

Guidance for Leaders

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 guidance in writing. Please let the Rambles Secretary or the Club Secretary know if you have a problem with any of the guidelines 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 guidelines you will minimise the risk of a failed claim.

Booking your walk with the Rambles Secretary

Please complete all sections of the booking form including the vicinity, number of stiles and how strenuous the walk is so that members can make an informed decision about attending.

Recce-ing

1. You should recce the walk during the month immediately before you lead it to reacquaint yourself with it and to check there are no new hazards.
2. It is a good idea to carry a pair of secateurs to cut back brambles which hinder the route.
3. Identify suitable locations for coffee/lunch/comfort stops.
4. If possible, identify an 'escape route' if you need to abandon the walk due to inclement weather or other reasons.

Leading on the day

1. It is your decision whether to cancel the walk due to inclement weather and advise those who have booked.
2. Carry the relevant OS map or hard copy of the route with you as a back-up in case your technical device fails.
3. Carry a first aid kit.
4. Brief the group before setting off, outline the route, mentioning any steep hills, potential hazards, coffee/lunch/comfort stops etc. Establish whether any members of the group do not wish to be in photographs/videos.
5. Introduce any new members.
6. Appoint a back marker. You and they should wear a hi-viz tabard.
7. Do not let the group get too strung out. Wait for stragglers and let them rest before you move on. Have regular stops and head-counts.
8. When walking along a road or through crop field remind the group to walk single file. When walking through a field of livestock, keep the group together and avoid the animals as far as possible, or re-route the walk if possible.
9. If a member wants to leave the walk make sure that they know how to get home and remind them that they will not be covered by the group's insurance once they leave the group.
10. If you come across any broken stiles, gates or bridges please make a note of the location (and take photos if you can) and afterwards report this to the Rights of Way department at ESCC, or to the Rambles Secretary.
11. Report any accidents or incidents to the Club Secretary after your walk, who will forward a form to be completed.
12. Always follow the Countryside Code.
13. For rambles using buses, check timetables and remind walkers to bring bus passes.
14. ENJOY YOUR WALK!

Revised March 2024

Item 4 under Leading on the day adjusted April 2025