

## **PD7**

### **WALKING GROUPS POLICY**

#### **Notice to all Walkers**

Walk leaders plan and reconnoitre the route to be taken. It is important that all walkers adhere to the planned walk. Walkers should not wander off the route, make detours, leave before the finish etc. There will be exceptions as in the case of an emergency. At all times walkers should be able to see the leader in front and be ahead of the back marker.

These few obvious rules will make walks more enjoyable for everyone.

#### **SHORT WALKS**

These walks set out at 10.15 a.m. from the rear of Sainsbury's on the 1<sup>st</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> Mondays in the month. They will cover a distance of approximately two miles or one hour's duration. There will be no steep hills or stiles.

#### **STROLLERS**

Strolls depart at 10.30 a.m. on the first Tuesday of the month from an eating establishment, generally a pub, within a ten mile radius of Bishop's Stortford. They will cover a distance of approximately two miles or 1½ hour's duration. There will be no steep hills or stiles and would suit the less mobile members.

#### **WEDNESDAY WALKING GROUP**

Walks are every Wednesday departing at 10.30 a.m. from Silver Leys, except the second Wednesday in the month. This is when an Amble (walk followed by a pub lunch) takes place setting out from a venue no more than approximately 45 minutes travelling time away from Bishop's Stortford. This is the aim but there may be the occasional exception to this. Walks do not take place the two Wednesdays over the Christmas/New Year period and a walk is substituted for an Amble the second week in January.

Most walks will be between four and five miles long but occasionally extended walks take place and these will cover a distance of approximately five to six miles. Every effort will be made to ensure that walkers are given adequate notice should a longer walk be scheduled to take place (the Walk No is preceded by an E on the list). On occasions the terrain can include steep hills and stiles.

#### **MONTHLY BRISK WALK**

The walks (on the 1st Friday of the month) are between 9 and 11 miles, where possible on footpaths and tracks, and start within a radius of 15 miles or so of Bishop's Stortford. They start at 9.30 a.m. and, with a break for coffee, finish at a pub in time for a pre-ordered lunch. The group also has an annual short break away at an H.F. Guest House.

#### **LONDON WALKING GROUPS**

Walks organised by U3A groups automatically have public liability insurance cover, provided the walkers are U3A members. However, this is not a personal accident insurance and all members must be aware they walk at their own risk. The person responsible for their safety on a walk is the individual.

U3A walking groups are not required to have trained first aiders and the insurance advice is to contact the emergency services immediately in the event of a serious incident, even if there happens to be a member present who has attended a first aid course. A Bishop's Stortford U3A Accident Form (PD8) needs to be completed as soon as possible both by the injured party and the Group leader.

Should any member have any underlying health problems that may affect them during a walk or any medication that they may need, they should ensure that the medication is brought with them and that either the walk leader or a trusted companion knows what to do in the event of any problem.

It is important to carry adequate drinks, especially in the warmer weather, to replenish body fluids as it is easy to become dehydrated without realising it.

Members are requested to carry their Membership Cards as these will have ICE contact numbers printed on the back.

Members of all the Walking Groups are encouraged to plan and lead the walks. In the case of the Wednesday Walking Group walks have already been mapped out and leaders will be given a copy of the directions and a map, but Ambles are left to the leaders to plan.

Members are requested to walk behind the leader and to stay with the group at all times.

A back-marker should be assigned by the leader and their responsibility will be to ensure that gates are closed and that no one gets left behind. However, it is the leader's responsibility to ensure that contact is not lost with the rear of the party through a gap opening up in the middle.

When walking along lanes which have no pavements walkers should keep well into the side of the road facing oncoming traffic.

On occasions when car-sharing to a venue is required, costs should be shared with the driver in line with Policy Document PD4.

Group Leaders do not arrange lifts. It is the responsibility of the member requiring the lift to make his/her own arrangements.

***Despite all the above, the objective of a U3A walking group is to enjoy the walking, socialising and, on some occasions, a few lunches!***