Ramblers Wellbeing Walks, Easy Access and Easy walks



**Name of Walk: Walk Leader: Date:**

Use this risk assessment as a starting point to think about your specific walk. We recommend making a note of any additional hazards.
Review and share your plan with walkers on the day – and make changes if you need to.

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| What are the risks or hazards? | What could happen and who could be harmed? | **How we manage the risks**  |
| Lack of confidence and/or skill | Leaders are stressed and overwhelmed | * All new walk leaders complete introductory training and make the most of opportunities to develop their skills
* Peer support available from more experienced leaders
* Leaders only lead within their capabilities
 |
| Walkers are exposed to unnecessary risks |
| **Too many****people walking****in the group** | Leaders are stressed and overwhelmed | * Leaders refer to recommended ratios and manage group size depending on the specific circumstances Identify additional helpers (e.g. walk assistant, co-leader or backmarker) for large groups
* Advertise any limits on group size (and booking information, if needed) in advance
* Where needed, limit invitations to people with a specific shared experience (e.g. women-only walks, cancer support groups)
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| Walkers are exposed to unnecessary risks |
| Walkers act recklessly | Walkers put themselves and others at risk | * Share information with walkers in advance to establish clear expectations and responsibilities
* Give a walk briefing before setting off, to share your plan and expectations
* Communicate with walkers throughout the walk
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| Leaders are stressed and overwhelmed |

Ramblers Wellbeing Walks, Easy Access and Easy walks continued.

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| What are the risks or hazards? | What could happen and who could be harmed? | **How we manage the risks**  |
| Weather | Walkers are exposed to extreme cold, heat, or wet | * Check the weather before the walk
* Let people know what to wear and what to bring
* Make contingency plans
* Set an appropriate pace and take breaks as needed
* Stay alert to changing conditions and adjust plans accordingly
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| Getting lost | Walkers get lost | * Where possible, recce the route a week or so in advance – or carefully plan with good local knowledge, guidebooks and/or maps
* Leaders are familiar with the route and contingency plans in case changes are
 |
| Walkers are exposed to extreme cold, heat or wet |
| Terrain | Walkers trip or fall, resulting in injury | * Leaders complete training on Preventing & Managing Incidents
* Check for muddy/slippery/steep sections when planning
* Advise walkers of terrain and suitable footwear in advance
* Make contingency plans, to draw on if needed
* Zig-zag up/down any steep sections
* Offer reassurance to nervous walkers & take adequate breaks
* Adjust plans on the walk if needed
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| Unsafe/unstable geographic features or obstacles (e.g., water, tides, rock fall, overhangs, and fallen trees) | Walkers trip or fall, resulting in injury | * Follow any local warnings or signs and advise walkers to keep away from sheer drops/edges
* Check paths are suitable for a group to use safely and make changes if necessary
* Make contingency plans to deal with unexpected features and obstacles
* Avoid crossing any significant water features – use bridges or other recognised water crossing points
* Check the tide times
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| Walkers get into difficulty and drown |

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| What are the risks or hazards? | What could happen and who could be harmed? | **How we manage the risks**  |
| Livestock | Walkers are at riskof injury from livestock | * Cross fields with livestock calmly and quietly, keeping the group together and any dogs on a short lead (releasing the dog if charged by cows)
* Follow the Countryside Code (England & Wales) and Scottish Outdoor Access Code (Scotland)
* Leave gates and property as you find them
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| Property is damaged |
| The wider public are at risk of injury from escaped livestock |
| Roads | Walkers are at risk of road traffic accident | * Maintain single file on any road sections without footpath/pavement
* Plan route to avoid busy roads where possible
* Check for suitable crossing places
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| Other road users are at risk of accident |
| Losing walkers | Walkers could get left behind/lost | * Leader knows who is on the walk – asking for names and emergency contact details
* Regular headcounts and communication with the group
* Appoint a backmarker
* Communicate with group throughout the walk
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| Accident or medical emergency | Walkers require first aid or medical attention | * Leader knows who is on the walk – asking for names and emergency contact details
* Ask walkers to complete and carry an In Case of Emergency (ICE) card
* Leaders complete training on Preventing & Managing Incidents
* Know how to contact the emergency services
* Ensure mobile phone is fully charged, and consider carrying a power bank
* Carry a first aid kit – and extra supplies/layers to keep people comfortable while waiting for help to arrive
* Ensure appropriate first aid awareness and skills amongst the group
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| Walkers with specific health conditions/needs | Leaders are stressed and walkers are exposed to unnecessary risks | * Ask walkers to get in touch in advance to find out more about the walk and whether it is suitable
* Explain that leaders cannot provide specialist support for individuals with specific health conditions/needs
* Ask a carer, family member or friend to accompany the walker if appropriate
* Work in partnership with other specialist services/organisations to provide guidance
* Create a safe, private space at the start of the walk for anyone to share any additional information they would like to
* Ask walkers to complete and carry an In Case of Emergency (ICE) card
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