



Group Newsletter – July 2026

We were recently informed by two long-standing members that they would no longer be walking with us because of some incidents that had occurred. It is not appropriate to relate the details here but we have decided to use this newsletter to give some pointers which we hope will keep our walks enjoyable for everyone.

Choose the right walk for you

It is every walker's responsibility to take note of the grading and distance of each walk on the programme and only to join walks which you are confident you are fit enough to be able to complete at a steady pace. The gradings are explained here:

Easy. These walks are suitable for anyone who has some level of fitness and who doesn't have a mobility difficulty or health concerns. The walks are generally suitable for pushchairs but they may need to be lifted over occasional obstructions. You don't need walking boots; comfortable shoes or trainers will be suitable.

Leisurely. If you have at least a little bit of experience of walking in the countryside and you have a reasonable level of fitness, these walks will be suitable for you. The walks are likely to include unsurfaced rural paths and may also include stiles. We recommend you wear walking boots and bring warm, waterproof clothing as appropriate for the season.

Moderate. These walks may include some steep paths and open country walking. They may be at a faster pace so you will need a good level of fitness and experience of walking in the countryside. Walking boots and warm, waterproof clothing are essential.

Other gradings are Easy Access (suitable for wheelchair users), Strenuous and Technical but our group does not currently offer any walks at these gradings.

Our general rule of thumb, which works for most walks, is that the group should be able to cover the ground at an average of two miles per hour, including all stops and allowing for ascents and negotiating stiles and other obstacles.

Not everyone in a group will walk at the same speed. The leader may ask faster walkers to stop several times to allow everyone else to catch up and this should be accepted as a normal feature of a group walk.

Problems can occur when a walker misjudges their level of fitness and falls so far behind the group that it adversely affects other people's enjoyment of the walk and the ability to complete the walk in a reasonable time. If using public transport, it could also jeopardise catching the intended return bus or train.

If this situation arises it is the walk leader's responsibility to decide how to resolve it. Ramblers' training package for walk leaders includes guidance on contingency planning for unexpected events. Whatever the leader decides to do we ask everyone to respect that decision.

Inappropriate behaviour

We take all reports of inappropriate behaviour by anyone on a walk very seriously. If you experience unwanted remarks or touching or any other form of behaviour from someone else on a walk that you consider to be inappropriate you should let us know. You can report it to the walk leader during or at the end of the walk. If you don't feel comfortable doing this, or if your concern is about the walk leader's behaviour, please contact our Chair, Tracy Ockley on 07400 400528 or our Programme Secretary, David Trease on 07534 049707 as soon as possible after the walk has finished.

We also have a formal complaints procedure. If you wish to invoke this you should contact Tracy, who can also provide a copy of the procedure to anyone who would like to see it.

Peter Gallagher
Acting Group Secretary on behalf of the Group Committee