

MARCH



Guidelines for Walking Groups

1. Introduction. We have three different Walking Groups entitled, Health Walks, Strollers and the Walking Group. The following guidelines will apply to all of them.

2. The Walk Leader. Any member can lead a walk and may not necessarily be the Group Leader who must ensure that the Walk Leader is conversant with these guidelines. The Walk Leader must know the intended route and any hazards that may be encountered on it.

- a. Know which members are taking part and be satisfied they are fit enough to complete it, are carrying Next of Kin data and any relevant medical Information.
- b. Fully brief members before setting off including distance to be walked, duration, lunch/break arrangements, availability of toilets and any points of interest or wildlife to be expected and hazards that may be encountered.
- c. Ensure that members have good footwear and are dressed appropriately.
- d. Carry a small, first aid kit and water.
- e. Have a mobile telephone (or access to one) and know how to contact the emergency services.
- f. Have details and contact information for any planned stops for lunch.
- g. Be aware of the weather forecast for the day and during the walk check the group is still together.

3. Longer Walks. In the Stroller and Walker groups, Walk Leaders should apply all of the previous section with the addition of the following. Longer Walks occur away from March, usually have a cross country element and range between three and seven or more miles when the group will spread out over several hundred yards.

- a. Reconnoitre the route if you haven't done it previously or for some time. Note any difficult terrain, areas likely to flood or become dangerous when wet and hazards like stiles, steeper sections and when walking on or crossing busy roads, etc. and include in your initial briefing.
- b. On roads, without a footpath, pay attention to the Highway Code by facing oncoming traffic and walking in single file.
- c. Appoint a "Fortrekker" (usually the Walk Leader) and a "Tail end Charlie", both of whom must be able to communicate by mobile telephone and should wear a High Visibility Jacket. Other members may wear similar if they wish.
- d. Consider using the [what3words app](#). Ideal for use in an emergency, when postcodes are not available. The application can be downloaded to a smart phone.