

# **RISK ASSESSMENT**

## **Walking activities (Amblers, Ramblers, Walking)**

A reasonable level of fitness and ability is required commensurate with the activity undertaken. All walks follow public footpaths, rights of way or public roads. Conditions under foot can vary considerably, avoiding dangerous or precipitous conditions at all times. Gates will be used where possible to negotiate fences, but it will be necessary to climb stiles during most walks.

In order to minimise risk, the following guidelines are followed:

New members should be issued with a copy of the AIR leaflet “Guidance notes for leaders and walkers”. This gives details of safe walking practices.

Each new member is given information about the ability level required to participate. The leader has the right to refuse to include anyone who is considered unable to complete the walk safely.

The walk leader will first try out the walk to ensure that it is suitable for the group. It should be of the right length and suitable for the group's ability level.

The walk is chosen with regard to the weather on the day of the walk and with regard to the ground conditions due to the weather during the previous few weeks.

During each walk the leader must count the number in the group at the beginning and again periodically during the walk and finally at the finish of the walk. It is also advisable for a back marker to be appointed to ensure that the whole of the group is in front of them at all times. When walkers go out of sight of the person following, they should ensure that the next person sees where they have gone before continuing. The leader must set the pace to suit the slowest walker, stop occasionally to prevent the group becoming too strung out and allow the slowest walker to catch up.

If someone feels unable to complete the walk, another person should be chosen to accompany them. If they are unable to make the walk back, a car should be brought to the nearest place to the walker. Walkers should bring a mobile phone if they have one.

Members are generally discouraged from taking dogs as they can create problems near livestock. However, after careful consideration of the size of the group and the location of the walk, Activity Leaders may allow dogs to accompany their owner provided dogs are kept on a lead and are strictly controlled.