

Footloose 303

Risk assessment / Advice sheet / Check list for: Country and coast walks

Who might be harmed by the hazard / risk?

In almost all cases it is those on the walk who might be harmed. However, in a few limited cases it may be third parties e.g. car drivers.

Risk or hazard	What to do to reduce risk	Leader's check
Planning / before you reccie the walk <i>Please refer to Reccying of country & coast walks".</i>		
Your route takes you onto high exposed ground and / or more than 30 minutes from habitation or a main road.	This is classed as a mountain or moorland walk which have higher risk and hazards. Please use the mountain and moorland risk assessment. If in doubt contact Mike W, Steve H or John W before you proceed any further. Contact numbers on GroupSpaces.	
A number of risks exist.	Use our "Reccying of country and coast walk risk assessment / advice sheet / check list	
What to take with you / do before the walk		
Walkers under estimate the difficulty of the walk and have problems.	Accurately measure the length. Give a good description of how hilly / hard the walk is. This should include how rough under foot if possible. If you are unsure about the route or your navigation ability seek help from another member before the walk.	
An emergency occurs – what to do?	Print off and take with you the group's emergency procedure. Have your map with you and know how to take a grid reference. Put a grid ref app on your phone	
Medical emergency	Walkers are advised to take their own first aid kit. Take yours also.	
May need to contact the emergency services	Take your mobile phone and make sure it is charged. Register your phone for SMS emergency use. See advice sheet on website. Take a pen and paper with you.	
Weather risk. Extreme cold; wet or heat.	Check the weather forecast the day before the walk. If you have very serious concerns contact Mike W, John W or Steve H. Make sure that you have all your kit and supplies ready and with you.	
Possible danger of cattle / horses acting aggressively towards dogs and walkers.	If you have concerns about horses or cattle, you are not confident with dogs being present or the terrain is not suitable, you should say "sorry no dogs please". The five dog owners we have are aware of this and the advice about walking through fields with cattle or horses.	
You are taken ill and can no longer lead walk.	Contact Mike W, John W or Steve H.	
On the walk		
Walker not properly equipped	The group sends out advice to all temporary and full members and they are responsible for making sure they are equipped. However, you or one of the committee can say "no, sorry you cannot walk" if necessary.	

Risk or hazard	What to do to reduce risk	Leader's check
Loosing someone on the walk	Count the number at the start and check as you walk Appoint a backmarker. Change person at lunch. If you do loose someone, first of all back track to try to find them. If they cannot be found you should return to the start. If they are not at start then contact the emergency services.	
Walker(s) having significant difficulty due to fitness / illness.	Keep an eye on those walking. Adjust the pace of the walk or have more stops. Cut short the walk / seek help if necessary.	
Walker(s) having significant difficulty due to weather (hot, cold or wet)	Hot weather; stop in shade and assess situation. Cold and or wet; share kit, help out. Cut short walk if necessary and possible.	
Slips or falls	The group's advice sheet makes footwear with a good grip an essential requirement. When leading / walking pick your way over the ground to avoid the most difficult / slippery ground. Walkers should be encouraged to help each other over difficult ground and warn of particular hazards e.g. very slippery stiles.	
Illness or accident	Put the emergency procedure into action. Seek help from others on walk or nearby.	
Ticks and Lymes Disease	Group has published advice on website Remind members, in particular in the Spring.	
Accident when crossing or walking on roads and lanes	Warn walkers when joining road. Walk in single file and so that vehicles can see the group (generally on the right hand side) - on sharp, right hand, bends it may be necessary to change sides. On narrow lanes hold group in recess / wide area to allow vehicles to pass, especially tractors and the like.	
Cattle or horses on route acting in an aggressive manner.	Lead group around, not through, the stock. In particular do not walk between cows and calves. Keep group together. Ask people who are confident with stock to help protect group. Holding ground and holding out arms can keep herds of bullocks back. Be prepared; have in mind an escape route from field.	
Increased danger of cattle / horses acting aggressively where dogs are with group.	Dogs to be on a lead but owner should release dog if stock is very aggressive. Find alternative route if situation warrants it.	
Loss of light. This is a particular risk during the winter or on an evening walk.	When planning your route take care about timing and know when sunset will be. Take a good head torch with you (other walkers are asked to carry torches or head torches)	
<i>After the walk</i>		
Any near incidents or near misses	Report these back to the group's H&S committee rep (see GroupSpaces for name and contact details). By doing this the group learns and can improve the way it works.	
	<i>Well done! You have made a fantastic and valued contribution to the group. Thank you for all your efforts.</i>	