

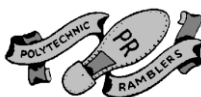
The Polytechnic Rambling Club

In association with THE UNIVERSITY OF WESTMINSTER

Founded 1885

Affiliated to the Ramblers' Association (Inner London Area)

Affiliated to HF Holidays



A GUIDE FOR LEADERS

Thank you for agreeing to lead a walk. We hope this guide will give you some useful tips on how to prepare your walk and ensure everything goes smoothly on the day. It is essential you familiarise yourself with the route. This will mean undertaking a walkover. The names and contact details of the Club Secretary and Programme Co-ordinator referred to in this guide can be found at the top of the current walks programme. The Club does not provide First Aid kits for leaders but you are encouraged to carry your own if you wish.

Choosing your walk – consider:

- **Our walks** are accessed by public transport and most start 10-11am, trains leaving London before 9am should be avoided.
- **The time of year.** Most walks range in length from 5 to 11 miles, sometimes longer in the summer and in winter 9 miles is about the maximum length due to limited daylight. Please check time of sunset and in the absence of streetlighting ensure your walk finishes before dark.
- **Location** including public transport options and journey time to the starting point of the walk
- **Terrain.** Ascents and descents.
- **The average pace of the group.** For most walks this is around 3Km (1.9 miles) / hr.
- **Whether linear or circular.**

The walkover

- Note critical navigation points, hazards and possible problems.
- Check: timings, rest and toilet points, alternative routes / options to shorten walk, mobile phone coverage.
- Identify a pub or café for lunch and ensure they welcome walkers. Locate a suitable picnic spot close by.
- Report any path or access problems to the Ramblers Association www.ramblers.org.uk/pathproblem

Walk details

Once you have planned your walk please send details to the Programme Co-ordinator including:

- Brief description including features of interest and type of walk (hilly, strenuous, leisurely pace).
- Length.

- Starting and finishing points and London station meeting point.
- Lunch arrangements.
- Train times. All train times will be checked before the programme is published. Timetable information can be found at www.nationalrail.co.uk.
- Ordnance Survey Landranger and/or Explorer map sheet no. (e.g, LR/EX 165)
- Your mobile phone number. This will not be published on the website and you can stipulate it is only for use on the day of the walk.

A few days before your walk

- Recheck transport details using www.nationalrail.co.uk as it will show revised times if there are any track works on the day. For London Underground journeys check status update on tfl.gov.uk.
- Check weather forecasts and adjust route if necessary www.metoffice.gov.uk.
- Seek advice from the Secretary or Programme coordinator as to whether to proceed with your walk in the case of extreme weather or travel disruption.
- Send any changes to published details to the Secretary who will email members and update the website.
- Confirm arrangements with the pub if necessary.

On the walk

- Do a head count before you start walking.
- If the group is large or involves walking on roads without pavements or challenging terrain a backmarker should be appointed and briefed.
- Make a note of the names of everyone on the walk for insurance purposes and pass to the Committee member who keeps the records for the Rambler of the Year award.
- Start by giving an overview of the walk (length and time, points of interest, refreshment stops) and a safety briefing. The safety briefing should include any issues identified on the walkover e.g. roads, livestock and slip hazards. Invite anyone with concerns, e.g. medical conditions, to speak to you in private.
- Set pace to suit the group's capabilities.
- Stay in sight or communication with the back of the group.
- If the group gets spread out you should stop regularly to wait for slower walkers to catch up. It is especially important to keep the group together if you are walking across a golf course, through a field of animals, or along a busy road.
- Be vigilant when changing direction.
- When walking on roads when no pavement is available walk in single file facing the on-coming traffic (except on a right hand bend).
- Help group across stiles, roads, railway lines, difficult terrain and in poor weather as required.
- Allow for regrouping, head counts and water breaks in hot weather.

At the end of the walk

- Check everyone has returned and can get home.
- In the unlikely event that an incident has occurred it should be reported to the Secretary or other Club Official who will complete an Incident Report Form. For information a copy of this form is attached as an appendix to this guide. By 'incident' we mean, e.g. accidents to Club members, damage to property or land or trespass. The Club Officials and Committee will decide whether it is necessary to report the incident to our insurers.
- Please consider writing a short account of the walk for our website and send it to the Committee member responsible for uploading walk reports.