

Risk Assessment

Use this risk assessment **(as recommended by Ramblers HO)** as a starting point to think about **potential risks in the route description** of your specific walk. We recommend making a note of any additional hazards.

Review and share your plan with walkers on the day – and make changes if you need to. There is a worked example of route description on the last page of this document.

This optional template is intended to help leaders consider all of the risks they need to when planning a walk. If you put a Y in the boxes on the right it will indicate that you have considered those risks in relation to your walk, not necessarily that those risks will be present on your walk.

What are the hazards?	What could happen and who could be harmed?	How we manage these risks	READ?
Lack of confidence and/or skill	Leaders are stressed and overwhelmed	- All new walk leaders must complete introductory training and make the most of opportunities to develop their skills - It is recommended that current leaders also complete the training (link to training portals) - Peer support available from more experienced leaders - Leaders only lead within their capabilities - Leaders of higher grade walks have additional skills for the conditions (e.g. advanced navigation, winter mountain skills, scrambling)	
	Walkers are exposed to unnecessary risks		
	Other risks/details:		
Too many people walking	Leaders are stressed and overwhelmed	Leaders refer to recommended ratios and manage group size depending on the specific circumstances Identify additional helpers (e.g. walk assistant, co-leader or backmarker) for large groups (link to HO guidance)	

in the group	Walkers are exposed to unnecessary risks	Advertise any limits on group size (and booking information, if needed) in advance	
	Other risks/details:		
Walkers act recklessly	Walkers put themselves and others at risk	- Share information with walkers in advance to establish clear expectations and responsibilities e.g. instruct walks to stay behind leaders at all times - Give a walk briefing before setting off, to share your plan and expectations - Communicate with walkers throughout the walk	
	Leaders are stressed and overwhelmed		
	Other risks/details:		
Weather	Walkers are exposed to extreme cold, heat, or wet	- Check the weather before the walk - Let people know what to wear and what to bring - Make contingency plans - Set an appropriate pace and take breaks as needed - Stay alert to changing conditions and adjust plans accordingly - For coaches, if extreme weather forecast, activate Extreme Weather Protocol (link below) - For mid-week walks, if extreme weather forecast, consider cancelling the walk Extreme Weather	
	Other risks/details:		
Getting lost	Walkers get lost	- Where possible, recce the route a week or so in advance – or carefully plan with good local knowledge, guidebooks, apps and/or maps - Leaders are familiar with the route and contingency plans in case changes are	

Coach Walks | Risk Assessment and Route Description

	Walkers are exposed to extreme cold, heat or wet		
	Other risks/details:		
Terrain	Walkers trip or fall, resulting in injury	• Leaders complete training on Preventing & Managing Incidents (link to portal) • Check for muddy/slippery/steep sections when planning • Advise walkers of terrain and suitable footwear in advance • Advise walkers to use walking poles where appropriate • Make contingency plans, to draw on if needed • Zig-zag up/down any steep sections • Offer reassurance to nervous walkers & take adequate breaks • Adjust plans on the walk if needed • Remind the group to stay hydrated and carry high-energy snacks	
	Other risks/details:		
Unsafe/unstable geographic features or obstacles (e.g., water, tides, rock fall, open edges, overhangs, stiles, and fallen trees)	Walkers trip or fall, resulting in injury	• Follow any local warnings or signs and advise walkers to keep away from sheer drops/edges • Check paths are suitable for a group to use safely and make changes if necessary • Ensure all stiles are properly maintained and advise walkers to take care in the event of issues • Make contingency plans to deal with unexpected features and obstacles • Avoid crossing any significant water features – use bridges or other recognised water crossing points (though warn if stepping stones are unavoidable) • Check the tide times • Ensure appropriate navigation skills in the group to re-route and navigate around any challenging or unexpected features	
	Walkers get into difficulty and drown		
	Other risks/details:		

Livestock	Walkers are at risk of injury from livestock	• Cross fields with livestock calmly and quietly, keeping the group together and any dogs on a short lead (releasing the dog if charged by cows) • Follow the Countryside Code (England & Wales) and Scottish Outdoor Access Code (Scotland) • Leave gates and property as you find them • Advise walkers to check for ticks and promptly remove if found	
	Property is damaged		
	The wider public are at risk of injury from escaped livestock		
	Other risks/details:		
Roads	Walkers are at risk of road traffic accident	• Maintain single file on any road sections without footpath/pavement • Plan route to avoid busy roads where possible • Check for suitable crossing places • Leader and back marker should wear high vis vests in the event of inclement weather and/or poor light	
	Other road users are at risk of accident		
	Other risks/details:		
Losing walkers	Walkers could get left behind/lost	• Leader knows who is on the walk – asking for names and emergency contact details • Regular headcounts and communication with the group • Appoint a backmarker • Communicate with group throughout the walk	
	Other risks/details:		
Accident or medical emergency	Walkers require first aid or medical attention	• Leaders complete training on Preventing & Managing Incidents (link to training portal) • <i>Know how to contact the emergency services</i> • Register phone with emergencySMS (see Wirral Ramblers website, “For Leaders”) • Ensure mobile phone is fully charged, and consider carrying a power bank • Carry a first aid kit – and extra supplies/layers to keep people comfortable while waiting for help to arrive	

Coach Walks | Risk Assessment and Route Description

		• Ensure appropriate first aid awareness and skills amongst the group • Have a back-up plan for areas without mobile phone signal (emergency beacon/GPS)	
	Other risks/details:		
Other hazards			

Walk leader name <i>(As it will appear on the route description sheet eg full name, first name, initials etc)</i>						
Walk date:			Recce date:			
Coach destination:						
Walk description: General route description of walk, taking into account any risks and mitigations identified during your recce as per Ramblers HO risk assessment guidance. (Max 135 words if possible) The RD Officer will copy and paste this route description onto the routes information sheet for the coach. HENCE NO NEED TO SEND RD IN A SEPARATE EMAIL	Grade:					
	Distance:	kms (mls)	Ascent:	m (ft)	Walk Points:	
		1pt/mile		1pt/500ft		

EXAMPLE Walk leader name	Anonymous		
Walk date:	26/09/21	Recce date:	17/09/21
Coach destination:	Ashbourne		
Walk description: General route description of walk, taking into account any risks and mitigations identified during your recce (in bold) as per Ramblers HO risk assessment guidance. (Max 135 words if possible) The RD Officer will copy and paste this route description onto the routes information sheet for the coach. HENCE NO NEED TO SEND RD IN A SEPARATE EMAIL	Grade: C We get off the coach on the A515 (near track to Alsop en le Dale) and take lanes (shared with traffic) to Milldale. We follow a generally very good path through Dovedale (a few short stretches are uneven and may be slippery if wet). We take a lane to St Mary's Bridge and make an ascent across fields to Thorpe. We take tarmac lanes towards Mapleton and then take an undulating path across fields (one broken stile, but doable with assistance) to Ashbourne. Some iconic Peak District scenery. Distance: 14kms (8.75mls) Ascent: 180m (600ft) Walk Points: 10 1pt/mile 1pt/500ft		