

Guidelines for Walks Leaders.

Before the Walk.

Reconnoitre the route in advance, or at least be familiar with it and any recent route variations.

Do a basic 'risk assessment' noting any potential hazards, with their level of risk and any measures to control them, for example;

- Parking (safe and adequate parking places),
- Leader and backmarker to wear hi-vis vest on roads,
- Busy road crossings, (regrouping, best place to cross),
- Road or lane sections, (single file on right or outside of bends),
- Bad weather, (alternative or escape routes),
- Dogs – are they allowed? Must be kept on leads.
- Stream crossings, (best crossing place, helping unsure walkers),
- Difficult terrain, (best line, slow pace, maintain Group cohesion),
- Accidents, (procedure for summoning help, basic first aid).

Provide detailed directions to the start point of the walk and meeting time.

On the Walk.

There are many styles of leadership – it's not necessary for the Leader to be at the front all the time, though the Leader should be when the route is difficult or not obvious.

- Welcome new walkers and introduce them to the group.
- Count the number of walkers before starting and from time to time, to check no-one is missing.
- If there is more than about five walkers then appoint a backmarker.
- Ensure a walking pace within the capability of the entire party; a reasonable rate of progress is needed but walkers should not feel unduly pushed.
- Consider waiting a little at stiles or gates to avoid the group becoming too spaced.
- Be prepared to shorten or modify the route if the state of the weather or the party make this wise.
- On extended walks, particularly on hills or moorland, carry a relevant map and either a compass or GPS and know how to use them. (Most of the Ramblers' and Tuesday Walkers' walks are on well-defined tracks, but walking in hills or moorland will require more navigational skill.)
- Ensure that all participants respect The Country Code.

