

ULVERSTON WALKING FESTIVAL - INSTRUCTIONS FOR WALK LEADERS – SEPTEMBER 2021

IMPORTANT – A condition of our public liability insurance is that a written risk assessment is completed for each activity in the Festival. Below is a generic risk assessment for all walks. Lead leaders are required to walk and assess their own walk, letting Martin and their co-leaders know by email of any additional risks not included in the generic assessment and how they are mitigating their impact.

While many of the generic risks could happen anywhere some will be location specific, which will need reporting. [For example: Risk – crossing A590. Mitigating Actions – group brought together and warned of need for care; responsible adult wearing hi-viz jacket at each side of group; crossing supervised. Risk – Stream crossing at Grid Mitigating Actions – group warned, individuals helped or offered a walking pole, if water high alternative crossing found.]

We are now insured as a Group affiliated to The Ramblers with public Liability cover of £5,000,000. All those attending a walk, who sign in, are counted as members for the duration of their walk and are therefore also covered under our insurance, in case, for instance one walker in attempting to help another actually caused an injury. This has been unclear in the past. The Registration Form has been changed to reflect this. (Further details under 'CONSTITUTION' tab.)

Guidance on the leadership of a group is also covered below but it will vary in usefulness depending upon the walk and the leader's experience.

INSTRUCTIONS

1. As a walk leader you are responsible for your group. They may have already seen the general advice on the website, including that:

- You reserve the right to refuse any participant you consider inadequately equipped or clothed for the walk.
- You reserve the right to alter or cancel a walk if you consider that conditions might compromise safety. (That apart, the walk should be as advertised.)
- Safety notes concerning dress and weather.

2. Partly due to COVID19, one aim of this festival is to walk in smaller groups. 'Easy' walks will have 2 leaders. 'Moderate' and 'Moderate-plus' walks will have 3 leaders. The co-leaders will allow a large group to be split; or to cover an incident when it may be best for most of the group to continue the walk; or to escort a walker to a point of safety. Advice for walks including high or remote fell is a leader ratio of 1:10 (or 1:6 in bad weather – but numbers on these tend to naturally reduce). Our 3 leaders should cover this. Where a walk includes information (eg historical) co-leaders should ideally have some basic information or it may be appropriate to bring the groups together at certain points to be briefed. It may be possible for 2 groups to be led by co-leaders and the lead leader brief both groups.

ACTIONS TO BE TAKEN

3. **A Couple of Weeks before the Walk:**

- You should check your route and complete a risk assessment. A generic risk assessment is below and under the 'RISK ASSESSMENT' tab but your assessment needs to take account of any risks particular to your walk. Please email Martin and your co-leaders of any extra risks and mitigating action as described above. Examples of Additional Risks are shown on the 'RISK ASSESSMENT' tab and will be built up as reports are fed in.
- You will need a basic first aid kit and, if your walk includes any significant road sections, 2 high-visibility (high-viz) vests. The first aid kit can be very simple for those leading low risk/easy walks and please provide your own. Let me know if you require high-viz vests. One can also be useful to identify the back marker of a group. They will need to be returned fairly quickly for other walks.

- Confirm your co-Leaders. The co-leader role should not be confused with the back marker (tail-end Charlie) whose role is to make sure you don't lose anybody off the back. In most cases a co-leader will do this job but if the group has split a responsible volunteer can usually be found from the walkers.
- Remind yourself of general safety procedures recommended by Mountain Rescue on our website and on the link to LDSAMRA. Register your phone to allow you to text 999 if the signal is poor as follows:

To register: Text "register" to 999. You will receive a reply explaining the service. Respond 'yes' (again by text to 999). You will receive another text confirming registration. **To check registration:** text "register" to 999.

4. The Day before the Walk:

- Check the weather forecast as it might dictate a change of plan.
- Collect 'In Case of Emergency' (ICE) cards, high-viz vests and Registration Forms from Martin, or print your own – template under 'REGISTRATION FORM' tab.
- Note the number booked in (emailed by Martin) and consider group sizes.

5. Before the Start of the Walk:

- Confirm number attending and introduce leaders. Split the group up if numbers warrant it.
- Confirm that no one has Covid19 symptoms, has recently tested positive or is within 14 days of start of symptoms. Brief on social distancing and mask wearing (if walk enters enclosed spaces).
- Ask walkers to sign the Registration Form and to agree to their photograph being taken. If they don't agree to be photographed, care will have to be taken not to include them in any random or group pictures, which we might use for publicity. Point out that by signing-in a walker becomes a temporary member of the Group and is covered by our insurance. It will be worth taking a couple of pens with you.
- Confirm any individual medical issues (in confidence) (ie: "please speak to a leader if you have any medical issues of which we should be aware") and assess group fitness and capability by generally discussing the route, height gained, distance, duration and any hazards.
- Give single walkers an ICE card on which to identify someone who could be contacted in the event of them having an accident/illness and ask them to put it into the top pocket of their rucksack or a jacket pocket if no rucksack. This is unnecessary if walkers attend as a couple or a group of friends.
- Check that clothing appropriate to the walk and predicted weather, and refreshments, are taken.
- For 'Moderate-plus' walks, in particular, try and confirm that walkers are physically up to the walk.
- Request that anyone leaving the group for a short break inform someone, or if permanent that they inform the leader.
- If necessary ask for volunteers to take the hi-viz vests and, on any road sections, walk ahead of or behind the group. It might be useful if one of them also agreed to be 'tail-end Charlie' so that a glance back will indicate the back of the group. With a small group the co-leader can do this.
- Ask walkers to set their pace by the walker behind them, so as to maintain a coherent group and walk at the speed of the slowest walker.
- Agree who will take photographs for the post-festival meeting.

6. During the Walk:

- Remember that being the leader means more than just walking at the front! Where the route is straightforward you may be better in the middle. Consider letting a co-leader lead for periods and any reasonably experienced walker can be appointed as 'tail-end Charlie'. If you have any problems with walkers they are unlikely to be with those at the front.

- Do an occasional head-count.
- Take some photos.
- If someone wishes to leave a walk early you must be satisfied that they can do this safely and you may need to get a co-leader to accompany them to an appropriate release point.
- In town be aware of traffic, shoppers and residents and in the country follow the country code.
- In the event of an accident only administer first aid if you know what you are doing. Check whether you have a qualified first-aider in your group. Call 999 if necessary [see below]. Take details of any incident or accident, including names and addresses of those involved.

7. After the Walk:

- If there has been any incident during the walk e-mail ulverstonwalks@gmail.com for an incident form, for completion and return to Martin.
- Registration Forms should be passed to Martin at Hamilton Grove, Oubas Hill, Ulverston, LA12 7LB and **please email Martin with the number on your walk (eg 2 leaders + 10 walkers) plus any problems or comments for the future. It would be useful to know how many booked in by email.**
- If you have incurred any costs in connection with the Festival, apart from travel, these may be emailed to Martin and a decision will be made on any appropriate refund.
- Send pictures to Christine Quiggin: Christine@quiggin.org.uk. Call her if unsure how to do this: 07884 104 791.

RISK ASSESSMENT

General Description. The Festival consists of 19 walks, some with an associated interest (Cemetery, historical etc). Walk leaders must be suitably experienced for their role and will be assisted by co-leaders. The programme indicates the level of difficulty of the walk and the website gives guidance on dress, equipment and how to keep safe on the fells.

Assessment Method.

Likelihood of Occurrence (1)	Severity of Outcome (2)
1. Highly unlikely ever to occur.	1. Slight inconvenience.
2. May occur but very rarely.	2. Minor injury requiring first aid.
3. May occur rarely.	3. Medical attention required.
4. May occur from time to time.	4. Major injury leading to hospitalization.
5. Likely to occur often.	5. Fatality or serious injury leading to disability.
Risk (1) x (2)	
1-5 = Low risk – risk controlled.	
6-12 = Medium risk – further precautions required.	
13-25 = High Risk – stop activity, immediate action required.	

Typical Risks.

- Blister, twisted ankle, slip/fall on grass, minor abrasion: Likelihood = 4, Severity = 2, Risk = 8 (Medium).
- Trip over rocks or uneven ground onto hard surface, serious sprain or asthma: Likelihood = 3, Severity = 3, Risk = 9 (Medium).
- Fall leading to broken limb, angina or hypothermia (following extended wait for help): Likelihood = 2, Severity = 4, Risk = 8 (Medium).
- Heart attack or stroke: Likelihood = 1, Severity = 5, Risk = 5 (Low).

- Traffic accident: Likelihood = 1, Severity = 4 or 5, Risk = 4 or 5 (Low).
- Catching Covid19: Likelihood =3, Severity = 3, Risk 9 (Medium).

ADDITIONAL RISKS FOR INDIVIDUAL WALKS are under the 'RISK ASSESSMENT' tab.

Measures to Reduce Risks (to be implemented by walk leaders as appropriate):

- Route checked within a couple of weeks before the Festival, and risk assessment completed considering such hazards as: traffic (including bikes), uneven/wet ground, slopes, dogs, weather, streams to be crossed, and difficult stiles to be climbed.
- Warn walkers of the possible hazards on your walk.
- Keep within your experience, for the prevailing conditions, and turn back if necessary.
- Carry a map and compass, even if familiar with the route, a basic first aid kit, **torch** and fully charged mobile phone.
- On walks graded Moderate or Moderate-plus a survival bag/shelter should be carried and if poor weather is likely walkers' clothing should be assessed at the start. (Consider carrying an extra walking pole to assist someone who lacks confidence on uneven terrain.)
- Keep group together, walk within the limits of all walkers and allow the slowest to dictate the pace. (It is useful to have topics of interest to talk about while you wait for stragglers, to mask the need for the pause and allow for stragglers to get a break.)
- Point out any hazards and help walkers over difficult terrain giving special attention to children, elderly walkers and those clearly lacking confidence.
- Avoid steep slopes, especially wet grass, and cross water at recognised sites.
- If any serious medical condition is suspected (eg angina, asthma) monitor the walker regularly, take breaks and call for help (below) if condition deteriorates.
- If you need help call 999 and ask for Cumbria Police and then Mountain Rescue. Give casualty's location and nature of injury/illness. **Remain where you have a phone signal.**
- On roads keep group together, face on-coming traffic, and deploy people to front and rear to warn traffic - wearing high visibility vests.
- **Covid19:** At the start check that no one has symptoms, has tested positive or is within 14 days of the start of symptoms. Suggest walkers keep apart at least 1m and warn them when negotiating gates and styles, or at rest stops, to maintain this. If entering an enclosed space suggest that masks may be appropriate and any sanitizers offered should be used. Consider taking a group bottle of sanitizer.

IN SUMMARY

<u>Before Walk</u>	<u>Take</u>
Check route & assess risk. Report additional risks. Check weather. Confirm and brief co-leaders. Collect Hi Viz vests and ICE Cards from Martin.	1 st Aid kit Walking pole (spare) Map & compass Mobile phone (charged) Hi Viz vests Torch Shelter (Moderate/Hard walks) ICE cards Registration Forms (print your own). Pens
<u>At Start</u>	
Introduce leaders. Count group. Get Registration Form signed. Check for any medical conditions (in confidence). Brief on: Leaving the walk; setting pace on slowest walker.	Appoint Hi Viz wearers & 'tail-end Charlie'. Describe route and hazards. Check clothing and assess individuals. Remind to take food and drink.
<u>During Walk</u>	<u>After Walk</u>
Operate within experience. Take regular breaks. Keep together. Monitor walkers. Control passage over hazards (eg steep ground, stream crossing, rocks).	Confirm all back. Hand in Registration Form. Report any incidents. Email numbers & comments.

