

GUIDELINES FOR LEADING A WALK

Walks should be fun and social occasions - here are some pointers to help you enjoy the walk as much as the other walkers!

Choose the route. Consider length/timing, terrain, ascent/descent, bearing in mind the time of year. Research any points of interest on the route.

Is there a car parking area at start of walk or is there a need for car sharing?

Consider lunch/rest stops, bad weather alternatives and means of shortening the walk if necessary.

If a restaurant is to be booked, send out menu choices to the group and then convey these to the restaurant. Book the restaurant allowing sufficient time for walkers to get there. At the end of the restaurant meal, collect payment from the walkers.

Liaise with either of the Group Leaders, Barry, barrypurvis2@gmail.com, or Una, unaconnor208@hotmail.com, so that the walk can be put on the U3a Walking Page. Responses from members of the Walking Group who want to go on the walk will come directly to you.

BEFORE THE WALK

Pre-walk the full route, checking timings.

Check weather forecasts, remember to check that your phone is charged.

If the weather has not allowed for the full walk, consider a Plan B walk so that the walkers are not disappointed. If the weather is too bad even for a Plan B walk, email/phone all walkers cancelling the walk no later than 8.30 am on the day of the walk.

ON THE DAY

Arrive early, welcome the group, especially any new members, check walkers off on your list.

Arrange for someone to act as a Backmarker and that each of you has a Walkie Talkie/mobile phone or whistle to attract each other's attention in case some members of the group are lagging behind so that a stop can be arranged.

Give an outline of walk with points of interest, refreshment stops and estimated return/lunch time. Mention that the safety and wellbeing of the whole group is of prime importance and that walkers can help by not walking in front of the leader, paying heed to hazards and warning those behind of them. Ask that anyone leaving the walk early lets you know. Introduce your Backmarker.

DURING THE WALK

It is best if you lead from the front so that you can set the pace for the walk. It is also important to stop and regroup regularly. The walkers at the back of the group should be given an opportunity to have a rest and a drink before setting off on the walk again. Group number should be checked during stops.

Communicate regularly with the Backmarker to ensure that the group is not spreading out too much and decide whether a stop might be necessary.

Any picnic or banana stops should be taken at the top of a climb not before.

If a restaurant meal has been booked, keep your eye on the clock and shorten breaks if necessary.

Incidents – where an injury occurs and a walker is unable to continue the planned walk route but is able to return to the start, then you should appoint someone who knows the route back to return with them. Where the walker is unable to walk, you, together with the Backmarker can decide whether to continue with the walk, return to the start of the walk, or appoint some volunteers to remain behind with the injured person while help is arranged.

AT THE END OF THE WALK

Check everyone has returned and can get home. Thank members of the group for coming.

It would be appreciated if anyone who has taken photos of the walk would email them to either Barry Purvis or Una O'Connor so that they can be put on the Walking Page of the U3a website.