

EGONS

HEALTH AND SAFETY GUIDANCE FOR ALL MEMBERS

Event organisers

Our event organisers are volunteers and as such are not trained. Descriptions of the events are published in our programme with additional information about the event such as: varied terrain, steep climb or not walked over, etc. Event organisers will raise any issues that were not in the programme at the start of the event.

Group walks

Any member or visitor taking part in a Group activity does so at his or her own risk, and the Group and its event organisers will not accept liability or responsibility for any injuries which might be received.

- It is recommended that no fewer than 3 people should be on any walk.
- You should only tackle distances and terrain that you are confident in completing.
- If you are inadequately equipped for the walk, the organiser can refuse to take you.
- Gates that need to be opened by the party must be closed when the party has passed through.
- Whilst walking, always maintain visual contact with those in front and those behind.
- If you wish to fall behind make sure that the backmarker knows you are doing so.
- Do not walk more than a few metres in front of the leader. Apart from being inconsiderate, there may be a change in direction or even a hidden danger.
- If it becomes apparent that the walk will finish in the dark, event organisers should walk at a suitable speed so that people can negotiate hazards safely

Walking on Roads

The route of all walks should be off-road where reasonably practicable. Where road walking is necessary, use pavements and safe walking points. Where there is no pavement, walk in single file on the right, facing oncoming traffic. Cross to the other side of the road before sharp right hand bends when instructed by the walk organiser to do so.

High level Walking

- Be prepared for more challenging weather, especially in winter.
- Ensure you have warm and waterproof clothing.
- It is a good idea to carry high energy rations.
- Event organisers will carry a map, compass and be prepared to shorten the walk and have an alternative/escape route planned should conditions deteriorate.
- Nominate a back marker to prevent the party being split or to halt the group in an emergency.
- The walk description should advise if scrambling, rock climbing or a head for heights is required.
- Shelter from the elements may be necessary particularly during rest breaks and lunch stops.

Cold, adverse or extreme weather

Heavy rain, snow and wind chill can seriously deplete a walker's energy leading to exposure and/or hypothermia. All walkers should ensure that they have enough warm clothing, food and plenty of water. It is a good idea to carry a warm drink of tea, coffee or soup.

In the event of adverse or extreme weather, the event organiser has the right to cancel a walk or curtail the route - therefore, walkers are advised to contact the leader before setting off. When considering whether to cancel or curtail a walk, the event organiser should bear in mind the weather forecast, the abilities of the group and the suitability of clothing. If the walk goes ahead, be aware that there are added risks such as falling trees in high winds.

Warm weather

Sun hats, sun cream and water will prevent sunburn, windburn and dehydration. More water will be required if walking strenuously or in hot weather

Environment

Be aware of your surroundings. The Group offers a variety of walking opportunities - they can all offer different challenges. Obstacles such as poorly maintained stiles and fences can become a hazard, and wooden bridges and stiles can become slippery when wet.

Slips, trips and falls

- Walking boots are considered appropriate for most walks and offer better traction in muddy/slippery conditions.
- Boots also support the ankles, lessening the chance and severity of sprains.
- Walking poles may offer added support.
- Carry a basic first aid kit- do not rely on someone else in your party to have one!
- Carry a torch if there is any risk that the walk may be completed in the dark.

Injuries requiring first aid

Event organisers are not trained to administer first aid, therefore all participants should carry a first aid kit and include additional items such as blister kits, insect repellent and mild pain killers such as paracetamol or aspirin. Ideally, members of the group should carry a mobile phone for use in emergencies. In the event of an emergency where there is no mobile phone reception, the event organiser may need to organise the summoning of help with someone else in the party.

Dogs and cattle

Dogs should be kept under control, in accordance with the Countryside Code.

- Treat untethered bulls and loose dogs with caution.
- Back away slowly and report the incident to the police if the situation is considered unlawful as well as dangerous.
- Do not walk between a cow and her calf.
- Dogs should be let off their leads should the cattle become threatening.
- Livestock following too closely can be deterred by turning to face them with both arms raised.
- Ensure that any instructions are passed to the rear of the party to shut any gate that the group have opened.

The Group, from time to time, may publish additional or updated advice to members in the programme or website Visit www.egons.org.uk

Remember: An EGONS event is like a group of friends going out together. The organiser will co-ordinate the event and roughly plan the route. Each person is responsible for his or her own safety at all times. Sometimes there may be a risk of serious injury. If you join in, you take the risk upon yourself.