

Ramblers Restart: Booking systems for group walks

This guide explains some of the options available to manage the number of people on your group walk.

As a walk leader, you can decide how big a group you feel **safe and comfortable** to lead, and can use a booking system to manage numbers if you need to.

If you use a booking system, it's important to make sure that the booking process is **fair, transparent and accessible**.



Remember – to be covered by our insurance, walks must be advertised in advance in **at least one** of the following ways:

- On the Ramblers website and app via the Group Walks and Events Manager (GWEM)
- On your group or area website
- In a printed programme
- On a public social media page (not a closed or private page)

Keeping your data safe & secure

When choosing a booking method, it's important to think about how names and contact details will be collected and managed, so that you keep everyone's data safe.

Platforms like Facebook and Meetup allow you to message attendees directly without collecting their contact details.

- ⊖ Don't collect more information than you need – just ask for names and a contact phone number or email address.
- ✔ Only use the details to send messages about the arrangements for the walk.
- ✔ Keep any paper list securely, where only you can access it. If you're keeping an electronic copy make sure it's password protected.
- ✔ If you're emailing the group, send it to everyone individually or use the bcc option so they don't see each other's email addresses.
- ⊖ Don't share the data with anyone, unless requested by NHS contact tracers.
- ✔ Destroy or delete the list **21 days** after the walk.
- ✔ If you are asked to provide walk contacts for NHS contact tracing, please let us know at volunteersupport@ramblers.zendesk.com

Booking systems – the options

1. Contacting the Walk Leader

One option is simply to include a phone number or email address to contact the walk leader in your walk description.

Anyone who wants to take part must contact the walk leader (or another volunteer) in advance, to confirm they have a place (or be added to a waiting list).

Pros

- ✔ No new technology required
- ✔ Can be done by phone, text or email
- ✔ Contact information goes directly to the walk leader



Add the phrase '**Fully Booked**' to the title of your walk on the Group Walk and Events Manager (GWEM) once all the places are filled.

Cons



- ➔ Walk leaders may receive a large number of emails or phone calls

2. Create a Facebook Event



If your group or area has a public [Facebook](#) page, you can use it to create events with a limited number of spaces.

If your group doesn't already have a Facebook page, this may be a good time to start one!

Pros

- ✔ Free
- ✔ Easy to use
- ✔ Members can post questions on the event page
- ✔ Having an active Facebook page is a good way to attract new members

Cons

- ➔ No waiting list option
- ➔ Not everyone may have (or want to set up) a Facebook account

See Facebook's guide to [Creating and Managing a Facebook Page](#) and [Creating an event for a Facebook Page](#) for more information.

3. Create a Meetup Event

Some groups already advertise their group walks on [Meetup](#), and find it a good way to attract new members.



Pros


- ✔ Easy to use
- ✔ Automatically creates a waiting list and fills spaces if somebody drops out
- ✔ Members can post questions on the event page
- ✔ Having an active Meetup page is a good way to attract new members

Cons

- ➔ You need to pay to create a Meetup group – it costs about £80 for a 6 month subscription which lets you create up to 3 groups

See Meetup's guides to [Starting a Meetup Group](#) and [Creating a Meetup event](#)

4. List the walk on Eventbrite

[Eventbrite](#) is an online  ticketing platform that you can use to create a fixed number of places for people to register for your walk.

Pros

- ✔ Free
- ✔ No account required to sign up (but you will need an account to create the event)
- ✔ Can manually add attendees if they're not able to go online themselves

Cons

- ➔ Waiting list doesn't automatically invite the next person if someone drops out
- ➔ A bit more complicated than Facebook or Meetup

See Eventbrite's guide to [Creating an Event](#).

5. Create a sign-up sheet with Google Forms

[Google Forms](#) lets you create an online form with your own questions – you could use this to create an online sign-up sheet.

Pros

- ✔ Free
- ✔ Can list multiple walks on the same link
- ✔ No account required to sign up (but you will need a Google account to create the form)
- ✔ More options when creating your form – e.g. you could limit the number of walks that each person can sign up to

Cons

- ➔ You need to create your own sign-up form
- ➔ You need to collect contact details and store them securely (see **Keeping your data safe and secure** above).

See Google's guide to [using Google Forms](#).

If you have any questions about **limiting numbers on group walks**, please contact the delivery team:

volunteersupport@ramblers.zendesk.com