

Mawdesley and Neighbouring Villages u3a

Walking Group Risk Assessment

We have been advised by the Third Age Trust that a risk assessment must be completed for all walks to help understand the risks and any steps you need to take to stay safe before leading a group walk.

Please complete a copy for every walk and pass it back to the walking table after the walk.

Walk Leader		Date of walk	
u3a group:	Walking Group	Date of risk assessment	
		Date of recce	

Possible hazards	Who might be harmed and how?	Ways to control the risk	Action taken? (click on the box to tick)
Bad weather (including extreme temperatures)	Walkers – risk of illness and injury, risk of the group being stranded	Check the weather forecast and postpone/cancel if necessary. Advise walkers to bring suitable clothing and items for the conditions.	<input type="checkbox"/>
		Make a note of 'escape routes' on the recce.	<input type="checkbox"/>
		Take a register of all walkers and ensure you have an emergency number for everyone on the walk.	<input type="checkbox"/>
		Ensure that someone knows when you are due back.	<input type="checkbox"/>
		Take a first aid kit on the walk (can be borrowed from the walking table)	<input type="checkbox"/>
		For strenuous and long walks where there may not be a mobile signal take the safety beacon (can be borrowed from the walking table)	<input type="checkbox"/>
Busy roads	Walkers – risk of vehicle collisions	Avoid routes along busy roads and/or check for suitable crossing places on the recce.	<input type="checkbox"/>
		Advise walkers to walk in single file on road sections.	<input type="checkbox"/>
Steep, slippery or muddy sections. Number of stiles	Walkers – risk of trips/slips	Check for muddy/slippy sections on the recce and adapt the route if necessary.	<input type="checkbox"/>
		Advise walkers to bring suitable footwear for the conditions.	<input type="checkbox"/>
		Ensure that the overview of the walk – the terrain, number of stiles, muddy sections and length of the walk is on the walk sheet.	<input type="checkbox"/>
Livestock	Walkers – risk of injury Risk of property damage if livestock escape	Cross fields with livestock calmly and quietly, keeping the group together. Be prepared to divert around livestock if necessary.	<input type="checkbox"/>
		Follow the Countryside Code (England & Wales) and Access Code (Scotland). Leave gates and property as you find them.	<input type="checkbox"/>

Possible hazards	Who might be harmed and how?	Ways to control the risk	Action taken? (click on the box to tick)
Cliffs or sheer drops	Walkers – risk of falls	Check paths are suitable for a group to use safely and make changes if necessary.	<input type="checkbox"/>
<i>(Please add more lines if needed)</i>			

How to carry out a risk assessment

- Use the template to assess whether your walk is safe to go ahead.
- We've included suggestions for the ways to control the risks – **you do not need to tick every box and some such as advice to walkers to wear appropriate clothing and provide an emergency contact number are on the walk sheet and guidance provided to all walking group members.** The important thing is to identify the potential hazards and note the actions you will take to reduce the risk.
- It is important to carry out a risk assessment **before** the walk takes place. You should start filling it out when planning your walk, and update it with any extra hazards that you notice on your recce and finalise it after the walk.
- Think about the different types of hazards and risks. We've included some common examples, but think carefully about your own walk in case anything needs adding.

Examples of other risks might include:

- Flooded paths, after heavy rain

This isn't an exhaustive list, so think carefully about any specific risks you may encounter on your walk.

- Next, consider the steps you can take to minimise the risk. Remember that this may sometimes mean changing your original plan. For example:
 - I will recce the route again to check whether the paths are flooded, and plan an alternative if necessary
 - I will read the local warning signs on my recce and advise walkers about the risks in my welcome briefing