

Charnwood u3a Thursday 6 Milers Group

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 or nearby area. Our walks start at 10.00 a.m. with a break for own refreshment shortly after 11.00 a.m.. Many walkers appreciate going somewhere for lunch after a walk but it is not essential for this to be organised.



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 based on what you know of their varying capabilities. Also choose a starting point where there is parking for a reasonable number of cars. Use UK Grid Reference Finder (<https://gridreferencefinder.com>) for starting point's Grid Reference, What3Words, Postcode.

Start planning by looking at possibilities on maps such as OS Maps (<https://explore.osmaps.com>) or OpenStreetMap (<https://www.openstreetmap.org>). Do let me know if you would like to discuss your walk with me, or helped 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. Such 'hazards' should also be made known when a walk outline is given before the walk.

Things to consider when planning your walk 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. However, the relevant local authority has a duty to keep footpaths usable and to maintain stiles and footbridges. For Leicestershire County Council, you can report any problems with a Public Right of Way using the "[Report a problem](https://www.leicestershire.gov.uk/roads-and-travel/cycling-and-walking/where-to-walk-and-ride-in-leicestershire)" form at <https://www.leicestershire.gov.uk/roads-and-travel/cycling-and-walking/where-to-walk-and-ride-in-leicestershire>. Similar reporting forms can be found for Derbyshire and Nottinghamshire. Remedial actions can take weeks and may not be done by the time of your walk.

Leading up to the day of your walk, keep me updated should you feel unwell or otherwise be unable to lead. Also, if you have concerns about the weather such as too hot, cold, wet or windy, we can consider changing or cancelling the walk, and notifying the group. On the day, it is your decision, as Walk 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 groups of 16 or more, appoint a 'back marker'. On the walk, things can happen that are unexpected and you may need to change your plans. Explain to the group what is going on and others will invariably help you out. Also, please have a charged mobile phone with you or know someone on the walk who does.

Before the walk, I will send you 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 for everyone in the group.

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

Our ongoing programme is only possible with offers, such as from yourself, to lead walks. Thank you 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.

Ginette Hsu, Cu3a Thursday 6 Miler Walking Group Co-ordinator

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