



TO ALL GROUPS OF THE SCOUT ASSOCIATION (UK) VISITING KANDERSTEG INTERNATIONAL SCOUT CENTRE UK SCOUTS AND SUMMER ACTIVITIES AT KANDERSTEG

Kandersteg International Scout Centre (KISC) is one of the most popular international destinations for UK Scouts. KISC and the UK Scout Association have been working together to ensure that your Alpine activities are conducted under the stipulations of UK activity rules. The purpose of this document is to clearly inform you of the procedure for activities while staying at Kandersteg International Scout Centre. It is crucial that you read the following.

What is the situation for UK groups in Kandersteg?

- When you arrive in Kandersteg, a leader will have to sign a 'Guest Declaration Form' on behalf of the whole group. This named leader is then responsible for all the actions while here.
- Members of staff in Kandersteg, who come from many countries, are trained and assessed in leading mountain activities based on KISC operating procedures and standards. The UK Scout Association have consulted with Kandersteg and observed their staff training, and are happy that these standards are at least as high as those required of UK leaders. UK groups can therefore be confident that using KISC led activities fulfil the requirements of the UK Scout Association. The KISC staff will work closely with all groups prior to activities to ensure that they are fully prepared.

What is the situation for UK groups taking part in activities lead by KISC Staff?

- When taking part in activities overseas the rules of the UK Scout Association allow for host country Scout leaders to lead activities for UK Scouts following the rules of the host country. This includes Kandersteg staff leading activities following the KISC rules and operating procedures. UK groups therefore do not need to follow UK activity specific rules (such as group sizes) when taking part in KISC led activities.
- For all activities a leader from the Scout Association (UK) must be present and be prepared to halt the activity if they have any safety concerns.

What is the situation for UK groups taking part in activities booked by KISC with external companies?

- KISC works with various external activity providers, who run activities such as high ropes parks and white water rafting. KISC only works with companies who comply with Swiss law and the Safety in Adventures label and whose staff are qualified to the level required in Switzerland.
- KISC works with some external companies who provide equipment rental – e.g. mountain bikes, ski equipment and river tubes. If groups choose to rent this equipment, they must follow UK activity rules and follow the permit scheme.
- Activities forbidden by the Scout Association remain forbidden even if offered with a KISC Staff or through an external partner of KISC. These activities include bungee jumping and banana boating.
- KISC offers some activities which are not well known in the UK and may not have any regulations. In these cases it is usually possible to find a similar activity as a comparison. E.g. for trotti bikes follow mountain biking guidelines, for Aare river tubing follow swimming and water sports guidelines.

What is the situation for UK groups doing activities on their own?

- KISC has a large international team led by the Deputy Director for Programme, presently Lieveke van Vugt from the Netherlands, who can offer advice and help you plan your activities. We urge you to use their knowledge and expertise as much as possible.

- It is up to you as a group to check that you are following all the relevant regulations of the Scout Association (UK), especially with regard to necessary 'Hill Walking' permits.
- All groups staying at KISC must complete a Route Card and leave it with the Staff. It is your responsibility to ensure that your planning comes within the rules of The Scout Association (UK)
- All groups staying at KISC follow the Mountain Safety Guidelines and How to Hike in the Alps documents produced by KISC.

Mountain Huts

- For many groups staying at KISC an overnight at a mountain hut is an important part of their Programme. KISC operates 2 of their own mountain huts; Gfellaalp and Ueschinenhütte and can also book spaces in various locally run mountain huts. The availability and layout of mountain huts cannot always be guaranteed in advance, so members of The Scout Association UK will need to consider and plan for potential sleeping arrangements.
- The KISC huts of Gfellaalp and Ueschinenhütte have 3 and 4 bedrooms but can be shared by several Scout groups from different nationalities. KISC staff will show groups the sleeping arrangements during the hut check in and will leave different group leaders to decide on sleeping arrangements.
- Externally run huts such as Frundenhütte, Lötschenpasshütte and Schwarenbach hotel typically will put a Scout group into 1 large dormitory room. Often they only have one sleeping room for all groups. In these cases it is down to the group to manage the sleeping arrangements to fit in with The Scout Association Safeguarding regulations.

If you need help or advice when planning your visit please contact The Scout Association Headquarters on 0208 4337100 or info.centre@scouts.org.uk.

Further notes

- Plan your programme thoroughly and contact the Programme Staff to discuss what you would like to do and please follow the booking procedure as stipulated on www.kisc.ch, in the KanderActive 2015 brochure and/or the General Terms & Conditions.
- Walking maps of the area around Kandersteg are available – aim to buy and use these. KISC can send you one in advance if you wish and put the cost on your bill.
- If you are still not clear about the current UK rules, contact your ACC Activities or The UK Scout Association at Gilwell Park.

KISC and The Scout Association (UK) Activity Team work together to ensure that the activities guided by KISC Staff meet the standards and expectations of Scouts from the UK. Alpine activities are adventurous and challenging – we all know that accidents can and do happen but with sensible preparation, the risks are minimised. However, these activities are rewarding, fun, team building and can provide memories that last a lifetime. We believe that KISC offers the safest programme we can and look forward to welcoming you to Kandersteg

Yours in Scouting



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Yours in Scouting



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THE SCOUT ASSOCIATION (UK) TERRAIN AND WATER CLASSIFICATIONS

Introduction

The purpose of this sheet is to clarify the situation with regard to UK led hiking, mountain biking, via-ferrata and water activities in the area around Kandersteg International Scout Centre. It is specifically to give detailed information to allow UK groups to relate and compare, using the UK terminology, the situation in Kandersteg with that of the United Kingdom. KISC led hikes and activities follow KISC rules and operating procedures as detailed before. These terrain and water classifications are for unguided / self-guided activities only.

The Swiss Alpine Club (SAC) categorises all paths in Switzerland using a rating of T1-T6. Remoteness, difficulty, navigational skills, exposure and technical skills are all taken into account with this rating. KISC has linked these to the equivalent UK Permit level.

UK Terrain Zero

The following areas are deemed to be Terrain Zero:

Locations less than 30 minutes from any habitation with telephone or road reachable by a normal road going ambulance.

Example routes: Blausee, Höh, Gasterntal, Oeschinensee.

T1 Wanderweg – UK Scout Association Terrain Zero (with extra requirements)

T1 Wanderweg are well marked, even, generally wide paths. Any steeper ground is well secured with a hand rail and steps. Navigation is simple and no specialist knowledge or equipment is required.

T1 Wanderweg are marked on the ground with yellow diamonds and yellow signposts. On the Kandersteg area map they are marked with a solid red line.

All Wanderweg are rated T1 by the SAC and can be considered Terrain Zero as long as the rules below are followed:

For parties following a T1 Wanderweg, the following apply:

1. The UK leader must carry out, a risk assessment of the proposed route, taking into account weather forecasts and trail conditions. KISC staff can assist with this process.
2. The party size is strictly limited to 8 people.
3. One person in this party must be designated as the leader of the party.
4. A completed Route Card must be left with the KISC Staff.

Example routes: Almenalp, Gemmi pass from Sunnbuel, Ueschinenhütte.

For activities on routes that exceed the requirements for terrain zero a permit is required and the following rules must be followed:

1. The leader must have a permit for the area in which they are walking. This will be at the same technical level as 'Terrain 1 or 2 UK', but any restrictions need to include the Kandersteg area being walked.
2. When there are winter conditions, including when there is snow on the route, the permit needs to be for 'Winter Conditions'. KISC staff will be able to help in assessing the condition of the route.
3. The party size is strictly limited to 8 people.
4. One person in this party must be designated as the leader of the party.
5. A completed Route Card must be left with the KISC Staff.

T2 Bergweg - UK Scout Association Terrain 1

Bergweg with a SAC rating of T2 can be considered UK Terrain 1. They can be steeper trails with some exposure and cross areas of loose rock. More exposed areas are generally equipped with a cable. Surefootedness and basic navigational skills are needed but the average hiker generally does not need to use their hands for progress. T2 Bergweg are marked on the ground

with red and white paint and yellow signposts with red and white tips. On the Kandersteg area map they marked with a dotted red line.

Example routes: Gurnigel, Gfellalp, Doldenhornhütte, Lammerenhütte

T3 Bergweg - UK Scout Association Terrain 2

Bergweg with a SAC rating of T3 can be considered UK Terrain 2. It indicates that the path will often be steep and in remote locations several hours from the nearest habitation. Hikers will need to use their hands to cross cabled, exposed sections. Navigational skills along with a head for heights and some previous hiking experience are needed for these trails.

T3 Bergweg are marked on the ground, the same as T2 Bergweg - with red and white paint and yellow signposts with red and white tips. On the Kandersteg area map they marked with a dotted red line.

Example routes: Frundenhütte, Lötschenpass, Blüemlisalphütte, Gällihore

T4 and T5 Alpinewege, Via Ferrata, and mountaineering routes - UK Scout Association Specialist Terrain

T4 and T5 routes are also known as Alpinewege. They can be in remote locations, cover difficult steep rocky terrain or cross large snowfields and often require alpine skills, equipment and experience. They are sometimes marked on the ground with blue and white markings and blue or blue and white signposts. On the Kandersteg area they are marked with a blue dotted line. Sometimes these routes are unmarked both on the map and on the ground. Also in this section are mountaineering routes and Via Ferrata which may involve glacier crossing, difficult navigation and specialist equipment – these routes are generally unmarked on the ground and on the map.

All of the above routes would be considered specialist terrain. UK parties proposing routes covering this specialist terrain need specific approval from their Commissioner, following advice from someone with specific knowledge and experience of the activity, in addition to a Terrain 2 hillwalking permit.

The Allmenalp Via Ferrata in Kandersteg is above mid-grade (K4) but quite short (guidebook time 3 hours), so Commissioners need to ensure that Leaders wishing to take young people on this have experience in hillwalking and climbing as well as knowledge of the specific safety equipment that they will be using on the Via Ferrata. County Mountaineering Advisers should be able to support Commissioners in ensuring that sufficient knowledge and experience are held.

Example routes: Hockenhorn, Tälligletscher, Kanderfirn, Allmenalp Via Ferrata.

Water & Lakes Around Kandersteg

When swimming the leader is responsible for assessing the grade, and therefore requirements, of the water body. For consistency the Scout Association has advised that the following popular lakes under normal conditions are considered Class B1 waters:

- Oeschinensee
- Daubensee

This means that Scouts swimming in these waters need to be led by either; someone holding a water activity permit following the guidelines for activity permit holders leading swimming, or by someone holding the appropriate Water Safety Management Programme (WSMP) qualification of the RLSS or equivalent or higher.

Paddling in still water up to waist deep is acceptable without qualified supervision as long as the following paddling guidelines are followed:

- Conduct a risk assessment of the activity.
- Provide appropriate individual(s) as safety cover and equipment as identified by the risk assessment,
- Ensure any safety cover is in an appropriate position to provide effective cover.
- Ensure the participants are clearly visible above the water level at all times.