

Take Care Out Walking



For all walks, the combined level of risk (considering likelihood and impact) of all hazards in the below is LOW and some ideas on how to control each one is documented accordingly. The list is not exhaustive but designed to help you think about some of the more common hazards to be aware of while out walking in our beautiful countryside.

Hazard	Who might be harmed	How can you control the risk
Traffic/roads	All walkers	Cross at safer places (e.g. zebra crossings) Keep any groups together and any walk leaders could wear hi-vis vests.
Walkers' well-being	All, particularly those with potential health issues	Regularly check you and other walkers with you are all properly hydrated, not cold or suffering from heat/sun effects. Each walker could carry a first aid kit. Be prepared to call the emergency services on 999.
Livestock	All walkers	Apply extra vigilance while crossing fields containing cattle (especially those with calves) Keep ALL dogs under control.
Other path users (e.g. cyclists & other walkers)	All walkers, particularly those with sensory impairments	Be especially aware of others if you are in a large group. Keep to one side of any path, check the group is not drifting across the path. Walkers to warn others if any bikes are approaching.
Over hanging branches and creepers across the path	All walkers	Be vigilant of these and warn other walkers as necessary on route.
Bad weather	All, particularly weaker and/or less experienced walkers	Check your clothing at beginning of walk to ensure adequately kitted out. Check and help other walkers too. Keep an eye on potential bad weather approaching, especially lightning. Be aware of places to shelter. Be prepared to abandon walk if necessary.
Group separation	All walkers, particularly faster and slower walkers	If in a group, make regular stops for people to group together. Possibly suggest slower walkers to go to the front. Walkie-talkies could be used for longer and more challenging walks and always maintain good communication amongst the group.

Hazard	Who might be harmed	How is the risk controlled
Slips, trips and falls	All walkers particularly those with balance difficulties/mobility issues	Be vigilant of the terrain and warn others as necessary on the route. Help other walkers around muddy spots, narrow paths, etc. Be prepared to abandon the walk if path accessibility is very bad.
Inclines	All walkers, particularly those with heart problems e.g. angina	Make yourself aware of any significant ascents prior to the walk and warn others about them. Be aware of other walkers' health needs. All walkers to take inclines at their own pace. Remind other walkers to take and use medication if necessary. Rest at hill tops and wait for other walkers to catch up and have their rest too.
Stiles	All walkers, particularly those with balance difficulties/mobility issues	Help other walkers as necessary over stiles.
Walking in the dark	All walkers, especially those with sight impairment	All walkers advised to take a fully-charged (head) torch on all walks where the natural light might be poor (eg. night walk or winter evenings). All walkers should stay closer together than walking in daylight.
New walkers	All walkers, particularly the new walkers	All walkers advised to print an Emergency Information sheet and hang it outside rucksack or jacket in a water-resistant pouch. You could always disclose any health information with a walk leader if in an organized walk. Be extra vigilant of someone new in the group in case they start to struggle.
Safeguarding	Under 18s	Under 18s to always be under the supervision of a parent or guardian throughout the walk.
Watercourses & cliffs	All	All walkers should keep away from edges with no barriers. Warn other walkers if you notice any warning signs and look out for life rings when passing water.
Insects, snakes, ticks etc	All	Be aware of possible ticks etc and wear long trousers or long socks in grassy sections. After grassy sections suggest walkers check theirs and the legs of others for ticks. Ensure you have a tick remover in first aid kit. Make yourself aware of what to do if you are bitten by a snake. Adders are the only poisonous snake in the UK but you need to be prepared.