

THE UNIVERSITY *of York*

OUTDOOR SOCIETY



Handbook



2020 - 2021

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Welcome to the University of York Outdoor Society!

We are one of the oldest, largest and most active societies at the University of York. We organise walks and trips every Sunday to various beautiful locations throughout Yorkshire, catering for both for those who prefer a shorter walk at a gentle pace and those who favour a longer more energetic route.

The walks are generally quite casual, and open to everybody whether or not you have purchased membership, through there is a price difference in tickets. We take a coach to our chosen venue (please note that it compulsory in the UK to wear a seat belt), and from there split into two groups, one group takes a medium-length walk whilst the second group take on a larger route. Both walks are pre-planned and led by our trained walk leaders. More challenging walks will be indicated at the beginning of the week.

Please note that information refers to both the normal operating situation as well as restricted COVID-19 activities. See the COVID-19 Section for more detail on how the society intends to operate until restrictions are lifted. Please keep up to date with the latest information by our mailing list, website and social media pages as the situation might change rapidly.

Medium Walks:

Medium walks are generally between 6 and 8 miles (10-13 km) long, and tend to be at a reasonably gentle pace and normally include a stop for a pub lunch. However you should bring drinks and snacks to keep you going and cash for the pub lunch (most pubs have a minimum card payment).

Occasionally pre-orders are needed for the pub. If this is the case you will be contacted by the walk coordinator.

Long Walks:

Long walks are slightly more challenging and are between 10 and 12 miles (16-19 km) long and don't include a pub lunch but instead stop for a packed lunch along the way at a convenient point.

The pace on the long walk is generally faster since we need to cover more ground and still be back to rendezvous with the medium walkers in time for the return coach. The walk will often include a climb. It is recommended that if you have little or no walking experience that you try a medium walk first before attempting the long walk.

Timings:

We meet near the benches outside the Roger Kirk Centre in James College at 8.45 am for a 9:00 am departure when traveling by coach. For local walks we depart an hour later at 10:00 am.

At 4.00pm all the groups meet back at the coach and return back to the University, arriving hopefully no later than 6.00pm. The exact arrival time back to campus varies depending on

where we are walking (and traffic conditions) but we're normally back between 5-6pm. For local walks it depends on the walk length and walkers will be able to leave the group from a certain point (e.g. if returning by Hes East), **however the walk leader must be made aware if you leave the group before the formal end of the walk.**

We try to avoid cancelling walks, however it is sometimes unavoidable due to weather and road conditions. In the event that a walk has to be cancelled walkers will be informed ASAP *via* email and the Facebook page and receive a full refund through YUSU.

Weekend Trips:

The society will run occasional weekend trips further afield such as Snowdonia or the Lake District. These trips enable the society to explore areas we normally cannot on our Sunday walks and attempt some more adventurous walking. Any climbing will be accessible to a wide range of abilities – activities involving the use of ropes, crampons, ice axes ect. does not form a part of any Outdoor Society events. Routes involving challenging scree slopes, narrow ridges and long periods of scrambling will be avoided. Routes will also be dependent on weather conditions on the weekend. Weekend trips are open to MEMBERS only and participants must be able to prove that they have suitable equipment and experience for climbing. A deposit will be required on booking, which is non-refundable (except in exceptional circumstances at the discretion of the committee) unless you find a replacement walker. Typically we will travel down on Friday evening, stay in a Youth Hostel and travel back late Sunday afternoon. A briefing meeting will be held shortly before the trip in order to confirm details and what you need to bring. Prices are higher than that of normal trips and will cover accommodation, transport and some catering.

Socials:

Socials are organised by the Social Secretary and we aim to have several over the course of the year. Previous Society socials have included ‘Walk the Walls of York’, pub crawls, coffee crawls, society meals, bowling and ‘Meet your Walk Leaders’.

Merchandise:

The society sells hoodies and beanies with the society logo on. The Merchandise Officer will organise society wide merchandise sales typically at end of Term 2 or beginning of Term 3, when prices will be confirmed. Contact the society for information outside of these times, as we keep certain sizes in stock where possible and are always happy to sell to interested walkers.



Outdoor Society History:

The University of York Outdoor Society was founded on 19th October 1964, making it one of the longest running societies at York. It all started when a group of friends in the Kings Manor JCR came up with the idea to create a rambling society to take advantage of the wonderful countryside surrounding York and to take a break from the day to day life in York!

On 29th October the first meeting was held in Kings Manor and after some discussion, "Outdoor Society" emerged as the favoured choice for the name of the new society. By the end of the first week 50 members had signed up, each paying 4 shillings (4/-) for the privilege.

The first walk was to Rievaulx Abbey and Helmsley, which took place on Sunday 15th November. Later trips included Richmond, Fountains Abbey and Whitby.



A photo from the first walk at Helmsley. Shown from the upper left going clockwise are Bill Shiels, David Corkill with his girlfriend Beate, Rosie Oxenford and Dave Rockcliffe.

Contacting Us:

Mailing List:

We have a mailing list which you can join on our website or by request. We send out weekly emails to let you know where we are going each week and when the tickets go on sale. We will also notify you about any socials and any other relevant information.

General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR):

Outdoor Society is required to abide by GDPR. By joining the society or our mailing list you give us permission to hold and use data on you in the following ways:

Mailing list:

We use MailJet to send out emails to our mailing list. When you sign up to our mailing list you give permission for us to send you emails relating to our walks and other society business – we certainly will not spam you! You have the right to unsubscribe from our mailing list at any point.

Membership:

On buying membership you give permission for your name and university username details to be stored on the YUSU backpages for the rest of the academic year. This information will be viewable by members of the committee with access to the backpages (Signatories) and as a YUSU-affiliated society shared with YUSU. If necessary it will also be shared with walk leaders and other committee members if required by the society.

Buying Tickets:

On buying a ticket your name and university email address will be stored on the event's list on the YUSU backpages. This information will be viewable by members of the committee with access to the backpages (Signatories) and as a YUSU-affiliated society shared with YUSU. The list of names will be given to the walk coordinator on the day of the walk. Contact details will only be used if the walk coordinator needs to contact the walkers with information about the walk; typically for pub pre-orders or walk conditions.

Track and Trace:

As part of the national requirement for Track and Trace the walk coordinator will be taking your name and university username on joining the walk while this remains a legal requirement. The data will be uploaded onto the YUSU website for reference. The committee will not keep a copy of the data. Walkers refusing to give their details will not be allowed on the walk.

All committee members have had training in GDPR from YUSU.

Contact Us:

Email: outdoorsoc@yusu.org

Website: <http://www.outdoorsoc.co.uk/>

Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/outdoorsoc/>

Twitter: @outdoorsoc

Instagram: uoyoutdoorsoc

Contact details for walk leaders will be provided as needed on some walks.

Costs:

Tickets:

Outdoor Society walks are open to everyone. To book a place on the trip, you must purchase a ticket from the YUSU website (<https://www.yusu.org/>). Tickets can also be brought on the day provided we have space on the coach, however we cannot guarantee you a place in these circumstances.

Tickets for the medium route go on sale from Monday - Wednesday of the given timetable week, and the long route tickets are available until Saturday evening. Everyone purchases the same ticket, which costs £11.50 plus a 50p booking fee for coach walks and £2 for local walks, and if you're not a member, we'll ask for an extra £2 on the day. The coach prices are currently higher than normal to account for social distancing reducing full occupancy of the coach. We will aim to reduce the price as soon as possible. Please note that exact change is preferred if you have it. If you are unable to pursue a ticket via the YUSU website please contact us and we can sort things out for you.

If you wish to join the medium group, but didn't purchase a ticket before Wednesday, you can purchase a long route ticket, however we can't guarantee that there will be space in the pub. If you wish to do this please let your walk coordinator know on the day. You can also bring a pack lunch on the medium walk; in this case please buy a long walk ticket.

Please note that it is YUSU's policy not to do refunds, unless a trip has to be cancelled.

Tickets for weekend trips are necessarily more expensive and include accommodation, transport and some catering. Prices are confirmed nearer to the trip, but are in the region of £60+.

Membership:

Membership costs £12 for the entire year. This option earns you a £2 discount on all Sunday Walks. If you are not sure at the moment, you can always come on a few Sunday walks as a non-member to see if it's for you!

Membership can be purchased online *via* the YUSU website (<https://www.yusu.org/>).

Membership also allows you to borrow equipment from the society, with payment of a deposit. The equipment that can be borrowed are tents, sleeping mats and bags. Unfortunately we cannot normally lend out maps, compasses or first aid kits (basically anything that is regularly used by our walk leaders). Please email or message our Facebook page for more information.

COIVD-19 Information:

As you are aware there are currently certain legal restrictions in the UK due to the current COIVD-19 pandemic. Outdoor Soc will operate within these restrictions as needed. This might result in our activities being curtailed at short notice, however we will do our best to continue to run at least local walks throughout the year.

If possible we will aim to run coach walks, however there will be of necessary changes to how we normally operate. Ticket numbers will be restricted to account for social distancing on the coach and any legal requirements. Ticket prices will be increased temporarily to account for this. Due to social distancing requirements we will ONLY be running a LONG walk on coach trips for the duration of the pandemic and any walkers MUST be able to handle the requirements of the walk. We will not be running pub lunches until restrictions are lifted.

Due to this we will be running a mixture of local and coach walks, with local walks having the standard long and medium walk lengths. In the event we are unable to run coach walks due to restrictions we will aim to substitute local walks in their place. Information will be available from our emails, website and social media accounts.

Socially distanced socials will be held where possible. If we are unable to meet in person we will hold virtual online socials in their place.

Walkers will be required to wear masks on the coach (unless exempt) and hand sanitiser will be provided (through you are welcome to bring your own). All attendees at both walks and socials will be required to comply with track and trace. Anyone refusing will not be allowed on the activity. All activities will be risk assessed and comply with Government, University and YUSU requirements.

We will aim to restart our full program of walks as soon as we are allowed to.

Duties of People:

Walk Leaders:

The walk leaders will lead the pre-planned walks. All walk leaders have either the National Silver Navigation Award or a lot of walking experience. The walk leader for a particular walk has overall responsibility for the group, but cannot take responsibility for a walker's personal safety or stupidity.

Walk Coordinator:

The walk coordinator is the walk leader that for a particular week will plan the routes of the walks, book the pub and generally lead the medium walk. They will also normally be the person ticking you on or off the coach to ensure that no one is left behind.

Backmarker:

The backmarker stays at the back of the group and make sure that all gates are closed after us and that we don't lose anyone. Although we try to provide backmarkers for all walks, sometimes due to walk leader availability this will not always be possible. If you find yourself at the back, please remember to close the gates!

Walkers:

As a walker you have responsibility for your own equipment and personal safety. We will do our best to keep you safe and provide warnings when needed, but we rely on walkers listening to and following the advice of the walk leader. Please DO NOT leave the group for any reason without your walk leader's permission and knowledge and if asked to be in a particular place at a given time make sure that you are there. We do not want to have to send out any search parties! Walkers that engage in persistent dangerous activities or persistently refuse to obey the walk leader or engage with the Society Code of Practice will be banned from the Society in line with YUSU's regulations and the Society Constitution for the safety of the group.

Walk Leader Training:

We train roughly six new walk leaders each year. Applications for walk leader training open towards the end of the Autumn Term and the training itself takes place over a weekend in mid-spring term. Please speak to one of our walk leaders or send us an email if you would like more information.

Committee:

The Outdoor Society Committee is elected each year by the society at our elections and AGM, which is normally towards the end of the Spring Term. The committee organise and run the walks. Positions on the committee are open to all paid members and are as follows:

Chair (Signatory):

Chairs the committee meetings. Responsible for walk tickets, writing the society grant, communicating with YUSU and looking after the email account. Will also act as the Trace and Trace Officer for the duration of the COVID-19 pandemic.

Treasurer (Signatory):

Manages the society's finances, writes the society grant, and looks after the cash box.

Secretary (Signatory):

Writes the weekly email, looks after the membership and mailing lists and helps to look after the email account.

Social Secretary:

Arranges socials for the society.

Webmaster:

Looks after the society website.

Transport Officer:

Arranges transport to the weekly walks and is the point of contact with the coach company.

Training and Safety Officer:

Organises walk leader training for new walk leaders.

Equipment Officer:

Looks after the society equipment and makes sure that each walk has the correct equipment.

Press, Publicity and Merchandise Officer:

Looks after the Facebook page and other social media. Organises any merchandise or publicity needed.

Mascots:

The Society Mascots are Oswald and Richard. You'll see them at Freshers' Fair and at points throughout the year. They are typically looked after by the Chair.

All walk leaders are automatically on the committee.

See our Committee Page on our website to find out who your current committee is!

<http://www.outdoorsoc.co.uk/committee.php>



Oswald (left) and Richard (right) enjoying the Malham walk in 2017!

Equipment:

Footwear:

It is important to have suitable footwear especially for the long walk. Walks, particularly in the winter months, can be wet and muddy and therefore soles that grip well on potentially slippery or rough ground are needed. We therefore recommend WALKING BOOTS. Sturdy trainers, and hiking boots are also acceptable. Please make sure your footwear fits to avoid blisters. We understand that some international students might struggle with bringing heavy walking boots due to baggage allowances and make allowances for this on the walks.

We do not advise:

- Plimsolls
- Converse
- Sandals
- Crocs
- Normal shoes/boots
- ANYTHING with heels
- Wellies are only acceptable on the medium walk

This is for YOUR comfort and safety. If you do not wear suitable footwear you are putting yourself and others at risk. Walk leaders will decide on the day whether your equipment is to be suitable for the conditions likely to be encountered. If you are wearing footwear which your walk leader does not believe is suitable for the walk you will be either asked to join the medium walk or not allowed on the coach. (This has occurred when some members turned up in trainers for a walk in lying snow or when walkers have worn crocs.) The walk leader is responsible for your safety and his or her decision is final.

Shop assistants can normally give advice on fitting boots and boot care. Good walking boots are expensive, but with good care will last several years.

Essential Equipment:

The following equipment is essential for walking in all weathers.

- Bring a WATERPROOF, even if the weather is fine in the morning. In the hills weather can be changeable.
- Make sure you have sufficient water for the day, particularly when it is hot.
- Make sure that you have a waterproof bag to carry your belongings in.

- Wear suitable layers for the weather. Gloves, hats and scarves are always useful in the winter time. You are able to leave layers on the coach if needed.
- If you are doing the medium walk please bring money for the pub. If you are doing the long walk please bring a pack lunch. Please bring snacks to get you through the day.
- Please DO NOT wear jeans as they can be very unpleasant to wear when wet. Walking trousers, leggings or shorts are much better!

Useful Equipment:

The following equipment is not essential, however some people find it useful, particularly on the long walk.

- Waterproof trousers
- Waterproof gloves
- Gaiters
- Walking stick/poles
- Sunhat
- Sun-cream
- Sunglasses
- Thermos Flask
- Insect Repellent

Outdoor Shops in York:

- GO Outdoors, Foss Bank
- Millets, Market Street
- The North Face, Low Petergate and York Designer Outlet
- Mountain Warehouse, Davygate and York Designer Outlet
- Craghoppers, York Designer Outlet
- Rohan, Stonegate

Sports Direct also sell a lot of walking equipment, at a much lower price than most of these shops.

The Ordnance Survey is the best source of outdoor maps: <https://www.ordnancesurvey.co.uk/>

First Aid:

Your walk leader will have an outdoor first aid kit with them. Several walk leaders are also qualified outdoor first aiders.

If you suffer from a medical condition please make sure you have appropriate medication (first aiders are not allowed to give medication) and if need be inform your walk leader in confidence so they can take it into account in the walk.

Mountain Rescue can be called for all off road accidents in the UK by calling 999 and asking for the police and then the mountain rescue (make sure you give the county you are in as mobile calls can sometimes go to the wrong force).

More information about first aid can be found at the following websites:

<http://www.redcross.org.uk/What-we-do/First-aid/Everyday-First-Aid>

<http://www.nhs.uk/Conditions/Accidents-and-first-aid/Pages/Introduction.aspx>

<http://www.sja.org.uk/sja/first-aid-advice.aspx>

Ticks:

Ticks are small blood-sucking arthropods, which can potentially carry diseases such as Lyme Disease, though not all bites result in infections. If you find a tick remove with either a tick removal tool or a pair of sharp tweezers by grasping the tick as near the skin as possible, without squeezing the body, and pull without twisting. After removal clean with antiseptic and make sure that you wash your hands.

If you have been bitten by a tick it is important that you monitor yourself for symptoms of Lyme Disease. The disease shows itself with flu-like symptoms (aching muscles, fever, pains and tiredness) and also has characteristic rash shaped like a bulls-eye (3-30 days later), however in up to a third of cases this will not appear. If you experience ANY of these symptoms after a tick bite seek medical attention ASAP. Lyme Disease can be treated by antibiotics, but if left untreated can lead to more serious problems such as arthritis and nerve or heart disease.

Tick bites can be avoided by keeping covered up; avoiding walking in bracken, long grass and vegetation and by using insect repellent.

More information can be found at the following websites:

<http://www.lymediseaseaction.org.uk/about-ticks/>

<http://www.tickalert.org/>

<http://stopthetick.co.uk/>

Blisters:

Blisters are minor friction burns that are especially common with people who are unused to prolonged walking in walking boots. Blisters typically get better without medical treatment, but it is recommended to protect a blister from further rubbing while it is healing by covering with a plaster.

The first sign of a blister is a 'hot spot', followed by the formation of a blister. If you think that you are developing a blister on the walk your walk leader can provide you with plasters to protect the site. Well-fitting footwear and thick socks are the best ways of preventing blisters.

More information can be found at:

<http://www.nhs.uk/Conditions/Blisters/Pages/Introduction.aspx>

In Event of an Accident:

While the society takes all possible precautions to avoid accidents, including giving necessary warnings to walkers and monitoring weather conditions, unfortunately not all accidents can be prevented due to the inherently hazardous nature of rambling. Walkers can assist in preventing accidents by wearing correct equipment, including suitable footwear, and obeying the walk leaders.

In the event of an accident the First Aider(s) should determine the severity of injury:

If a minor injury (not requiring immediate attention of Mountain Rescue) the Walk Leader should:

- Perform first aid as necessary.
- Bear in mind the state of the rest of the group. If weather is inclement walkers should be instructed to put on any additional layers they have and take available shelter.
- The rest of the group should stand well clear; obey any instructions and not obstruct the first aiders/walk leaders.
- Contact Walk Coordinator (long walk) or Long Walk Leader (medium walk) ASAP if injury will entail a significant delay or assistance will be needed.
- If after first aid the walker is happy to continue with the walk do so, but monitor their condition and consider cutting the walk short if needed.
- If after first aid the walker can move in their own time, but is not capable of finishing the full walk take the shortest route back to the coach or a suitable pick up spot at a suitable speed.
- Do NOT make an injured walker do more than they feel capable of doing.

If a major injury (requiring immediate attention of Mountain Rescue) the Walk Leader should:

- Perform first aid as necessary.
- Other walk leaders while initial examination is done should determine exact location and grid reference of group and consider where nearest mobile signal is likely to be.
- Bear in mind the state of the rest of the group. If weather is inclement walkers should be instructed to put on any additional layers they have and take available shelter.
- The rest of the group should stand well clear; obey any instructions and not obstruct the first aiders/walk leaders.
- Once nature of injuries is determined and if there IS mobile signal at the group's current location Mountain Recuse should be contacted and the Walk Coordinator (long walk) or Long Walk Leader (medium walk) notified of the situation. The University should also be notified *via* the Emergency Security number as well (44(0)1904 323333).

- Once nature of injuries is determined and if there is NOT mobile signal one of the walk leaders (not the most experienced first aider) should go with at least TWO members of the group to contact Mountain Recuse as detailed above.
- As soon as possible one of the walk leaders should lead the rest of the group back to the coach or a suitable pick up spot to minimise risk of hypothermia to walkers.
- The responsible first aider should stay with the casualty along with at least TWO members of the group.
- If possible self-evacuate casualty to an easier location to be met by Mountain Recuse, but NEVER move a casualty if their injuries will be increased unless there is immediate danger.

Please note that:

- Mountain Recuse will take at least 40 minutes to reach the scene and can be easily be longer.
- Hypothermia is always a risk under these circumstances.
- First Aiders and Walk Leaders should do everything possible to deal with the situation, but should NEVER put themselves in danger or allow walkers to.
- If any of the walkers are first aiders/medical students any assistance they feel they can give will be welcomed.
- Under no circumstances should any information concerning the accident be passed on to anyone other than the authorities, the University, YUSU or committee members. This is to ensure that if relatives needed to be informed of an accident they hear it from the appropriate authorities and not from a news-outlet or social media.
- Walkers should not post anything about an accident on social media. Information will be passed to the rest of the society, if needed, *via* official society routes of communication.
- The Walk Coordinator should monitor the situation.
- The chain of command in an emergency is Walk Coordinator, Long Walk Leader, Backmarkers, other walk leaders/committee members present, but advice should be taken from most experienced walk leaders as needed. When dealing with injuries the most experienced First Aider is in charge.
- Keep the group informed with the current situation to help prevent worries and panic.
- All walk leaders should have a copy of the emergency contact list and make sure that their details are up to date on it.
- WHATEVER happens the walker leader and backmarker are in charge until the appropriate authorities arrive and all instructions MUST be obeyed for the group's safety.

Emergency Procedures:

In the event of a group failing to return to the coach on time where there has been no contact to indicate any delay or accident wait at least 15 minutes in case they are just running late due to slow walkers or timing issues. If the delay is over 15 minutes attempt to contact walk leader/backmarker to determine location and expected ETA, though please note that mobile phone signal can be limited in walk locations and no answer is not a reason to panic.

Consider planned route and any possible extensions and cuts which might have been taken and make sure you know who you are looking for. Walk Coordinator should have the walk list. Make sure that there are no missed calls on walk leaders' mobiles.

Search Parties:

If search parties are needed the following procedure should be used:

- Send small groups consisting of walk leaders and regular walkers along most likely routes. Groups should NEVER be less than TWO, ideally three if dealing with a larger search area.
- Ask people you meet.
- 15 minutes out, 15 minutes in.
- If they find them they must walk them in.

While search parties are out:

- The walk coordinator should stay at the coach/central point.
- Keep walkers on the coach updated with the situation
- Consider second search routes.

After all search parties are back from the first search:

- Wait until all parties are back
- Do a second search, 30 minutes out and 30 minutes in.
- Prepare information to contact Police/Mountain Rescue if needed.

After second search:

- Contact Police/Mountain Rescue/University of York (44(0)1904 323333).
- Consider third search with a radius of 45 minutes.
- Contact and inform other Committee members not on the walk if needed, particularly if they can monitor email/social media accounts for information.
- Keep people on coach informed.
- Once the authorities arrive they are in charge.

If walkers are missing, particularly at the end of the day, the Walk Coordinator should find out:

- Who you are looking for
- Last known location
- Expected search radius
- If there is anyone who has contact details for them

- If in the town/village walk leaders should check toilets, pubs, tea rooms ect. Walkers are well known to happily hole up in them!
- If a walker had been lost on the hillside search teams will be needed and Mountain Rescue might very well need to be called.

Walkers should not leave the group without the knowledge or permission of the Walk Leader. If you do find yourself separated from the group try to contact a member of the group or the University of York Emergency contact number (44(0)1904 323333), though signal might be poor or non-existent. Take shelter and do NOT leave current position unless staying puts you in greater danger. The Walk Leader will shortly notice your absence and attempt to locate you. Moving just widens the search radius and makes location more changing.

If part of a group is lost (such as the back of the group) the two walk leaders should try to contact each other and determine relative locations. If contact is not possible the walk leader and backmarker should lead though to a known location on the planned walk route and wait for contact to be made. The planned walk route in this circumstance should not be left unless it will enable a defined point such as the coach or the pub to be reached. The Walk Leader should try to keep the Backmarker in sight at all times and group numbers should be checked at regular intervals. In the event that there is no Backmarker walkers should remain within sight of the Walk Leader at all times.

Walk Leaders should know how many people they have in their group at the start and end of the day. The Walk Coordinator should tick people on and off to coach to prevent accidentally leaving walkers behind at the walk location.

In the event that an entire group is lost:

- Attempt to contact other Walk Leader
- Attempt to determine location using landmarks and satellite data
- ASK passing walkers if needed.
- Retrace steps to last known location.
- Head to a known location, such as a town or village.
- Try to triangulate or guesstimate to position yourself.
- If really lost or visibility is poor STOP. Wandering aimlessly only makes search area larger.

If a group is likely to be significantly delayed or weather is bad take the shortest possible route back to the pub/coach. If needed (and possible) contact other walk leader and arrange a pick up at a suitable location. Head-torches should always be carried during periods when days are shorter.

When using a Mountain Whistle the international distress signal is 6 blasts followed by a pause of 1 minute, then repeated. The response is 3 blasts followed by 1 minute, repeated. Continue distress signal until located. Unless assistance is required do NOT do anything that could be mistaken for a distress signal. Mountain whistles are in the large first aid kits.

If a majority of Walk Leaders agree that a decision is dangerous then it should NOT be acted on.

Walkers' Codes:

The Country Code, The Countryside Code and The Scottish Outdoor Access Code are sets of rules for visitors to rural areas of the UK in order to protect the countryside.

The Country Code:

The Country Code was developed by several organisations in the 1930s. The most widely accepted version of The Country Code was published in 1981 by The Countryside Commission.

- Enjoy the countryside and respect its life and work
- Guard against all risk of fire
- Leave all gates as you found them
- Keep your pets under close control
- Keep to public paths across farmland
- Use gates and stiles to cross fences, hedges and walls
- Leave livestock, crops and machinery alone
- Take your litter home
- Help to keep all water clean
- Protect wildlife, plants and trees
- Take special care on country roads
- Make no unnecessary noise

Countryside Code:

The Country Code was updated in 2004 and became the Countryside Code to take account of the introduction of new open access legalisation.

- Be safe - plan ahead and follow any signs
- Leave gates and property as you find them
- Protect plants and animals, and take your litter home
- Keep dogs under close control
- Consider other people

Scotland has a different code called the Scottish Outdoor Access Code. We, as a society, do not plan walks in Scotland, but you will need to be aware of it if you ever walk there.

More information can be found at:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/the-countryside-code>

On the Walk:

Road Walking:

We try to avoid road walking as much as possible, however it is not always avoidable. If we are required to road walk and there is no pavement please walk in SINGLE file on the CORRECT side of the road and obey general traffic safety. When road walking this is opposite to the side that the cars travelling in the same direction as you are (cars in the UK drive on the left and therefore walkers walk on the RIGHT of the road). This enables you to see approaching cars and move out of the way if needed. Your walk leader and backmarker will attempt to warn you of on-coming cars, however please be aware that there might be very little warning.

Steep Slopes:

When ascending or descending a steep slope, particularly if it is wet, muddy or icy, please leave a gap between you and the person in front of you so that if someone does slip no one else is knocked over. Your walk leader will often alert you when this is particularly important.

Public Rights of Way:

A *public footpath* in England and Wales is a path on which the public have a legally protected right to pass and repass along. We have a very extensive network of such public footpaths, some of which are hundreds of years old, dating from before the enclosure of agricultural land into fields.

A *public bridleway* is a path along which the public have the right to walk and ride or lead a horse. The law allows cycles to be also used on bridleways, but the landowner is not required to facilitate the use of cycles and cyclists are obliged to give way to other users.

A *byway open to all traffic (BOAT)* is a route along which the public is also allowed to use vehicles, but is used mainly by the public as a footpath and a bridleway.

A *restrictive byway* is a path along which the public have the right to walk, ride or use non-mechanically propelled vehicles (bicycles, horse-drawn carriages ect).

A *permissive path, permitted path or concessionary path* is a path whose use is allowed by the landowner. A permissive path will often not be open all year round depending on the needs of the landowner and may not be marked on maps.

The Right to Roam allows the public to walk on *access land*. Access land may be closed for up to 28 days per year, while rights of way must be open all year round unless special permission is given by the local authority.

Access land is land which by law the public has the right to conditional access, normally uncultured land such as moorland and coast land.

More information can be found at:

<http://www.ramblers.org.uk/advice/rights-of-way-law-in-england-and-wales/basics-of-rights-of-way-law.aspx>

<https://www.gov.uk/right-of-way-open-access-land/overview>

<http://www.ramblers.org.uk/advice/paths-and-access/england/what-is-the-right-to-roam.aspx>