



Safeguarding children and vulnerable adults

Guidance for participants
March 2017

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 help everyone enjoy walking. We are committed to equal opportunities and diversity and aim to treat everyone with dignity and respect, and not to discriminate on grounds of age, disability, ethnicity, race, sex (gender), sexual orientation, gender reassignment, religion or belief or non-belief, marriage or civil partnership, or pregnancy or maternity.

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 and young people under 18 who must be accompanied by a responsible adult.

When attending Ramblers activities:

- 1 Check that an activity is appropriate for you before turning up. Group 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 18, 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 under 18 and are participating in activities using tools, such as footpath maintenance, you must be supervised at all times by a parent, guardian or responsible adult.
- 4 Please do not be offended if asked for proof of age.
- 5 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.

- 6 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 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.
- 7 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.
- 8 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.
- 9 Before and during the activity, please 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.
- 10 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 (in the case of children, tel 0808 800 5000, www.nspcc.org.uk/helpline) and/or the Ramblers safeguarding officer (tel 020 7339 8594, rebeccah.abraham@ramblers.org.uk). If you suspect that anyone is ever in immediate danger call the police.
- 11 Please note that the consent cards previously issued to 15-17 year olds are no longer valid, and everyone under 18 must be accompanied by a responsible adult when participating in Ramblers activities.

For more information about our policies and guidelines on safeguarding children and vulnerable adults, see www.ramblers.org.uk/volunteer/safeguarding.