

This is not a definitive leadership document, it is written solely for LFW.

There is a difference between taking someone for a walk and leading a walk. If you are leading for LFW then you should be aware of the basic principles required of a leader. Note that no matter how well you lead you will always be criticized due to the different expectations of the people you are leading. Help and advice is always available whilst you are planning your walk, please talk to the Walks Co-ordinator or any committee member. When leading for the first time help will always be on hand from experienced leaders should you require assistance.

You should be able to/or:

- Use a map and compass
- Have basic knowledge of first aid
- Assess hazards and risks
- Use emergency procedures
- Communicate
- Check the weather and know of its effects.

GUIDE LINES FOR WALK LENGTHS AND HEIGHT GAIN

These are the accepted gradings for the walks offered by our Club:-

“B” party is usually 8 to 11 miles taken at a reasonable pace and can include some hill walking up to 1500 feet of ascent.

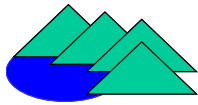
“A-“ party is usually 10 to 12 miles and is intended to be suitable for those wanting slightly more than a B walk. In Summer this walk is often planned as a direct ascent of a summit without the additional mileage of an A walk.

“A” party is usually anything between 11 and 14 miles and is suitable for the reasonably fit fell walker and includes uphill climbing for anything up to 3,000 feet.

“A+” party walks at a fast pace and can climb up to 4,500 feet and cover anything between 14 and 18 miles.

YOUR WALK

1. Preparation: walkout the route as much of it as possible. Allow approximately 4-5 hr in winter and 5-6 hr in summer and an approximate guide of 2mi/hr, including stops. On some terrain such a bog and rocky slopes etc you may be reduced to 1mi/hr, whereas on roads the pace may be quicker. You can use Naismith’s rules. Note any safe exit routes in case of deteriorating conditions.
2. The speed or pace of the party should be set to suit the party and not to any preconceived notion such as: I always walk at this speed and the party must keep up! You should have plenty of time having organised your walk.



3. Communicate clearly your walk to others in order to inspire confidence. Avoid statements like 10 to 11 miles, say 11 miles. They will not worry if it's a bit shorter, but will moan if it's longer. You cannot be exact.
On the walk don't forget to tell the party where they are and add points of interest. It makes the walk more interesting although many will not take any notice.
4. When starting your walk ensure that everyone is ready. Don't set off while people are packing bags etc, and the same applies at stops on the route.
5. Don't let the party become too spread out, have catch-up stops and when they catch-up don't set off immediately, allow a couple of minutes for the last to have a rest. People who are trailing behind will become demoralised.
6. Remember that you're lucky that the people on your walk are a mostly experienced and capable walkers hence there is no need to tell them about their kit. However it is useful to check any newcomers.
7. Stop for a short break, say 10min, about every 1 to 1½ hr and longer for lunch. Don't forget to stop often later in the day when people are getting tired. They lose their concentration and are more likely to have accidents especially on difficult terrain. Length and frequency of breaks will depend on which party you are leading (i.e. A+ will require less frequent breaks than a B party walk)
8. Be aware of changes in the weather and modify the walk if possible. In bad weather make sure you have a back marker (with a whistle) and keep the party close together. With any group a back marker is useful. With LFW this seems to be often done without asking by the person at the back.
9. Use common sense, all leaders make mistakes, so do not be too proud to ask for help and other's opinions when things go wrong or you are not sure what to do.
10. Your primary task as a leader is to have your party walk safely from A to B.
Your party's primary objective is to enjoy themselves.
11. At the end you should be last, not first, into the pub having ensured the slowest and last of your party are safely back.

FURTHER INFORMATION

Several books are available on the subject, the most popular being Mountaincraft and Leadership by Eric Langmuir. A copy of this book is held in our library.

Other books :-

- Hillwalking – The official handbook of the Mountain Leader and Walking Group
- Leader schemes by Steve Long
- Mountain Navigation by Peter Cliff.