

*Issued to LDWA Chairs and LDWA Walks Secretaries*

## **COVID-19 GUIDANCE FOR LDWA SOCIAL WALKS**

The National Executive Committee (NEC) issued this guidance in response to the guidance announced by the four Governments of the United Kingdom on various dates which took effect from 22.06.20.

All LDWA social walks had been suspended since March 2020. The NEC decided to reintroduce social walks for Local Groups from 22.06.20, **subject to following NEC guidance.**

**The guidance has now been updated to reflect the changing Government guidelines since June 2020.**

For Local Groups that wish to commence social walks, the NEC guidance aims to provide a framework which protects walkers and the reputation of the LDWA. However, some Local Groups may decide that the NEC guidance does not enable them to commence social walks until the current COVID situation improves and/or Government advice changes.

Although the NEC has allowed LDWA social walks to restart, this permission will be reviewed if the Government sets new restrictions, e.g. in response to new outbreaks of the virus. Government guidance supersedes all advice given by the NEC and must be followed at all times.

### **Before the Walk**

- Walk leaders must ensure they have a copy of this NEC guidance available to brief walkers at the start and to show to any member of the public or official (e.g. police) who asks what you are doing. This will demonstrate that you have thought about what to do in advance.
- Walk leaders should take into account any situation when the walk may not go as expected, e.g. the need to support an injured walker whilst maintaining social distancing (see **On the Walk** below).
- Walk leaders must recce a route or an area with which they are familiar and apply a COVID perspective. This includes thinking of how to apply social distancing, how to avoid difficult terrain and how to minimise the use of narrow paths where practical and possible. Consider routes which have some flexibility to allow for any last-minute changes.

## Numbers on social walks

- ***In England the numbers attending each walk should still be limited to six walkers, including the walk leader.***
- ***In Scotland 15 people can now meet socially from up to a maximum of 5 households.***
- ***In Wales, 30 individuals can meet socially including the walk leader.***
- Possible options on how to manage numbers are:
  - Participants must register in advance with a contact e-mail address provided for registration and only primary members of a local group will be accepted. If the Local Group is concerned that some walkers may turn up without prior registration, the Group may decide to give only general details of the walk initially and give specific details, e.g. start point and time, at registration.
  - It is not possible to have more than the numbers specified above on the same walk, so in order to manage demand, consider hosting a second walk in a different location with another walk leader. Consider using a waiting list to ensure that all members who want to walk are given a chance to do so on different walks.
  - If spaces are still available prior to the walk taking place then Associate Members can join the walk, also by pre-registering, to make up the numbers.
- **Please do not attend LDWA social walks** if you or any member of your permitted 'bubble' have recently been diagnosed with or show any COVID-19 symptoms, are awaiting test results or are self-isolating under current Government guidance.
- Do not car share unless you are from the same household or part of a permitted 'bubble' from another household.

## On the Walk

- Social distancing (currently set at two metres) should apply throughout the walk between fellow walkers and to avoid members of the public.
- All walkers should consider carrying hand sanitiser (alcohol-based gel), a face covering, gloves, wet wipes and a small first aid kit. The walk leader should consider carrying extra items to use as back-ups.
- Use hand sanitiser if you have to touch communal surfaces, e.g. gates and stiles, and wash your hands at home.
- Bring your own food and drink and, if shops are used, allow time for queuing.

- Public toilets may have restricted access or not be open, so identify appropriate areas for comfort stops.
- Do not share personal items or equipment during a walk.

**LDWA National Executive Committee 03.08.20**