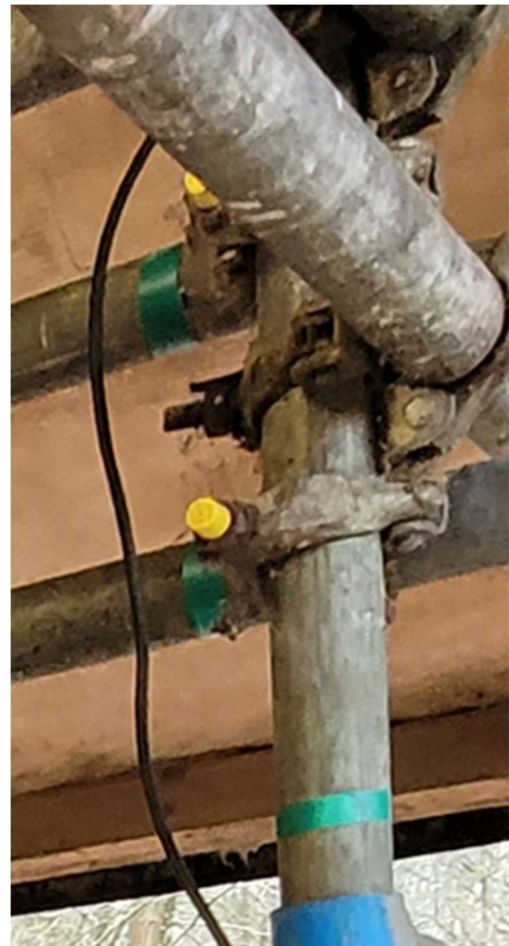
- Each instructor should be attached to a **rated** anchor point on the tower at all times.
- A high anchor point, and snug tether should be used to reduce potential fall distance.
- An adjustable personal anchor can be used for instructors.
- A rope or sling tether can be used, if adjusted to prevent potential fall distance and shock loading.
- The ring anchor points at the corners may be used, or slings may be used to create higher anchors. When doing this, a sling should be secured around both horizontal bars (marked with green tape)



Instructor using a Petzl Connect personal anchor on one of the corner anchor rings.

16.6 Rated anchor points

- All rings are rated anchor points for instructor / participant safety while at the top of the tower.
- Poles that can be used as anchors are marked with green tape.
- Any tower component that is **NOT** marked with green tape is **NOT** to be used to secure an instructor or participant
 - Green = Usable for an anchor. **No green = DO NOT USE!!**



Both horizontal anchor bars are marked with green tape, as is the vertical support.
Green = Can be used as an anchor.

17. Equipment : Non Bentley Copse

17.1 Own Equipment : Climbing, Abseiling, High Ropes

- Instructors / participants may only use their own equipment (EG harness, helmet, carabiners, personal tether) with permission from a Bentley Copse instructor authorised to assess the condition and suitability of the equipment/PPE.
- Participants on a Bentley Copse led session are not permitted to use their own equipment.
- Where hirers have booked an *Own Instructor* session of the tower and wish to use their own equipment (Harnesses, Ropes, Helmets etc), the responsibility for the equipment rests with the group leader in charge. If Bentley Copse feel the equipment is unsafe, the session will be stopped.

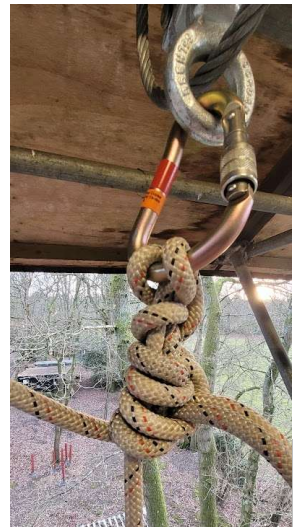
18. Preparing The Activity

18.1 Set Up Instructions : All High Ropes & Zip Wire

- An RVC (Routine Visual Check) should be made before each activity is opened to identify any obvious deterioration since the last use EG vandalism (Defined within EN 15567)
- This check should include:
 - Ground Surface
 - Sharp Edges
 - Missing components
 - Structural integrity of the safety system
 - Trees including hanging branches
 - Stays are taut (Climbing Tower and Zip wire)
- The following activity specific set up instructions **must** be followed.

18.2 Set Up Instructions : Abseil

- The instructions on safely accessing the top of the tower must be followed.
- Abseil rope:
 - The top anchor for the static abseil rope should be set up as per the photograph.
 - A releasable abseil should be created using an Italian hitch using a steel DMM Boa carabiner attached to an anchor ring:
 - A slippery hitch and two half hitches should be used to tie off the Italian Hitch.



- A suitable length of tail must be left to keep the releasable abseil secure and tidy.
- Generally, the abseil rope will be set up to be on the abseilers right hand side when they descend.
- Spare static rope should be kept clear of the area but easily accessible to affect a rescue if needs be.
- Safety rope
 - The safety rope should be set up as per the photograph.
 - An Italian Hitch is rigged to belay the abseiler.
 - A figure 8 on a bight, with stopper knot is used with a DMM belay master carabiner to attach the abseiler to the safety rope.
 - The spare safety rope must be positioned so as to not get in the way or get caught up in use.

18.3 Set Up Instructions : Climbing

- How to set up the tower
 - Up to four ropes may be setup all following the instructions as detailed in this document under *Ground Anchors, Ropes and Belay Slings*.



Safety rope :
Italian Hitch

19. Off Ground Safety Briefing

19.1 Compulsory briefing

- All sessions must start with an introduction and safety briefing to include the legal essentials, and common sense practicalities, of running an off ground activity session.
- Each point below **must** be covered, and not made light of, but the wording used and timing will vary from instructor to instructor.
- Every part of briefing must be delivered before the first participant leaves the ground.

19.2 Briefing Contents

- **Introduction** - Introduce yourself and any assistants. Introduce the activity and the aims of the session.
- **Medical** - Ask if anyone has any medical concerns that will affect them or anyone else participating in the session. Offer them the opportunity to take you to one side to discuss. Adjust the session to include them as best as is deemed suitable.
- **Inherent Risks** - Explain that minor injuries such as bumps, bruises, cuts, grazes, sprains and strains are very common and more serious injuries cannot be ruled out. You must not promise that you can remove all risk of injury, but that the procedures (including listening to and following directions) are designed to minimise the risks.
- **Attire** - Explain and check that suitable attire is being worn. Closed shoes, long trousers, hair tied back, all jewellery removed, pockets empty, scarfs off, dangling hood cords tucked in. Do not adjust the safety equipment after it has been fitted by an instructor. If anyone needs to leave the session at any point, they must remove all PPE before leaving unless approved by an instructor.
- **Challenge By Choice** - All participants are invited to participate voluntarily. All participants have the right to withdraw at any time.
- **How to communicate with an instructor** - How to seek help, if required during the activity.
- **Safety** - Do not leave the ground until an instructor has told you it is safe to do so. Follow the instructions from the instructor.
- **Activity-specific rules** - See *Running The Activity : Safety Rules*.

20. Running The Activity : Abseil

20.1 The following tasks are required before the activity may start:

- The activity equipment must be checked as detailed in this document under *Equipment : Routine Checks and Quarantine Procedure*.
- The activity must be setup as detailed in this document under *Preparing The Activity*. If another instructor has set it up, every element **MUST** be checked - derigging and re-rigging if necessary to perform the checks.
- The instructor must provide an introduction and safety briefing as detailed in this document under *Off Ground Safety Briefing*
- The instructor must provide and fit PPE as detailed in this document under *Equipment : Harnesses* and *Equipment : Helmets*

20.2 During the activity

- There must be at least one adult on the ground to assist with group control and connecting / disconnecting from the equipment. This may be another member of Bentley Copse Staff, a Teacher, Leader, or other adult helper.
- All activity specific rules within *Running The Activity : Safety Rules* must be followed.
- All participants must descend under control.
- The instructor and assistant must ensure that waiting participants are in their designated area and that there is no unauthorised access by other site users.

20.3 Ending The Activity

- The *Ending The Activity Session* steps should be followed.

22. Running The Activity : Safety Rules

22.1 Safety Rules (Abseiling)

- The abseil safety system must be setup as detailed in the *Preparing The Activity, Set Up Instructions (Abseil)* section of this document.
- Spectators
 - Spectators may sit in the shelter or stand outside the pit area marked by wood.
 - Spectators should never enter the pit area unless directed by an instructor or assistant and must be wearing a helmet.
 - Spectators do not need to wear a helmet if they are not entering the pit area.
- The top of the tower must be accessed using the *ALF Climb Assist Pulley System* as detailed in *Accessing The Tower Top* in this document.
- Before the participant leaves the abseil platform, the instructor must physically check that all aspects of their personal protective equipment are worn and fitted correctly, the safety system is correctly attached and that the screw gate is closed on all carabiners within the safety system.
- Once in position the abseil (low stretch) rope can be connected and the process of abseiling explained.
 - Heels over the edge,
 - Lean back
 - Let the rope slide through the hand at a speed they are comfortable with.
 - Keep feet level with bottom and about shoulder width apart keeping weight on the heels as they descend.
- Participant to disconnect from the safety and abseil rope once they have reached the floor. The assistant may need to help with this.
- If pulling the abseil rope free from above, the participant should be directed to cover their face with their hands while the rope is pulled up and out of the figure 8 slowly.
- If deemed appropriate for heavier abseilers, the instructor may redirect the control safety rope from the Italian hitch to a rig or gri-gri attached to their belay loop, such that the safety rope is controlled by the Italian hitch with the rig/gri-gri used to provide greater control.
- The instructor may only abseil if they are using a suitable backup system.

22.2 Problem Solving (Abseiling).

- If there is a problem with the participant part way down the abseil the following process should be followed.
 - Instructor to hold the safety rope and ask the participant to rectify the problem before carrying on.
 - If this is unsuccessful, the instructor must tie off the safety rope in a releasable way.
 - Untie the abseil rope to give the participant slack to solve the problem.
 - If the problem cannot be solved, the instructor can release the tie-off on the safety rope and use this to lower the participant to the ground in a controlled manner.

22.3 Safety Rules (Climbing)

- The abseil safety system must be setup as detailed in the *Preparing The Activity, Set Up Instructions (Climbing)* section of this document.
- Provide guidance and coaching to the climber(s) on body movement and correct technique.
- Spectators
 - Spectators may sit in the shelter or stand outside the pit area marked by wood.
 - Spectators should never enter the pit area unless directed by an instructor or assistant and must be wearing a helmet.
 - Spectators do not need to wear a helmet if they are not entering the pit area.
- The instructor leading the session may enforce that all entering the compound wear a helmet at all times.

23. High Ropes Rescue Procedures

23.1 Abseiling

- **Entrapment during abseil**
 - The releasable abseil system should be used to lower the participant to the ground.
- **Participant unable to complete abseil**
 - They are coached back onto the ALF system, removed from the abseil safety rope and coached back down the ladder.
- **Injured or unconscious person on platform and unable to abseil or use ladder.**
 - Call 999 asking for assistance. Explain access issues.
 - Administer assistance locally.

23.2 Climbing

- **Stuck participant : Unwilling to come down**
 - Coach them down.
 - Wait them out
- **Stuck participant or rope : Unable to lower**
 - Use second rope and competent person to climb adjacent to them to coach them down.
 - Use instructor or suitably skilled person to climb using the second rope if adjustments to the ropes or safety system is required.