



White Cliffs Ramblers Walk Leaders Guide



The White Cliffs Ramblers committee and members are most grateful to those who lead our group walks. They are a fundamental aspect of the continued success of the group.

Ramblers has recently published a new, updated Walk Leader Handbook which can be found at <https://www.ramblers.org.uk/go-walking-hub/resources-walk-leaders>. This sets out their approach to leading group walks which uses eight guiding principles to ensure safe, enjoyable and welcoming walks.

Although the Walk Leader Handbook is a guide and sets out some parameters, White Cliffs Ramblers will continue to lead walks much in the same way as they have done in the recent past with some of the key points set out as follows.

In planning walks it is important to recce the walk in advance and assess the risks. To assist in assessing the risks, a White Cliffs Ramblers Risk Assessment (generic form) has been prepared and is available at <https://whitecliffsramblers.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2024/06/risk-assessments-word-doc-generic-dq-revised.pdf>. There is no need to prepare a separate written risk assessment for each walk if this has been used as a basis for assessing the risks.

Walk leaders are encouraged to stay alert to changing conditions whilst on the walk, be that weather or should an emergency arise. In such circumstances they should use their discretion to change the walk to best suit the conditions and not rigidly stick to the originally intended plan. Safety is always paramount.

If the walk leader feels confident in leading a larger group, there will be no limit set on the ratio of leaders to walkers. If a walk leader chooses to limit the numbers on a walk, this will be clearly stated, along with the methods of control (for example contacting the walk leader in advance) in the walks programme. Given the relatively high number of experienced walk leaders and walkers in the White Cliffs group who are regular attendees on group walks, if a larger than expected number turn up, the walk leader should feel comfortable in seeking assistance, if necessary. This could be in the form of appointing a secondary leader, middle and/or back marker as deemed appropriate for the size of the group.

There will not be a requirement for walkers to book on a group walk in advance, unless specifically requested to do so by the walk leader and advertised as such in the walks programme. As is good practice, a head count should be taken at the start of each walk and regularly during the walk to ensure everyone is accounted for. If the walk leader deems it appropriate, a register can be taken or sign in sheet used at the start of the walk.

All walkers on White Cliffs Group Walks are expected to abide by the Information for Walkers a link to which can be found at <https://whitecliffsramblers.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2024/06/information-walkers-WCR.pdf>. All walkers are expected to carry a completed "In Case of Emergency Card", a blank version of which is sent to all new members on joining and can also be found at <https://ramblers.chorus.thirdlight.com/link/3r06unc8vr7-i4xuky/@/preview/430>.

In addition to the Walk Leaders Handbook there is also a very handy Walk Leaders Checklist available at <https://www.ramblers.org.uk/go-walking-hub/resources-walk-leaders> which contains practical reminders of what to consider before, during and after the walk.

Should anyone have any questions about this guide they are requested to contact the Chair John Pye at johnrpye@icloud.com or Walks Co-ordinator Deborah Quow at deborahquow@gmail.com.