

Newsletter

August 2020

(8/20)



In common with other Ramblers' groups our summer programme has been all but obliterated by coronavirus restrictions.

With the official restart of Ramblers' walking allowed by the government more scheduled walks are now possible – but, as ever with our activities, both leaders and walkers need to be comfortable in taking part.

The virus has not gone away – so please, before going on an official walk check that it is still on [Walksfinder](#) , read the [Ramblers guidance](#) , and contact the leader to let them know you intend coming.

This should help to avoid any possible embarrassment on exceeding the guidelines on numbers.

A message to walks organisers ;

We, the committee, hope that you have been keeping well during lockdown (and in the easing of it) and that you have been managing to do some walking.

You will be aware that the government restrictions have only allowed people from different households to walk in groups of six. Ramblers produced some guidance as to how official walks should be conducted. Our various groups, and indeed the committee, felt that the conditions they were placing on us were too onerous to be instated for a walk of 6 people. As a result, no official group walks have been taking place. Wednesday Long Car Walk Group has organised Unofficial Bubble walks of 6 people on a rota basis, and more recently, Unofficial Sunday Walks have started with staggered start times.

Now however, Ramblers Head Office have negotiated with the government a package of recommendations to allow larger groups of up to 30 to walk together. These guidelines allow walks to occur if they are deemed to be Covid secure, in the same way that businesses have to operate in a Covid secure way.

Ramblers DO NOT say that walks must allow 30 people they say that groups can decide how many people they allow on a walk.

The committee welcome the relaxation in the guidelines but feel that 30 people is too many to have in a group at present. Currently there are concerns that the infection rate is rising again and although the risk of catching the infection outside is low, it is not nil. After discussion, we feel that a compromise would be to have up to 15 in a group and would advise that groups re-starting walks do not go above this figure. The reasons against larger numbers include the issue of parking when car sharing is not allowed and the fact that other walkers are likely to feel intimidated if they are met by 30 people coming in the opposite direction. Also, they may be annoyed at seeing a large group when they are unaware of the special conditions governing our walks. It will be difficult to maintain social distancing in a large group.

Derwent Edge 23 August 2014

For a walk to be Covid-secure covered by Ramblers Insurance and have more than 6 people on it several criteria have to be met.

Although we may resent these rules it is important to realise that they are likely to remain in place for some considerable time.

If we dismiss them out of hand we are unlikely to be able to walk as a group in the

foreseeable future. It is also important to realise that the rules do not allow people to walk in groups of more than 6 if they do not comply with the regulations and if they are not walking in an official group. Other walking groups will be following the same or similar guidelines.



The details of the guidance are on the Ramblers website but here is a brief summary of the main points:

- *The walk needs to be publicized on either Walksfinder or in the booklet. As most walks up to October have been cancelled on Walksfinder, David Moore would need informing to put a walk back on.*
- *The walk leader should carry out a risk assessment and preferably a recce. The risk assessment is a tick box form and covers the points we consider when planning a walk. The walk leader should be registered on Assemble (part of the Ramblers website) to ensure the walk is insured. The risk assessment needs to be kept for 12 months.*
- *The walk leader needs to decide how many people they are prepared to lead. This number will be published on Walksfinder. The walk leader needs to keep a register of the people on the walk. People will need to book a place on the walk by phoning or texting the leader, or committing in advance to attending a series of walks. Committing to a series of walks will ensure that a walker gets a slot.*
- *If there are repeatedly more than 15 people wanting to walk then it may be necessary to run 2 walks per week.*
- *The list of walkers and contact details i.e. phone number needs to be kept for 21 days in case anyone falls ill and contact tracing has to be done. In this situation people's details are given to the Track and Trace team for them to do the tracing.*
- *Everyone on a walk must carry a face covering and preferably disposable gloves in case they need to give or receive first aid in safe manner.*

We are hoping that by October the programme as published in the booklet will be able to resume and that it will be possible to increase the number of people on a walk. It is however up to each group and each walk leader to decide what they are comfortable with.

Heather on Eyam Moor (22 August 2015)



You may feel that this is a lot of red tape, that it is not worth complying with and that is easier just to walk in ones or twos. The risk with taking that view is that Ramblers will collapse as an organisation. This would mean that in addition to losing our group walks we would risk losing our footpaths as who else would protect them. Also we would like

to be able to attract new members, who have been inspired to walk, whilst walking during lockdown and this will be easier with an active programme of walks.

A link to the guidelines and a copy of the risk assessment is on the first page of this newsletter.

In conclusion if wish to walk with more than 6 people it needs to be on a Covid-secure walk adhering to the Ramblers guidelines. If you wish to avoid the Ramblers guidance you can only walk in groups of 6 and will not be covered by their insurance.

The committee would like you as a Walk organiser to disseminate this information to the people who usually walk in your group and establish how many people they are happy to lead or walk with. Then decide if there is an appetite to restart group walks and if so contact David Moore to put them on Walksfinder. Walk leaders will need to read the guidance on the Ramblers website. If anyone is unable to access the information the committee can send then a printed copy.

If there is anything you are unsure about or unhappy with, please contact one of the committee to discuss it. We are not trying to make you do anything that you feel is unsafe. We are trying to balance the risks of promoting group walks, recruiting new members, remaining safe and the potential decline of the group.

Chesterfield and North East Derbyshire Ramblers Committee

Below Crook Hill (3 August 2015)



Chesterfield & NE Derbyshire Ramblers

South Yorkshire / NE Derbyshire Area



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