



# Safeguarding children and vulnerable adults

## Guidance for the public and Ramblers members

**We are committed to ensuring the well-being of everyone who participates in Ramblers activities and will take every practical step to minimise the risk of harm, paying particular attention to the needs of those who are most vulnerable, including children and vulnerable adults. We are also committed to supporting our hardworking volunteers and staff who help deliver our charitable aims.**

**Please help us by reading the following guidance and following it where appropriate. It is particularly relevant to children and young people; their parents, guardians and carers; vulnerable adults and others with special needs; and their carers and support workers.**

We work to make walking accessible to all, and want to share its benefits with as wide a range of people as possible. We are committed to equal opportunities and aim to treat everyone with dignity and respect, and not to discriminate on grounds of age, ethnic origin, gender, sexuality, disability or beliefs.

Everyone is welcome to participate in our activities, so long as an activity is practically appropriate for a particular individual. However we are not able to provide specialist care and support for those that need it. We are also unable to accept responsibility for children under the age of 15 or those aged 15-18 without parental consent.

When attending Ramblers activities:

- 1 Check that an activity is appropriate for you before turning up. Led walks listings usually include an indication of length, pace and difficulty so check this carefully, and follow any advice about clothing and equipment. If in doubt, contact the organisers in advance.
- 2 If you are under 15, you will need to be accompanied by a responsible adult when participating in activities, such as your parent, legal guardian, carer, teacher or youth worker.
- 3 If you are aged 15, 16 or 17 you can join in any activity unaccompanied (as long as it does not involve an overnight stay) if you bring along a valid 15-17 Year Old Parental Consent Card as proof of parental consent. Consent is needed to enable decisions to be made about and/or administer emergency first aid and/or other medical treatment if necessary. The cards are available free to 15-17 year olds so long as the application is signed by your parent or legal guardian. For more information see [www.ramblers.org.uk/localgroups](http://www.ramblers.org.uk/localgroups) or phone 020 7339 8500 and ask for the Safeguarding Officer. Some local Ramblers Groups issue these cards too.

- 4 Alternatively you could provide the leader with a signed and dated letter from your parent or legal guardian that clearly indicates that consent has been given for participation in Ramblers activities. The letter should include the names and address of the parent/guardian and the young person(s) concerned.
- 5 On some activities we may ask parents or guardians to fill in a parental consent form.
- 6 If you are under 18, you can only participate in activities involving an overnight stay if accompanied by an adult with parental responsibility for you.
- 7 Please do not be offended if asked for proof of age or of parental consent.
- 8 If you are a responsible adult accompanying children or young people under 18, be aware that you are responsible for their direct care and supervision, and that this is not the responsibility of Ramblers staff and volunteers.
- 9 If you are an adult who is unable for whatever reason to care for themselves independently, or needs specific help in order to participate in an activity safely (for example because of an illness or disability), you must be accompanied by another adult such as a carer or support worker who takes responsibility for your care. If you are also a Ramblers member and the activity is aimed at members, there is no need for your carer or support worker to be a member too.
- 10 If you are a carer or support worker accompanying someone who is unable to care for themselves independently or who needs special assistance, please be aware you are responsible for their direct care and/or special assistance, and that this is not the responsibility of Ramblers staff and volunteers.
- 11 Please tell the walk leader or organiser discreetly and in confidence about any medical conditions that may affect the ability of you or the people in your care to participate safely in the activity.
- 12 Before and during the activity, follow the advice of the leader or activity organiser. Leaders have to take responsibility for everyone's safety and enjoyment, and can refuse to accept people who in their judgement may place themselves or the group in danger or seriously disrupt the activity.
- 13 If you have any concerns about the behaviour of anyone participating in an activity, such as abusive, threatening or inappropriate behaviour, raise this discreetly with the walk leader. If you have concerns that a child or vulnerable person is being placed in danger or abused, you can raise this with your local authority, the NSPCC helpline (tel 0808 800 5000, [www.nspcc.org.uk/helpline](http://www.nspcc.org.uk/helpline)) and/or the Ramblers Safeguarding Officer (tel 020 7339 8500, [childandvulnerableadults@ramblers.org.uk](mailto:childandvulnerableadults@ramblers.org.uk)).

For more information see [www.ramblers.org.uk/volunteer/safeguarding](http://www.ramblers.org.uk/volunteer/safeguarding).