

Cambridge University Rambling Club

Safety Policy & Risk Management

This policy seeks to outline the responsibilities with regard to safety of the club and its members as well as the safety procedures the club currently has in place.

1. The club has a dedicated Safety Officer (who may or may not also have another committee role) who is responsible for overseeing safety management in the club.
2. The safety officer is expected to ensure the Club's safety policy, procedures and overall risk assessment remain up to date, reviewing and reporting any relevant points at the AGM. The officer should also continuously ensure that the policy is being effectively implemented in the club's operations.
3. The safety officer will ensure this policy and the risk assessments included will be displayed on the club website and kept up to date and that queries and concerns may be raised and responded to.
4. Any injuries or accidents which occur on walks are to be reported by the walk leader to the safety officer and thus the university sports service and a review may be done into the policies if deemed necessary. Near misses should also be reported to the safety officer but these do not need to be passed on to the sports service.
5. It is the responsibility of walk leaders to ensure the relevant mitigations mentioned in the risk assessment are implemented in their walks. The full list of responsibilities of walk leaders can be found in the Walk Leaders Responsibilities document, also available on the website.
6. It is the responsibility of the participants of a ramble to inform the walk leader of any relevant medical conditions and points they should be aware of at the beginning of a walk.
7. It is the responsibility of participants to bring any issues or concerns about safety to the attention of walk leader. Participants should bring food/snacks (as appropriate), drink, any medication etc they require, any relevant equipment (e.g. sun cream, torch), and suitable footwear and clothing.
8. On rambles, it is expected that the walk leader should be able to provide a basic first aid kit and access to a telephone (where possible). The walk leaders are not however necessarily first aid trained. It is ultimately the responsibility of participants to ensure their own safety.
9. The risk assessment on the next page should account for most hazards which may occur in the routine rambles of the club. A separate risk assessment shall be made and circulated for any events which do not fall within this category such as trips and multi-day walks.

Risk Assessment for typical rambles

Hazard	Risk Likelihood	Risk Severity	Overall Risk	Mitigations
Road Traffic	Low	High	Medium	Minimise walking on and crossing busy roads. Always look for safest convenient place to cross. Cross in small groups to minimise time in road. Walk in single file on right side of road where road walking is necessary.
Trains – level crossings	Very Low	High	Low	Always check both ways before crossing and wait for green light if present. Minimise time spent on or near tracks.
Uneven/slippery ground surface – trips and falls	Medium	Low	Low	Select the best paths available to follow, adjusting from the planned route if necessary based on conditions. Encourage care in areas which are particularly slippery or difficult terrain. Carry a basic first aid kit to deal with basic injuries.
Weather	Medium	Medium	Medium	Always check weather forecast and ensure everyone is adequately prepared before setting off with suitable clothing and footwear for conditions.
Weather - hot	Medium	Medium	Medium	Ensure everyone has plenty of water before setting off. Ensure the walk takes a sensible and not too strenuous pace with plenty of opportunity for breaks. Try to maximise amount of route to be done out of direct sunlight.
Navigation – group split up	Medium	Variable	Medium	Make regular count checks that the entire group is still together.
Navigation failure - lost	Low	High	Medium	If navigating by map, ensure maps are up to date and the leader has good map reading skills and idea of the route. If navigating by GPS, ensure that spare power is available to ensure the GPS device does not run out of battery.
Animals	Medium	Medium	Medium	In almost all cases, this will refer to cows. Do not approach too closely, especially when young calves are present. Take care to pass calmly at a distance making sure not to go between calves and their mothers.
Darkness	High (in winter)	Medium	High in winter, low otherwise	When conducting walks in wintertime with early sunset, ensure that there are several torches with plenty of charge among the group where there is any risk of the walk going on beyond the times of daylight.

				Walk approximate start/ending timings to be clearly stated on termcard
Ticks	Medium	Medium	Medium	Walk leaders to be aware of areas/conditions with high risk of ticks, and advise participants to have appropriate clothing. First-aid kit to have tweezers/tick removal tools.
Obstruction of path	Low	Low	Low	Walk leader to be aware of past weather in walk location, and assess if path obstruction due to flooding/vegetation/other conditions Walk leader to have maps/navigational devices to find alternative route if necessary Upon encountering, walk leader to assess conditions, discuss with participants, and take safe course of action to bypass/cross obstruction If no alternative exists, walk leader may cut short walk
Allergic Reactions	Low	High	Medium	Members with known allergic reactions to bring appropriate personal medication and inform walk leaders prior to setting off on walk
Poor conduct of members	Low	Medium	Low	Walkers to abide by code of conduct set out by club Complaints and disciplinary procedures of club in place
Members insufficiently equipped	Low	Low	Low	Walk leaders to check that members have appropriate footwear for expected ground conditions Walk leaders to check that members have appropriate clothing for expected weather conditions Walk leaders to discuss any such concerns with participants
Inexperienced walk leader	Low	Medium	Medium	Walk leaders to be appointed in accordance with outlined procedure in walk leader responsibilities document Walk leaders to be aware of their responsibilities (again see walk leader responsibilities document)
Non-navigational - Group split up	Medium	Low	Medium	Most likely during lunch break/walks ending in Cambridge Walkers to make the walk leader aware of leaving the main group, and make clear when/if returning to walk. Walk leaders to make clear if/when the group can split up, and when/where the group will reconvene.
Dangerous/abusive members of public	Low	Medium	Low	Walkers to stay together during walks Walk leader to alter route or cut short walk if necessary
Plant life	Medium	Low	Low	Walk leader to assess conditions of walking route

				First-aid kit to have plasters, gauze, tweezers
Travel, done by train or bus	Very Low	Variable	Very Low	No mitigations possible/necessary.

Last updated: 19th March 2024

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Added section on ticks

Added section on path obstructions

Added section on Allergic Reactions

Added section on poor conduct by members

Added section on equipment

Added section on inexperienced walk leaders

Added section on Non-navigational group splits

Added section on dangerous/abusive members of public

Added section on plant life

Added additional point for Darkness