

Instructions to Leaders (Please keep for future reference)

All our Leaders are experienced ramblers and the time and effort entailed in working out a walk is much appreciated by everyone. Most of what is stated below is known and done already but, having had to do a generic risk assessment for insurance purposes, the Club has felt obliged to put certain instructions in writing. Please let the Rambles Secretary or the Club Secretary know if you have a problem with any of the instructions or if you think anything should be changed or added/deleted.

As a Leader you owe a duty of care to your party, but you will not be held personally liable for injury or damage. That is why the Club has insurance. But, if a claim is rejected because the Insurer's requirements have not been complied with, the Officers and committee of the Club could be held liable. By complying with these Instructions you will minimise the risk of a failed claim.

1. Ideally, although this is not essential, you should not enter a 'new' walk (i.e. one you have not done before) for the programme until it has been recce'd at least once.
2. We like imaginative titles for walks, but walkers do appreciate knowing the vicinity of the walk. Please, therefore, make sure that either the title of your walk or the description gives an indication of the area, maybe by naming the nearest town or village.
3. Please say if there are steep hills, and how many. Also roughly how many stiles. If the walk is considered strenuous this should be stated.
4. Leaders should consider location of coffee/lunch stops as appropriate and identify 'comfort' stops when recce'ing your walks. This info should be given to walkers at the start of the walk.
5. You should re-walk the route shortly before leading it for the Club, e.g. within one month, both so that the route is fresh in your mind and so that you can check for any new hazards.
6. It is a good idea to have a pair of secateurs with you in case any brambles need pruning.
7. You should have a first aid kit (to include bandages, gauze, microtape, plastic forceps).
8. It is your decision whether to cancel or alter a walk because of inclement weather, so check the weather forecast. If you cancel you should still turn up at the start, usually Wannock Road Recreation Ground, so you can send people home.
9. It is your decision whether to abandon a walk part way through. Indeed, when planning a walk it is a good idea to have an escape route (a short way back) in case of inclement weather or in case someone gets injured or is ill.
10. You should have with you the relevant OS Explorer map, plus a compass and a mobile phone.
11. At the start of your walk you should give the group a brief description of the area, mentioning any steep hills and known hazards. Welcome any new walkers. Look to see that everyone appears to be appropriately dressed and is wearing stout footwear.
12. Count the group. For larger groups, say 12 or more, you should appoint a back marker.
13. As a Club we prefer members not to climb over farm gates, especially if there is a perfectly good stile. If it is necessary to climb over a farm gate this should be one at a time at the hinge end so as to minimise the risk of any damage. You should supervise this and be ready to help any less able walker.
14. If a member wishes to leave the group, please check that he/she knows the way back and also inform the member that he/she is no longer the responsibility of the Club, i.e. for insurance purposes.
15. Do not allow the group to get too strung out. Have regular stops. Make sure any stragglers are O.K. Do a fairly frequent head count.
16. Before walking along a road, remind the group to stay in single file behind you. Remember that you should walk on the right hand side of the road, unless you deem it safer to walk on the other side.
17. Before walking across a crop field, remind the group to stay in single file behind you.
19. Keep the group close together when walking through a field with animals. Look out for any bulls and keep well away.
18. If you come across any broken stiles, gates or bridges please make a note of the grid reference and afterwards report this to the Rambles Secretary so we can inform the Rights of Way people at the ESCC.(East Sussex County Council).
20. After the walk report any accident or incident to the Club Secretary, who will enter details in an Accident and Incident Book and possibly notify the insurance company.
21. Always follow the Countryside Code.
22. For rambles using buses please check timetables and bring your bus pass.