

## **Naturist Ramblers Club – Health and Safety Policy**

### **Planning and Preparation:**

- **Route Assessment:**

Before each walk, the walk leader will undertake an assessment of the route, identifying potential hazards like steep inclines, slippery surfaces, blocked paths and obstacles.

- **Weather Considerations:**

The walk leader will always check the weather forecast and be prepared to modify the route, postpone or cancel walks if conditions are deemed unsafe (e.g., extreme heat, heavy rain, snow, or ice). The walk leader will notify the group during the pre-walk briefing of any potential extreme weather conditions.

- **Appreciation of General Conditions**

As part of the Walk Guidelines (issued to members as part of the Walks Programme), members are advised of the general hazards of walking in the countryside. For example to ensure that appropriate footwear is worn, and the possibility of nettle stings and insect bites etc.

- **Emergency Planning:**

The walk leader will have a plan in place for emergencies, including a first aid kit (carried by the walk leader), a way to contact emergency services (e.g., mobile phone), and knowledge of nearby emergency exits or assistance points.

- **Communication:**

Ensure clear communication with all participants about the route. Give the estimated time of return, and any potential risks or hazards. This is done during the pre-walk briefing.

- **Group Size and Fitness:**

Should the group size exceed 30, consideration should be given to splitting the group into two smaller groups. As part of the Walk Guidelines (issued to members as part of the Walks Programme), it is made clear that walkers need to be reasonably fit and that the group needs to walk at a reasonable pace. Consider the fitness levels of participants and choose routes that are appropriate for the group's abilities. Allow for regular breaks and adapt the pace accordingly.

- **Essential Items:**

As part of the Walk Guidelines (issued to members as part of the Walks Programme), walkers are advised to bring appropriate clothing, footwear, and sufficient water and snacks for the walk.

### **During the Walk:**

- **Maintain Visibility:**

Walk in single file on roads, facing oncoming traffic, and be mindful of blind spots or bends. Try to ensure that the lead and tail-end walkers are wearing something approaching hi-viz whilst walking along public road.

- **Act Responsibly:**

Ensure any gates are left as they were found. First person to reach gate to wait until everybody has passed, or pass appropriate message back to "leave gate open or "last person to shut gate". Alternatively a designated "tail end charlie" to take responsibility for gates.

- **Stay Together:**

Ensure the group stays together. Regular headcounts will be undertaken to identify lost walkers. Walkers who get detached from the group are advised to go back to where they last saw the group, wait 30min for rescue. If that fails then backtrack to beginning of the walk.

- **First Aid:**

Be prepared to administer basic first aid if necessary and follow the instructions of any trained first aiders present.

- **Adapt to Conditions:**

Be prepared to make adjustments to the route or pace if conditions change or if walkers are struggling.

- **Stay Hydrated and Fed:**

Encourage regular hydration and ensure walkers have sufficient food to maintain energy levels.

- **Respect the Environment:**

Be mindful of the environment, stay on designated paths, and avoid disturbing wildlife or damaging vegetation. Do not leave any litter.

### **Specific Considerations:**

- **Ticks:**

Take precautions against tick bites, especially in areas with long grass or vegetation, as ticks can transmit diseases like Lyme disease. The walk leader will have a first aid kit which contains a tick removal tool.

- **Falls:**

Take extra care on uneven terrain and be prepared to assist walkers who may be at risk of falling.

- **Heat:**

In hot be mindful of the risks of sunburn, heatstroke and heat exhaustion. Ensure walkers stay hydrated, take regular breaks, and avoid overexertion. On days with high UV levels, remind walkers to apply sunscreen and wear sunhats. Advise any walkers showing signs of sunburn (redness) to cover the affected area and apply sunscreen.

- **Cold:**

If cold weather is forecast give a warning to carry / wear warm clothing. The walk leader carries a foil blanket for use if anybody starts to shiver.

**Approved by the Naturist Ramblers Club Executive Committee on 1st November 2025**

To be reviewed by the Naturist Ramblers Club Executive Committee every 3 years or sooner if needed.