

# Ramblers Wellbeing Walks, Easy Access and Easy walks

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.

What are the risks or hazards?	What could happen and who could be harmed?	How we manage the risks
<b>Lack of confidence and/or skill</b>	<p>Leaders are stressed and overwhelmed</p> <p>Walkers are exposed to unnecessary risks</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• All new walk leaders complete introductory training and make the most of opportunities to develop their skills</li> <li>• Peer support available from more experienced leaders</li> <li>• Leaders only lead within their capabilities</li> </ul>
<b>Too many people walking in the group</b>	<p>Leaders are stressed and overwhelmed</p> <p>Walkers are exposed to unnecessary risks</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Leaders refer to recommended ratios and manage group size depending on the specific circumstances</li> <li>• Identify additional helpers (e.g. walk assistant, co-leader or backmarker) for large groups</li> <li>• Advertise any limits on group size (and booking information, if needed) in advance</li> <li>• Where needed, limit invitations to people with a specific shared experience (e.g. women-only walks, cancer support groups)</li> </ul>
<b>Walkers act recklessly</b>	<p>Walkers put themselves and others at risk</p> <p>Leaders are stressed and overwhelmed</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Share information with walkers in advance to establish clear expectations and responsibilities</li> <li>• Give a walk briefing before setting off, to share your plan and expectations</li> <li>• Communicate with walkers throughout the walk</li> </ul>
<b>Weather</b>	<p>Walkers are exposed to extreme cold, heat, or wet</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Check the weather before the walk</li> <li>• Let people know what to wear and what to bring</li> <li>• Make contingency plans</li> <li>• Set an appropriate pace and take breaks as needed</li> <li>• Stay alert to changing conditions and adjust plans accordingly</li> </ul>

## Ramblers Wellbeing Walks, Easy Access and Easy walks continued.

What are the risks or hazards?	What could happen and who could be harmed?	How we manage the risks
<b>Getting lost</b>	Walkers get lost	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Where possible, recce the route a week or so in advance – or carefully plan with good local knowledge, guidebooks and/or maps</li> <li>Leaders are familiar with the route and contingency plans in case changes are needed</li> </ul>
	Walkers are exposed to extreme cold, heat or wet	
<b>Terrain</b>	Walkers trip or fall, resulting in injury	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Leaders complete training on Preventing &amp; Managing Incidents</li> <li>Check for muddy/slippy/steep sections when planning</li> <li>Advise walkers of terrain and suitable footwear in advance</li> <li>Make contingency plans, to draw on if needed</li> <li>Zig-zag up/down any steep sections</li> <li>Offer reassurance to nervous walkers &amp; take adequate breaks</li> <li>Adjust plans on the walk if needed</li> </ul>
<b>Unsafe/unstable geographic features or obstacles</b> (e.g., water, tides, rock fall, overhangs, and fallen trees)	Walkers trip or fall, resulting in injury	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Follow any local warnings or signs and advise walkers to keep away from sheer drops/edges</li> <li>Check paths are suitable for a group to use safely and make changes if necessary</li> <li>Make contingency plans to deal with unexpected features and obstacles</li> <li>Avoid crossing any significant water features – use bridges or other recognised water crossing points</li> <li>Check the tide times</li> </ul>
	Walkers get into difficulty and drown	
<b>Livestock</b>	Walkers are at risk of injury from livestock	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>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)</li> <li>Follow the Countryside Code (England &amp; Wales) and Scottish Outdoor Access Code (Scotland)</li> <li>Leave gates and property as you find them</li> </ul>
	Property is damaged	
	The wider public are at risk of injury from escaped livestock	

## Ramblers Wellbeing Walks, Easy Access and Easy walks continued.

What are the risks or hazards?	What could happen and who could be harmed?	How we manage the risks
<b>Roads</b>	Walkers are at risk of road traffic accident	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Maintain single file on any road sections without footpath/pavement</li> <li>• Plan route to avoid busy roads where possible</li> <li>• Check for suitable crossing places</li> </ul>
	Other road users are at risk of accident	
<b>Losing walkers</b>	Walkers could get left behind/lost	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Leader knows who is on the walk – asking for names and emergency contact details</li> <li>• Regular headcounts and communication with the group</li> <li>• Appoint a backmarker</li> <li>• Communicate with group throughout the walk</li> </ul>
<b>Accident or medical emergency</b>	Walkers require first aid or medical attention	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Leader knows who is on the walk – asking for names and emergency contact details</li> <li>• Ask walkers to complete and carry an In Case of Emergency (ICE) card</li> <li>• Leaders complete training on Preventing &amp; Managing Incidents</li> <li>• Know how to contact the emergency services</li> <li>• Ensure mobile phone is fully charged, and consider carrying a power bank</li> <li>• Carry a first aid kit – and extra supplies/layers to keep people comfortable while waiting for help to arrive</li> <li>• Ensure appropriate first aid awareness and skills amongst the group</li> </ul>
<b>Walkers with specific health conditions/needs</b>	Leaders are stressed and walkers are exposed to unnecessary risks	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ask walkers to get in touch in advance to find out more about the walk and whether it is suitable</li> <li>• Explain that leaders cannot provide specialist support for individuals with specific health conditions/needs</li> <li>• Ask a carer, family member or friend to accompany the walker if appropriate</li> <li>• Work in partnership with other specialist services/organisations to provide guidance</li> <li>• Create a safe, private space at the start of the walk for anyone to share any additional information they would like to</li> <li>• Ask walkers to complete and carry an In Case of Emergency (ICE) card</li> </ul>

## Leisurely and Moderate walks

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.

What are the risks or hazards?	What could happen and who could be harmed?	How we manage the risks
<b>Lack of confidence and/or skill</b>	Leaders are stressed and overwhelmed	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>All new walk leaders complete introductory training and make the most of opportunities to develop their skills</li> <li>Peer support available from more experienced leaders</li> <li>Leaders only lead within their capabilities</li> </ul>
	Walkers are exposed to unnecessary risks	
<b>Too many people walking in the group</b>	Leaders are stressed and overwhelmed	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Leaders refer to recommended ratios and manage group size depending on the specific circumstances</li> <li>Identify additional helpers (e.g. walk assistant, co-leader or backmarker) for large groups</li> <li>Advertise any limits on group size (and booking information, if needed) in advance</li> </ul>
	Walkers are exposed to unnecessary risks	
<b>Walkers act recklessly</b>	Walkers put themselves and others at risk	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Share information with walkers in advance to establish clear expectations and responsibilities</li> <li>Give a walk briefing before setting off, to share your plan and expectations</li> <li>Communicate with walkers throughout the walk</li> </ul>
	Leaders are stressed and overwhelmed	
<b>Weather</b>	Walkers are exposed to extreme cold, heat, or wet	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Check the weather before the walk</li> <li>Let people know what to wear and what to bring</li> <li>Make contingency plans</li> <li>Set an appropriate pace and take breaks as needed</li> <li>Stay alert to changing conditions and adjust plans accordingly</li> </ul>

## Leisurely and Moderate walks continued.

What are the risks or hazards?	What could happen and who could be harmed?	How we manage the risks
<b>Getting lost</b>	Walkers get lost	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Where possible, recce the route a week or so in advance – or carefully plan with good local knowledge, guidebooks and/or maps</li> <li>• Leaders are familiar with the route and contingency plans in case changes are needed</li> <li>• Ensure appropriate navigation skills in the group for the walk and possible conditions</li> <li>• Pre-register phone with 999 emergency text service</li> <li>• Know the hours of dusk and darkness, and plan accordingly</li> <li>• Carry relevant kit – for example a whistle, headtorch and emergency shelter for more remote walks</li> <li>• On more remote walks, complete a Route Card in advance and leave a copy with a designated Emergency Point of Contact (EPOC) – “late back procedure” should be implemented by the EPOC if needed</li> </ul>
	Walkers are exposed to extreme cold, heat or wet	
	There is a communications blackout	
	Walkers run low on food/drink supplies	
<b>Terrain</b>	Walkers trip or fall, resulting in injury	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Leaders complete training on Preventing &amp; Managing Incidents</li> <li>• Check for muddy/slippery/steep sections when planning</li> <li>• Advise walkers of terrain and suitable footwear in advance</li> <li>• Make contingency plans, to draw on if needed in response to the group &amp; conditions</li> <li>• Zigzag up/down any steep sections – highlight benefits of walking poles</li> <li>• Offer reassurance to nervous walkers &amp; take adequate breaks</li> <li>• Adjust plans on the walk if needed</li> </ul>
<b>Unsafe/unstable geographic features or obstacles</b> (e.g., water, tides, rock fall, overhangs, and fallen trees)	Walkers trip or fall, resulting in injury	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Follow any local warnings or signs and advise walkers to keep away from sheer drops/edges</li> <li>• Check paths are suitable for a group to use safely and make changes if necessary</li> <li>• Make contingency plans to deal with unexpected features and obstacles</li> <li>• Avoid crossing any significant water features – use bridges or other recognised water crossing points</li> <li>• Check the tide times</li> </ul>
	Walkers get into difficulty and drown	

## Leisurely and Moderate walks continued.

What are the risks or hazards?	What could happen and who could be harmed?	How we manage the risks
<b>Livestock</b>	Walkers are at risk of injury from livestock	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 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)</li> <li>• Follow the Countryside Code (England &amp; Wales) and Scottish Outdoor Access Code (Scotland)</li> <li>• Leave gates and property as you find them</li> </ul>
	Property is damaged	
	The wider public are at risk of injury from escaped livestock	
<b>Roads</b>	Walkers are at risk of road traffic accident	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Maintain single file on any road sections without footpath/pavement</li> <li>• Plan route to avoid busy roads where possible</li> <li>• Check for suitable crossing places</li> </ul>
	Other road users are at risk of accident	
<b>Roads (driving)</b>	Road traffic accident puts walkers and other road users at risk of injury	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Remind walkers that the drive to/from the walk is often the riskiest part of the day</li> <li>• Remind drivers to take care, take adequate rests on longer journeys and maintain fluid/blood sugar levels at the end of the day</li> </ul>
<b>Losing walkers</b>	Walkers could get left behind/lost	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Leader knows who is on the walk – asking for names and emergency contact details</li> <li>• Regular headcounts and communication with the group</li> <li>• Appoint a backmarker</li> <li>• Communicate with group throughout the walk</li> </ul>
<b>Accident or medical emergency</b>	Walkers require first aid or medical attention	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Leader knows who is on the walk – asking for names and emergency contact details</li> <li>• Ask walkers to complete and carry an In Case of Emergency (ICE) card</li> <li>• Leaders complete training on Preventing &amp; Managing Incidents</li> <li>• Know how to contact the emergency services</li> <li>• Ensure mobile phone is fully charged, and consider carrying a power bank</li> <li>• Carry a first aid kit – and extra supplies/layers to keep people warm and comfortable while waiting for help to arrive</li> <li>• Ensure appropriate first aid awareness and skills amongst the group</li> </ul>

## Strenuous and Technical walks

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.

What are the risks or hazards?	What could happen and who could be harmed?	How we manage the risks
<b>Lack of confidence and/or skill</b>	Leaders are stressed and overwhelmed	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>All new walk leaders complete introductory training and make the most of opportunities to develop their skills</li> <li>Leaders have additional skills for the conditions (e.g. advanced navigation, winter mountain skills, avalanche awareness)</li> <li>Peer support available from more experienced leaders</li> <li>Leaders only lead within their capabilities</li> </ul>
	Walkers are exposed to unnecessary risks	
<b>Too many people walking in the group</b>	Leaders are stressed and overwhelmed	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Leaders refer to recommended ratios and manage group size depending on the specific circumstances</li> <li>Identify additional helpers (e.g. walk assistant, co-leader or backmarker) for large groups</li> <li>Advertise any limits on group size (and booking information, if needed) in advance</li> </ul>
	Walkers are exposed to unnecessary risks	
<b>Walkers act recklessly</b>	Walkers put themselves and others at risk	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Share information with walkers in advance to establish clear expectations and responsibilities</li> <li>Give a walk briefing before setting off, to share your plan and expectations</li> <li>Communicate with walkers throughout the walk</li> </ul>
	Leaders are stressed and overwhelmed	
<b>Weather</b>	Walkers are exposed to extreme cold, heat, or wet	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Check the weather before the walk</li> <li>If relevant, check the avalanche forecast before the walk</li> <li>Let people know what to wear and what to bring</li> <li>Make contingency plans</li> <li>Set an appropriate pace and take breaks as needed</li> <li>Stay alert to changing conditions, extremes of temperature and adjust plans accordingly</li> </ul>

## Strenuous and Technical walks continued.

What are the risks or hazards?	What could happen and who could be harmed?	How we manage the risks
<b>Getting lost</b>	Walkers get lost	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Where possible, recce the route a week or so in advance – or carefully plan with good local knowledge, guidebooks and/or maps</li> <li>• Leaders are familiar with the route and contingency plans in case changes are needed</li> <li>• Ensure appropriate navigation skills in the group for the walk and possible conditions</li> <li>• Pre-register phone with 999 emergency text service</li> <li>• Know the hours of dusk and darkness, and plan accordingly</li> <li>• Carry relevant kit – for example a whistle, headtorch and emergency shelter for more remote walks</li> <li>• On more remote walks, complete a Route Card in advance and leave a copy with a designated Emergency Point of Contact (EPOC) – “late back procedure” should be implemented by the EPOC if needed</li> </ul>
	Walkers are exposed to extreme cold, heat or wet	
	There is a communications blackout	
	Walkers run low on food/drink supplies	
<b>Terrain</b>	Walkers trip or fall, resulting in injury	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Leaders complete training on Preventing &amp; Managing Incidents</li> <li>• Check for muddy/slippery/steep sections when planning</li> <li>• Advise walkers of terrain and suitable footwear in advance</li> <li>• Make contingency plans, to draw on if needed in response to the group &amp; conditions</li> <li>• Zigzag up/down any steep sections – highlight benefits of walking poles</li> <li>• Offer reassurance to nervous walkers &amp; take adequate breaks</li> <li>• Remain the group to stay hydrated and carry high-energy snacks</li> <li>• Adjust plans on the walk if needed</li> </ul>
<b>Unsafe/unstable geographic features or obstacles</b> (e.g., water, tides, rock fall, overhangs, and fallen trees)	Walkers trip or fall, resulting in injury	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Follow any local warnings or signs and advise walkers to keep away from sheer drops/edges</li> <li>• Check paths are suitable for a group to use safely and make changes if necessary</li> <li>• Make contingency plans to deal with unexpected features and obstacles</li> <li>• Ensure appropriate navigation skills in the group to re-route and navigate around any challenging or unexpected features</li> <li>• Avoid crossing any significant water features – use bridges or other recognised water crossing points</li> <li>• Check the tide times</li> </ul>
	Walkers get into difficulty and drown	



## Strenuous and Technical walks continued.

What are the risks or hazards?	What could happen and who could be harmed?	How we manage the risks
<b>Livestock</b>	Walkers are at risk of injury from livestock	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 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)</li> <li>• Follow the Countryside Code (England &amp; Wales) and Scottish Outdoor Access Code (Scotland)</li> <li>• Leave gates and property as you find them</li> </ul>
	Property is damaged	
	The wider public are at risk of injury from escaped livestock	
<b>Roads</b>	Walkers are at risk of road traffic accident	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Maintain single file on any road sections without footpath/pavement</li> <li>• Plan route to avoid busy roads where possible</li> <li>• Check for suitable crossing places</li> </ul>
	Other road users are at risk of accident	
<b>Roads (driving)</b>	Road traffic accident puts walkers and other road users at risk of injury	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Remind walkers that the drive to/from the walk is often the riskiest part of the day</li> <li>• Remind drivers to take care, take adequate rests on longer journeys and maintain fluid/blood sugar levels at the end of the day</li> </ul>
<b>Losing walkers</b>	Walkers could get left behind/lost	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Leader knows who is on the walk – asking for names and emergency contact details</li> <li>• Regular headcounts and communication with the group</li> <li>• Appoint a backmarker</li> <li>• Communicate with group throughout the walk</li> </ul>
<b>Accident or medical emergency</b>	Walkers require first aid or medical attention	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Leader knows who is on the walk – asking for names and emergency contact details</li> <li>• Ask walkers to complete and carry an In Case of Emergency (ICE) card</li> <li>• Leaders complete training on Preventing &amp; Managing Incidents</li> <li>• Know how to contact the emergency services</li> <li>• Ensure mobile phone is fully charged, and consider carrying a power bank</li> <li>• Have a back-up plan for areas without mobile phone signal (emergency beacon/GPS)</li> <li>• Carry a first aid kit – and extra supplies/layers to keep people warm and comfortable while waiting for help to arrive</li> <li>• Ensure appropriate first aid awareness and skills amongst the group</li> </ul>