



Altrincham and District Rambling Club Covid 19 – ADRC Members Group Walking ‘Open-up’ Guidance May 24th, 2021

The following is the latest ADRC Covid 19 guidance document, which is to be used in an effort to provide Club Members with safe and enjoyable group walks. This guidance is not designed to be fully comprehensive and cover all eventualities. **Members are asked to read these guidelines and determine whether they wish to walk** and are reminded that should they decide to participate they **must take responsibility for themselves**, whilst looking out for and helping others, as necessary.

Introduction

The UK Government, since 27th March 21, has allowed group walking and this is now also allowed via more public based Covid 19 rules. In addition, the vaccine programme has progressed very well and the majority of our members have been ‘double-jabbed’, which all adds to our overall confidence and safety. That said, the virus is still prevalent, with new variants in certain parts of the UK and hence the Club still advises that caution should be taken in all aspects of our walk planning and on the day of the walk.

Walks Re-commencement Date

This physically occurred for ADRC on 14th April, after the ‘busy’ Easter holidays. The Club are now organising a full ‘normal’ programme of longer “A” walks, and shorter “C” walks. The concept of some future “B” walks is also being considered.

The Club still recommends that walks should continue to start from a good-sized car park, or adequate road-side parking, and where possible “honey trap” areas should be avoided. Walks can now be undertaken in Wales, as well as England. The Club continue to recommend that **walk start times should be at 0930 at the latest**, in order to minimise exposure to the general public at the walk meeting point and en route.

Walk Participation

Along with current UK Government advice, Club walks can now accommodate **up to 30 participants**, still at the discretion of the walk leader. The Club are still retaining the current booking system and hence if a Member wishes to join a walk advertised in a monthly circular, the Member should contact the walk leader and seek participation agreement. Members will be notified by email or telephone, depending on how the contact is made and applications can be made up to 18:00 hours the day before the walk and acceptance will be on a **first come first served basis**.

Walk Leaders

As usual walk leaders will be in control of all walking related issues, from walk creation to the completion of the walk on the programmed day, and they reserve the right to decline a member’s involvement, including any non-booked members who turn up on the walk day, or, if the leader has chosen to limit the numbers.

Travel and Transport

The Club are monitoring the ‘normal’ meet at Altrincham Railway Station situation, however it is felt too early to recommend such a change. Car travel therefore continues to be preferable and, under the current UK Government advice, the **provision of lifts for walk participants is now allowed**, albeit at the discretion of car drivers. Travel arrangements will be in good time for the advertised walk start time and place, where social distancing will continue to be sensibly observed. It is the Members responsibility to be at the appointed venue and to be ‘booted-up’ and ready to walk 15 minutes before the walk start time in order that they can hear the walk and Covid-19 briefing. **Latecomers may miss this briefing, as the walk leader reserves the right to do the briefing and leave the parking area as quickly as possible.**

Walk Planning

In order that the **new Group Walk Hazard Appraisal form** can be completed pre-walk (this being a condition of our insurers), any ARDC group walk must have been reconnoitred, or at the very least the walk should be known by the walk leader to such an extent that hazards can be identified and briefed out accordingly.

Safety

Whilst the outdoor Covid 19 risk is now low, walkers may continue to wear masks/gloves if they wish. Caution should be continued when groups approach stiles, gates etc and a sensible walking distance should be maintained at all times, including at coffee/lunch stops etc. It is better for walkers to walk side by side, rather than in a line.

If there is a local outbreak 'hot-spot', a walk may need to be cancelled at very short notice. Leaders will contact participating walkers accordingly, to the best of their ability.

Whilst ADRC Members understand and respect the countryside, extra care will be required until group walking settles back down to the 'new normal'. This extra care applies to being close to, or within, private and/or access land, in order to avoid the occurrence of any emergency situations that would require 3rd party assistance. A full hand wash should be undertaken by Members on return to home.

Communication

The Club's circular production is now back to normal and walk submission details should be with the Programme Secretary, no later than the 11/12th of the month, having been initially communicated with the respective Walk Organiser. If there are any 'flare ups', any changes that need to be made because of Covid related issues, after the circular has been issued, will be notified to internet enabled Members, via the new mass-mail system.

Summary

As long as Members continue to act responsibly, group walking outdoors will be safe. We have to learn to live with ongoing risks, our own new rules, our own new safe good practice, and our new documentation etc.

The above guidance can be/will be adjusted as and when the Government advises further 'Open-up' of the country and things hopefully revert back to something like the 'old-normal'. Should any adjustments be required, members will be notified via the web-site, mass-mail system and informal communications.

ADRC, 24/05/21