

## Leek U3A Walking Group

### Risk Assessment Guide

General Distance Scale	General Difficulty Grade (Easy, Moderate or Challenging)	Specific Difficulties		
< 5ml (<8km)	<b>E</b>	Relatively flat, ascent < 50m/164ft.	Ascent => 50m/164ft. < 150m/492ft.	Ascent => 150m/492ft. <300m/984ft.
		Well surfaced footpaths, canal towpaths, tracks including cycleways.	Possibly some uneven/unsurfaced footpaths/tracks.	Undulating terrain i.e. rising and falling constantly.
		Crossing mainly open fields.	Mainly easy stiles/gates.	Some rough or uneven footpaths/tracks.
		Few or no stiles.	Crossing mainly open fields, possibility of livestock.	Frequent easy stiles/gates or a few difficult stiles/gates.
	Risk/Difficulty	<b>E1</b>	<b>E2</b>	<b>E3</b>
≥5ml and < 8ml (≥ 8km and <12.8km)	<b>M</b>	Ascent => 50m/164ft. < 150m/492ft.	Ascent => 150m/492ft. <300m/984ft.	Ascent => 300m/984ft. < 500m/1640ft.
		Possibly some uneven/unsurfaced footpaths/tracks.	Undulating terrain i.e. rising and falling constantly. Crossing mainly open fields, possibility of livestock.	Some open moorland terrain.
		Crossing mainly open fields, possibility of livestock.	Some rough or uneven footpaths/tracks.	Some rough or indistinct footpaths.
		Frequent easy stiles/gates or a few difficult stiles/gates.	Some awkward stiles/gates that are difficult to negotiate.	Many awkward stiles/gates that are difficult to negotiate.
	Risk/Difficulty	<b>M2</b>	<b>M3</b>	<b>M4</b>
≥8ml (≥12.8km)	<b>C</b>	Ascent => 150m/492ft. <300m/984ft.	Ascent => 300m/984ft. < 500m/1640ft.	Ascent => 500m/1640ft.
		Undulating terrain i.e. rising and falling constantly. Crossing open fields, possibility of livestock.	Undulating terrain i.e. rising and falling constantly, with some open moorland terrain.	Featureless, open moorland, karst type or rough mountainous terrain.
		Some open moorland terrain.	Mostly rough or indistinct footpaths.	Considerable sections of wetland or boggy conditions underfoot, difficult fords or stream crossings in wet or extreme weather.
		Some awkward stiles/gates that are difficult to negotiate.	Many awkward stiles/gates that are difficult to negotiate.	Mostly rough or indistinct footpaths. Steep ascents which may involve some scrambling.
	Risk/Difficulty	<b>C3</b>	<b>C4</b>	<b>C5</b>

The aim of this table is to give walk leaders some means of indicating the degree of difficulty (i.e. the most awkward obstacle) walkers will encounter on a route in order that participants can determine whether a walk is suitable for their abilities. Routes may be graded according to distance and general difficulty scale: Easy, Moderate or Challenging plus a single numerical value relating to the highest degree of difficulty or obstacle likely to be encountered in a range 1-5. Scales are generally grouped between E1-E3, M2-M4 or C3-C5 but if a short or medium distance route contains one or more exceptional hazards, e.g. over 500m of climbing, then it may be graded accordingly e.g. M5. See examples below. All difficulties are subjective and are for general guidance but should form part of a Risk Assessment for any walk.

#### Examples:

4 mile (6.5km) route along well surfaced footpaths, canal towpaths, tracks including cycleways. Crossing mainly open fields.	<b>4.0m/E1</b>
5 mile (8km) route crossing some open moorland terrain.	<b>5.0m/M4</b>
5.5 mile (8.8km) route crossing mainly open fields, possibility of livestock.	<b>5.5m/M2</b>
6.5 mile (10.5km) route with ascent => 500m/1640ft. regardless of other terrain.	<b>6.5m/C5</b>
8 mile (12.8km) route with ascent => 150m/492ft. <300m/984ft. and with some rough or uneven footpaths/tracks.	<b>8.0m/C3</b>
10.5 mile (16.8km) route with ascent => 500m/1640ft. but with no other serious obstacles	<b>10.5m/C5</b>