

## Charnwood u3a Thursday 6 Milers Notes for Walk Leaders



Thank you for offering to lead a walk. Having been out with us you will be familiar with what the group usually does i.e. a roughly 6 mile walk in the Charnwood (and thereabouts) area. Our walks starting at 10.00 with a coffee break (wherever is most suitable) shortly after 11.00. Many walkers appreciate lunches being organised at the end of a walk but arranging these is not essential.

It is often best to choose a walk that you like doing yourself (as you will be more relaxed and this will help others enjoy it). Please think whether it will suit the group, and what you know of their varying capabilities. Also choose a starting point where there is parking for a reasonable number of cars.

Start planning by looking at possibilities on maps. OS Maps are available on-line at [www.bing.com/maps](http://www.bing.com/maps) (then select 'OS Maps' under 'Style' on the upper right of the page and magnifying the view). Do let me know if you would like to talk through your walk, or help in either planning the route or checking it out. You should pre-walk the route in advance and, ideally, check it again (perhaps carrying clippers) a few days beforehand.

Members of Cu3a take responsibility for their own safety, for wearing suitable (wet weather) clothing and deciding on their walking ability. Walks should however be planned to minimise risks. Any particular matters of concern and features which may cause difficulty on the walk (such as steep ascents, difficult stiles or where balance maybe an issue) should be made known to me. As necessary we can then discuss them and put appropriate details in the walk programme information. Any such 'hazards' should also be made known when, at the start, a walk outline is given.

Things to look out for in your walk planning are:-

- To avoid (wherever possible) busy roads and to pick safe crossing points;
- That low lying areas can flood, or turn muddy;
- Not to use unsteady, or difficult to use, stiles and footbridges;
- Being mindful of crops and overgrowth (which may be different when the walk is done);
- Ploughing (where a path has not been re-established);
- Fields with, or likely to have, livestock that may become excited.

Re-routing is the only option to avoid busy roads or flooding but the County Council has a duty to keep paths usable and to maintain stiles and footbridges. Should, in Leicestershire, you want them to remove any obstructions the best way of reporting issues is to use the county's '[Report It](#)' form (which covers Rights of Way). This gives access to the definitive map which shows the County's footpaths (which after scrolling) enables the location of the instruction to be identified. Similar (website) reporting can be done in Derbyshire and Nottinghamshire. (*Note - remedial actions can take weeks and may not be done by your walk!*).

Leading up to the walk date do keep me updated should you be unwell or otherwise be unable to lead. Also if you have concerns about the weather (being too hot, wintry or wet). We can then consider making changes or cancelling and notifying the group. On the day it is your decision, as leader, whether to proceed.

Hopefully all will go well on the walk itself. At the start do a head count and check from time to time that all the walkers are with you. For larger groups appoint a 'back marker'. On the walk things can happen that you were not expecting and you may need to change your plans. But explain to the group what is going on and others will invariably help you out. Also please have a charged mobile phone (or know who is carrying one).

I will send you beforehand the list of emergency contacts for our group members. Hopefully this will not be needed. Please keep the list to yourself and destroy it after your walk. I will also share any member's known health factors so that we can decide whether to indicate that the walk may not be suitable to all of the group.

If I am not on a walk and an incident, or accident occurs, I need to given details of whatever has happened.

Our ongoing programme is only possible with offers, such as from yourself, to lead walks. Thanks for doing this and hopefully these notes will assist you preparing and leading a walk which Charnwood u3a members can safely enjoy. Do please contact me if you have any concerns or matters you want to talk through.