

Wigtownshire U3A

Sharing Leisure and Learning Activities

Safety on U3A walks

Walking with a group is one of the most popular and safest forms of physical exercise. However, in view of the age group of our walkers, the Group Facilitator/Walk Leaders should be aware of possible Health and Safety issues and how to deal with incidents.

Planning and Preparation

The Group Facilitator does not have to be the Walk Leader. The Walk Leader role can be shared amongst the group.

The attached U3A Walk Leader Risk Assessment Checklist should be completed prior to any walk. This includes information for walkers.

The route of each walk should be planned prior to the walk. The Walk Leader/Facilitator should have completed the walk during the planning stage. When selecting the route think carefully about the following: -

- Are the start and finish points safe for the group to congregate?
- Are footpaths available? Road traffic can pose a hazard
- Does the length of the walk unduly tax the capability and experiences of the group?
- Are there alternative routes should the weather conditions deteriorate?

All members should be made aware of the route before the day of the walk.

The Walk Leader should warn members of any possible hazards on the walk.

The Walk Leader/Group Facilitator does not need First Aid training, but it would be sensible to carry a basic First Aid kit for minor problems.

In the event of a serious problem the emergency services must be contacted immediately.

The Walk Leader /Group Facilitator must know how many members are on the walk.

The Group Facilitator should ensure all walk members carry emergency contact details.

All walkers should have the mobile number of either the Walk Leader or Group Facilitator.

The Walk Leader/Group Facilitator should have a camera (or mobile phone camera) and notepad to record any unexpected hazards, obstacles or incidents.

General information

Walks organised by U3A groups are automatically covered by public liability insurance, provided the walkers are U3A members. However, this is not personal accident insurance and all members must be aware that they walk at their own risk.

Should any member have an underlying health problem that may affect them during the walk or any medication that they may need, they should make sure they have the medication with them and ensure that either the Walk Leader or a trusted companion knows what to do in the event of any problem.

Members are asked to carry an emergency contact name and telephone number which could be used should the need arise.

Members should have the mobile phone number of the Walk Leader/Group Facilitator prior to any walk.

Members should carry adequate drinks, especially in warmer weather, as it is easy to become dehydrated without realising it.

Members should be asked to stay with the group at all times.

In the event of any incident/accident the Group Facilitator should take notes and complete the attached Incident Report Form as soon as possible after the walk in case of a claim being made. A Committee member can be asked to help with this.

Diane Collins
Groups Coordinator
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