

Planning group walks

Quick guide

Restrictions are easing, but it's clear that COVID-19 has not gone away. We need to **be flexible** and **organise walks in different ways**.

This guide outlines the steps you **must** take when planning group walks, including how to:

- limit the number of people on walks
- promote your walk clearly
- support the walk leaders in your group

It will be particularly useful for **walk programme coordinators & GWEM editors**.



Remember – in order to volunteer, your role needs to be recorded on our system. Check your volunteer roles:

<https://ramblers.goassemble.com>

What is a 'small' group walk?

There may be differences to the maximum group size, depending on whether you live in England, Scotland or Wales.

Check our guidance on [Restarting Ramblers activities](#) for the latest updates.

1. Planning walks

- ✔ **Contact walk leaders in your group to check their availability**

Remember that COVID-19 has affected everyone in different ways. Some volunteers may not be able to lead walks at this time, and no one should feel that they have to lead a walk.

Before volunteering, everyone should consider their personal circumstances – and **make the decision that's right for them**.

- ✔ **Be flexible in your planning**

Some groups organise **rolling programmes** throughout the year – meaning that walks can be added to the programme easily at any time.

This is helpful as fewer walk leaders may be available, and there might be local restrictions where you plan to walk.

- ✖ **We do not recommend planning a 3 or 6 month walk programme, or distributing printed programmes.**

Plans may need to change at short notice, so think about different ways to organise your walks.



Think about organising **pop-up walks** too, if walk leaders are available at short notice.

Just remember to advertise the walks in advance – and give walkers enough time to book on!

- ✔ **Think about different types of walk**

Some people may be new to walking, not have walked for some time, or feel anxious about joining a group.



When planning, it's important for walk programme coordinators and walk leaders to consider:

- **The latest government guidance on travel and transport**

Staying local will often be the best option – we recommend planning circular walks which can be accessed on foot. See our page on [Restarting Ramblers activities](#) for the latest updates.

- **Location & route**

Avoid busy and congested areas, or narrow footpaths, to make physical distancing easier.

- **Length, pace and difficulty**

Consider organising **short walks**, at an **easy or leisurely pace** to help people get back into walking.

- **Facilities**

Many facilities such as car parks and public toilets may be closed for some time.

2. Limiting numbers

- ✔ **You must limit the group size, in line with the latest government guidelines**

Check our guidance on [Restarting Ramblers activities](#) for the latest updates in England, Scotland & Wales.

- ✔ **Decide on a booking process for walkers**

There are several options available: walkers can contact the walk leader directly to book a place, or you could create an event page on websites like Facebook, Meetup or Eventbrite.

Take a look at the [Quick Guide to Booking Systems](#) to help choose the best option for your group.



It's important that your booking process is **fair and accessible**, so that everyone who wants to join a walk has the chance to do so.

We recommend following the principle of **first come first served**, and starting a **waiting list** to fill places if anyone drops out.

You could ask people to book onto one or two walks initially, to give more people a chance to sign up.

3. Publicising walks

- ✔ **Advertise your walk publicly**

We recommend adding your walk to the Group Walks and Events Manager (GWEM) so that it appears on the Ramblers website and app.

Read our [insurance guidance](#) for more details of where to advertise Ramblers group walks.

- ✔ **Write clear and informative walk descriptions**

As well as the normal information you provide about the walk, you must include:

- **Instructions on how to book** – remember to include a link if you have set up a booking page on another website
- **The walk leader's contact details** – so that walkers can get in touch with questions
- **Information about physical distancing, hygiene, and any extra steps** – such as what to expect at the start of the walk, car parking arrangements, and things to bring.

Use the **'additional details'** section on GWEM for any links – they won't work if placed in the walk description.



Update your area or group webpage to let everyone know about the changes. Remember to include a link to the [latest guidance](#) for volunteers and walkers.

4. Supporting walk leaders

- ✔ **Keep in touch with walk leaders regularly**

You might need to make changes to walks at short notice. If so – remember to update the walk listing and contact everyone who has booked onto the walk to let them know.

We also have specific [guidance for walk leaders](#) outlining the steps that they must take before, during and after the walk.

For more information, contact the delivery team: volunteersupport@ramblers.zendesk.com