

ULVERSTON WALKING FESTIVAL - INSTRUCTIONS FOR WALK LEADERS

(Although these instructions may appear daunting, much of them are common sense, and having read them through the aide memoire at the end will probably suffice.)

1. We need to be satisfied of the competence of our leaders on the basis of a national or equivalent award (ML, MRT or NP Leader) or considerable experience, probably based on leading walks for other organisations (eg U3A). 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 /clothed or fit enough for the walk.
- That 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. Each walk has 2 leaders (Leader 1 who offered the walk and their co-leader, Leader 2). Both should be able to actually lead the walk in the event of the non-availability of Leader 1 or following an incident when one leader might continue with the remainder of the group. Group sizes have been reduced to 15 on Easy and Moderate walks and 10 on Moderate Plus and Hard walks, but with flexibility to avoid repeated closing and reopening walks if walkers cancel or to allow leaders to alter the number, for instance to reduce them where traffic might be an issue, or allow a few more on a Moderate Plus walk in a rural area. (These numbers take account of group management and the enjoyment of the leader.)

3. Ownership of the walk will remain with Leader 1, unless formerly handed over as arranged by the Walks Coordinator. Leader 1 is responsible for arranging the risk assessment and the need for, and collection of, high vis vests, 1st Aid kits, ICE cards, shelters and registration forms (if unable to print).

4. **1st Aid.** Those walk leaders who have a current 1st Aid, or higher, qualification can operate within their expertise and are likely to have their own first aid kit. Those who are not qualified (including those whose qualification is out-of-date) will be limited to what a casualty, of sound mind, requests or common-sense dictates, such as the attempt at a life-saving procedure. Our suggested 1st Aid kit is limited to items readily available to the public and in the case of pain relief is restricted to the maximum suggested dose of 2 x 500mg Paracetamol (having clarified that no other Paracetamol have been taken that day). Ibuprofen is not to be given, due to several possible side-effects, unless the casualty has their own. Always check first whether the casualty is carrying their own medication, and whether they have any related allergies.

5. Before administering any medication or other treatment, a non-qualified leader must make it clear that they are not qualified and offer what they think is appropriate, but it should be up to the casualty, of sound mind, to accept the offer. If in any doubt assistance must be sought from a qualified person or the emergency services awaited. Pain relief should only be given in cases of significant pain and when waiting for the emergency services would be against what you perceive to be the best interests of the casualty. Most casualties remaining still for an extended period will start to get cold and a small shelter will be supplied for all walks to cover this and the dignity of the casualty (further shelters bought for 2027).

6. The suggested 1st Aid kit is:

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| • Assorted non-allergenic sterile plasters | • Alcohol-free medi-wipes |
| • One large sterile dressing | • Two rolled bandages (one ideally elasticated) |
| • One medium sterile dressing | • Face shield |
| • Triangular bandage and safety pin | • 2 x 500mg Paracetamol (with instructions to not use if any already taken that day) |
| • Two pairs latex-free disposable gloves | |

ACTIONS TO BE TAKEN

7. A Couple of Weeks before the Walk:

- Leader 1 should check their route and complete a risk assessment. A condition of our public liability insurance is that a written risk assessment is completed and retained for each activity in the festival. A generic risk assessment is below but your assessment needs to take account of any risks particular to your walk. Please email Martin and your Leader 2 of any risks specific to your walk and mitigating actions you will take. Examples of Additional Risks are shown on the website under 'Walk Leader Instructions'. Take particular care over stiles and whether they are safe and passable by all walkers and dogs.
- Let Martin know if you require a 1st Aid kit, a shelter and, if your walk includes any significant road sections, high-viz vests. The latter can also be useful to identify your back marker. All rural walks are to include a shelter for weather protection and the dignity of a casualty.
- Confirm arrangements with your Leader 2 and exchange telephone numbers.
- Remind yourself of general safety procedures recommended by Mountain Rescue on our website under 'WALK NOTES' tab 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.

8. 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, shelter and 1st Aid kit, as required, from Martin. Additionally, if needed, a Mountain Rescue collection box – for fell walks. You will also need Registration and Accident Reporting forms, off the website or from Martin.
- You will be sent the names of those booked onto your walk and any requiring a lift, as opposed to those wishing to car share.

9. Before the Start of the Walk:

- Confirm number attending and introduce leaders.
- Ask walkers to sign the Registration Form, including agreeing 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 Ramblers and are covered by our 3rd Party insurance. It will be worth taking a couple of pens with you.
- Collect the walk fee of £3/person, less for evening walks or children under 16 who are free.
- 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 medication being taken") 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 and Hard 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.
- Agree who will take photographs for the post-festival meeting.
- If any walkers have a dog, confirm our rules that they must be kept on a short lead throughout and that the dog is their responsibility and other walker should not be expected to get involved in manhandling it (for instance over a difficult stile).

10. 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 your Leader 2 lead for periods. 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 a 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 (see notes on 1st Aid above). Check whether you have a medically qualified person in your group. Call 999 if necessary (see below). There is an Accident/Incident Reporting Form on the website under 'Instructions for Walk Leaders'. Your priority will be the health and safety of any casualty, and the rest of the party, but the information on the form may be useful for following-up any incident. Leaders **could** take a copy of this form or just be aware of the information ideally required.

11. After the Walk:

- If there has been any accident or incident during the walk (an accident involves an injury while an incident could involve a problem with livestock, dog chasing sheep, a near miss, or a complaint) complete as much of the Accident/Incident Reporting Form as possible and send it to Martin.
- Registration Forms should be passed to Martin at Hamilton Grove, Oubas Hill, Ulverston, LA12 7LB. and **please email Martin with any feedback on the walk, which may be useful in the future.**
- 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. Also, if another charity has supported your walk in some way and you think a small donation would be appropriate.
- Send pictures to Christine Quiggin: Christine@quiggin.org.uk (07884 104 791 if advice needed).
- Check whether you can retain high vis, shelters and 1st Aid kits for another walk or return them promptly to Martin for reuse. (Extras bought for 2027 to avoid this happening to often.)

RISK ASSESSMENT

12. A risk assessment is required for all walks as follows: the generic assessment below covers hazards likely on all walks. These specific to your walk, or more likely than the generic assessment suggests, must be recorded on your assessment. Identify the hazard (event likely to cause harm), the risk (What could happen: likelihood & severity), and how you can mitigate the risk, the likelihood in particular. You should also be aware of the possible need for a dynamic risk assessment (ie done mentally on the discovery of a real or perceived hazard – when, for instance, a change of route might be required).

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.	

13. Generic 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 = 2 Severity = 4/5 Risk = 8/10 (Medium).

14. 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 (don't rely on a smart phone for map, compass, torch).
- On all walks a shelter should be carried by at least one leader and if poor weather is likely walkers' clothing should be assessed at the start. For Moderate Plus and Hard walks both leaders should have a shelter. Consider carrying an extra walking pole to assist someone who lacks confidence or may find rocky-type terrain difficult.
- 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. If you have a signal, **remain where you are for a return call from Mountain Rescue within a few minutes.** (Note that you may get through to 999 without an actual signal from your provider, but will not get a call back if don't have a signal.)
- On roads keep group together, face on-coming traffic, and deploy people to front and rear to warn traffic - wearing Hi Viz vests. It may be better not to get the group to cross the road to avoid going round a blind corner but for the leader to move ahead and ensure the way is clear or to warn traffic.

IN SUMMARY

<u>Before Walk</u> Check route & assess risk. Report additional risks. Check weather. Confirm and brief co-leader, swap telephone No's. Collect Hi Viz vest, ICE Cards & Shelter from Martin (plus Regn & Accident Forms, MR collecting box and 1st Aid kit if needed).	<u>Take</u> 1st Aid kit Walking pole (spare) Map & compass. Mobile phone (charged) Registration Forms Torch ICE cards Shelter Pens Hi Viz vests Accident Report Form (optional) Collecting Box (optional)
<u>At Start</u> Introduce leaders. Count group. Get Registration Form signed. Collect Fees. Check clothing and assess individuals. Check for any medical conditions (in confidence) Brief on: Route, any hazards, dogs, leaving walk, setting pace, take food & drink and suitable clothing.	
<u>During Walk</u> Operate within experience. Take regular breaks. Keep together. Monitor walkers. Control passage over hazards (eg steep ground, stream crossing, rocks).	<u>After Walk</u> Confirm all back. Let Martin have: Registration Forms, collecting box, Accident/Incident Reports, Hi Viz, shelter and 1st Aid kit; numbers attending and any feedback. Send photos to Christine Quiggin.

Reviewed June 2026