



Guidelines for Walk Leaders

These notes give guidance on how to prepare and lead a club walk. They also explain what action is required should certain situations arise.

Preparing for the Walk

1. In the interests of safety, it is recommended that the walk leader, preferably accompanied by another club member, should recce the route prior to the walk.
2. Potential risks on the proposed walk should be assessed and alternative routes considered.
3. Complete the Risk Assessment Form and use it as part of the pre-walk briefing.
4. If using a Pub, National Trust Property or other private car park please ensure that permission is obtained first. The proposed car park should large enough to accommodate the walkers' cars without affecting the business of the owner.
5. On the day before the walk, assess weather forecasts and decide if an alternative route is desirable.

Leading the Walk

1. On the day of the walk, (or earlier if possible), it is the responsibility of the walk leader to decide if the weather is so adverse that the walk should be abandoned. If the walk is to be abandoned, please contact a member of the committee as soon as possible so that the walkers who have pre-booked can be contacted. The walk leader will still need to go, if it is safe to do so, to the walk meeting place in case anyone, who it has not been possible to contact in time, turns up.
2. The walk leader should appoint a backmarker. It is advisable for both the leader and back marker to carry mobile phones (remembering to exchange phone numbers) and a whistle. It is the duty of the walk leader to keep the group together.
3. It is recommended that walk leaders carry a copy of the OS map for the area plus any notes on the walk.
4. Reread the Risk Assessment of the walk.
5. As a courtesy, the walk leader should welcome the group and guest walkers. This should be followed with a short briefing covering:
 - That the group have read and understand the club's 'Guidelines for Walkers'
 - A description of the walk – including the terrain, paths, roads, stiles, etc.
 - Potential hazards
 - Coffee, lunch and other breaks, with timings
 - Pub stop (if planned)
 - Toilets (if any)
 - Length of walk and estimated finishing time

6. Ask guest walkers to complete the Guest Registration Form.
7. First Aid Kit if carried - please remember you cannot personally administer any medication, including painkillers, antihistamines, insect repellent and antiseptic cream.
8. When crossing a road, direct the group where to cross and remind them that as responsible adults to take care when crossing – DO NOT TELL THEM WHEN TO CROSS.
9. **Should any person on a club walk become unable to continue walking for whatever reason, the walk leader must not leave that person on their own. At least one other member of the group must remain with the person and have the use of a mobile phone for contact purposes. Arrangements must be made to get the person safely back, which may include getting professional help.**

After the Walk

1. **Walk Leaders should report any accident or incident occurring on their walk, that they think should be brought to the attention of the club, to any member of the Committee at the earliest possible opportunity.**
2. Report any difficulties on the footpath/stiles to the secretary and/or the relevant County Council Footpaths Officer.

Further help and advice on planning and leading a walk is available from any committee member or by sending an email to: walking@solihull-pathfinders.club