

We are recommending that u3a walking group leaders follow the Ramblers risk assessment for walking groups.

Walk Leader		Date of walk	
u3a group:		Date of risk assessment	
		Date of recce	

Possible hazards	Who might be harmed and how?	Ways to control the risk	Action taken?
Bad weather (including extreme temperatures)	Walkers – risk of illness and injury, risk of the group being stranded	Check the weather forecast and postpone/cancel if necessary. Advise walkers to bring suitable clothing and items for the conditions.	☐
		Make a note of 'escape routes' on the recce.	☐
Busy roads	Walkers – risk of vehicle collisions	Avoid routes along busy roads and/or check for suitable crossing places on the recce.	☐
Steep, slippery or muddy sections.	Walkers – risk of trips/slips	Check for muddy/slippery sections on the recce and adapt the route if necessary. Advise walkers to bring suitable footwear for the conditions.	☐
Livestock	Walkers – risk of injury	Cross fields with livestock calmly and quietly, keeping the group together. Be prepared to divert around livestock if necessary.	☐
	Risk of property damage if livestock escape	Follow the Countryside Code (England & Wales) and Access Code (Scotland). Leave gates and property as you find them.	☐
Cliffs or sheer drops	Walkers – risk of falls	Check paths are suitable for a group to use safely and make changes if necessary.	☐
		Follow any local warnings or signs and advise walkers to keep away from the edge.	☐
Dogs	Walkers, livestock, horses – risk of injury	Dogs can only be allowed on walks with the permission of the Group Leader and provided they follow the guidance in The Dog Walking Code provided by The Countryside Code	☐

How to carry out a risk assessment

This template is a tool to help you plan and lead walking safely. You must do a risk assessment for each walk.

- We've included suggestions for the ways to control the risks – **you do not need to tick every box**. The important thing is to identify the potential hazards and note the actions you will take to reduce the risk.
- It's important to carry out a risk assessment **before** the walk takes place. You should start filling it out when planning your walk and update it with any extra hazards that you notice on your recce.
- Think about the different types of hazards and risks. We've included some common examples but think carefully about your own walk in case anything needs adding.
- Next, consider the steps you can take to minimise the risk. Remember that this may sometimes mean changing your original plan.