



Local Walk Leaders' Advice Sheet

This sheet is intended to give you some small tips about leading a safe and enjoyable Local Walk. Read them in the week leading up to your trip---not when you're on the train!

You should take with you:

- First Aid Kit
- Map
- Compass
- Train / Bus Times
- Money for train/bus fares and/or pub visit (if needed)

You might wish to take the following extras for use in emergencies:

- Spare waterproof / fleece / gloves / hat
- Spare sun-hat / sun cream
- A torch
- Mobile Phone
- Extra Water
- Extra food - e.g. chocolate bar
- Spare money - for emergencies
- Insect repellent

Safety:

Before the walk, you should study the map and think about any possible dangers:

- If possible, plan to avoid busy roads. Where it is not possible to avoid the road, use pavements if available, otherwise walk in single file on the right-hand side of the road, facing on-coming traffic. It may be appropriate to cross the road before approaching a corner where drivers may not see you far enough in advance. Cross roads together, at the same time, especially on busy roads, using crossing aids if they are available.
- Avoid crossing railways at unprotected level crossings where a reasonable alternative is available; if it is unavoidable then the leader should open the gates on both sides of the crossing before allowing the group to cross. All gates should be shut again after crossing.
- Get a weather forecast for the day of your walk---pay special attention to extreme weather, for example snow, lightning, or heavy winds. See how this may affect your route and make back-up plans for sections which may be inappropriate---for example avoiding exposed areas in lightning, and river banks in heavy rain/flooding conditions.
- If you think somebody is inadequately prepared for the walk, explain this to them and discuss possible problems. If necessary, you can refuse to lead somebody who you think is inadequately prepared.
- On hot days, take some extra water in case somebody doesn't have enough, or allow plenty of stops along the way for people to buy more liquid. Take some sun cream for participants who forget their own.
- On cold days, bring some extra clothing (e.g. an extra layer, hat and gloves) that you can lend to participants if necessary. You don't have to equip the whole group, but having a spare may be useful!
- Be aware of possible falls, off cliffs, high river banks, steep hills, etc and make your participants aware of such dangers.
- Check the contents of the first aid kit, and make yourself aware of the intended usage of each item, along with scenarios where they may be necessary.
- For areas in which your route strays far from 'civilization', consider escape routes you may take in case of an accident. For example, find routes to the nearest phone box, or the nearest road if necessary.
- Go through the walk in your mind---be aware of places where you might easily get lost / take a wrong turning, etc so that you are aware of these problems when you come to them.
- Before starting your walk, check that your participants have no health problems that you should know about--for example, asthma or diabetes.
- Make sure you know how many people are in your group! Count at regular intervals to ensure that you don't



leave anyone behind!

- **Please report any incident that occurred on the walk (e.g. injury, use of first aid, etc.) to the Trip and Safety Coordinator (email trip.safety@ouwc.org)**



Enjoyment:

- Take a look on the internet, or other sources of information to find out a little about the area which you are visiting. Participants, especially those who don't know the UK well, may be interested to know about the history of the area, or the geology, or about the villages you are walking through.
- Check the train/bus times yourself---see which changes you need to make, and check the engineering works / road works too – see if there's a possibility that you may be delayed
- Before you start walking, show the participants the map and the intended route, point out the highlights of the walk, and discuss the terrain. That way there are no surprises!
- If you've planned for a pub lunch, see if the pub has a website and find out the type of food it sells, and the serving times.
- Encourage participants to come to the club's social events, to share photos or to discuss other walking-related matters; encourage them to lead their own trips or to use the walking-general e-mail list to get in touch with other club members. Encourage them to join the committee, or take the minibus course!
- Take along your termcard to promote other OUWC events and to explain a little about how the club is run.

Leader criteria:

- At the beginning of Trinity Term 2011, OUWC committee decided to change the criteria for local walk leaders, to the effect that **local walk leaders now need to have been on a local walk OR been on a club trip in the past**. Previously, the requirement was to have previously been on a local walk. The rationale for this change was to encourage more people to lead local walks.

After your walk, please return OUWC equipment, along with the report form to the Archivist as soon as possible.