



LDWA

LONG DISTANCE

WALKERS ASSOCIATION

GUIDELINES FOR CHALLENGE EVENTS

How to Organise a Challenge Event

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GUIDELINES FOR EVENTS

How to Organise a Challenge Event

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THE LONG DISTANCE WALKERS ASSOCIATION

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The Long Distance Walkers Association

The aim of the Long Distance Walkers Association is *to further the interests of those who enjoy long distance walking*. The LDWA is an Association of about 10,000 members with the common interest mainly in 'extended walks in rural, coastal, mountainous or moorland areas and especially those walks that exceed 20 miles in length'. The Association is Sport England, Sport Scotland, and Sport Wales Governing Body for Long Distance Walking and promotes challenge walks, pioneers new walking routes, and receives and publishes information on all aspects of non-competitive walking. The Association welcomes and encourages all people, regardless of age, gender, disability, race, ethnic origin, creed, colour, or social status to participate in long distance walking. The Association's journal *Strider* is published three times a year and is distributed to all members. Information about the LDWA may be found on their website www.ldwa.org.uk

Guidelines for Events

This is the ninth edition of the LDWA's *Guidelines for Events* which has evolved from the first edition published in 1983. This edition has been updated from earlier versions and includes material relevant to organising events following easing of restrictions from the Covid-19 pandemic.

Further Documentation

The LDWA has produced a range of policy and other documents, some of which relate to challenge walks and which may provide more detailed information relating to aspects of challenge walk organisation than is included here. Many of these documents are located in the LDWA [Toolkit](#) which is accessible to LDWA members and links are given at appropriate points in these guidelines.

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Disclaimer

Whilst every effort has been made to ensure that the advice in this booklet is accurate and expedient, no responsibility whatsoever can be accepted by the Association or its officers or authors for any errors or consequences arising from these *Guidelines*.

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Introduction

A *Challenge Event* has come to mean a cross-country walk of a significant distance that is undertaken by walkers on the same occasion. The 'challenge' is a personal one - the event is not a race, but the aim is to complete the route within a given time limit. Challenge events vary enormously in style and character, ranging from a 20 mile walk along canal towpaths, to the annual LDWA 'Hundred' with walkers taking up to 48 hours to complete 100 miles over mountain or moorland, with checkpoints set out along the route.

A challenge event does not have walk leaders, and walkers are responsible for their own navigation, usually with the aid of a route description, compass, maps and/or electronic GPX files. In practice, walkers tend to form small groups, so that the route-finding is shared and the walk is done in congenial company. It is this social aspect as much as the challenge aspect that has led to the increased popularity of challenge events in recent years. A challenge event requires considerable organisation, and these *Guidelines* are intended to provide guidance for those organising or helping with the event, particularly for events organised under the umbrella of the LDWA.

The Long Distance Walkers Association was founded in 1972 to coordinate information on the growing calendar of challenge events and to promote walking long distance routes. The membership of the LDWA rapidly increased, as did the number of events. In recent years, about 200 challenge walks in Britain each year are listed in the LDWA magazine *Strider*. Many of these are organised by the (currently) forty-one LDWA local groups whilst others are put on by a wide variety of other organisations (such as walking clubs, scout troops, companies, and mountain rescue teams) and by individuals. In 1985 the LDWA was granted National/Sports Governing Body status for Long Distance Walking within Rambling by Sport England, Sport Scotland and Sport Wales, and in 1999 it became a company limited by guarantee. As a governing body, the LDWA has a duty to uphold, promote and improve the standard of organisation of events and so increase the enjoyment and safety of participants. These *Guidelines* have been produced with this in mind, and it is hoped that those involved in staging events, from chief organisers to those who lend a hand in any way, will find the suggestions contained in this booklet useful.

The style, environment and level of support provided varies enormously between events. This variety and individuality is one of the attractions of challenge walking, and the LDWA has no wish to detract from this or attempt to impose any uniformity on events.. The main desire is to see that every event, in its own way, is organised efficiently, effectively and with regard to safety of participants, organisers and the public paramount, with regard to the environment, so that it can be enjoyed by participants and organisers alike.

Obviously, the amount of organisation, time and volunteer effort required varies considerably with the scale and nature of the event. There is a world of difference between a 20-mile pastoral walk and a 100-mile event taking in rough moorland or mountains. These *Guidelines* try to cover all types of events, and many of the suggestions are certainly 'over the top' for shorter, smaller events. Once the scale and nature of the event has been decided it should be fairly clear which parts are relevant. It is up to the event committee to decide which suggestions to follow, but they should remember that safety must remain paramount. Organisers have practical and legal responsibilities to walkers and helpers, and the LDWA requires certain basic standards for events that it supports (see Appendix A).

Challenge walks take place in a wide variety of surroundings and situations, each with its own organisational problems. These *Guidelines* cannot cover all eventualities but should be applied in a flexible manner to the particular event. Rather than laying down precise procedures the *Guidelines* try to suggest 'Have you remembered this?' or 'This might be worth trying'.

There are many annual events that are extremely well-organised, with the routine second nature to those involved. Nevertheless, even 'old hands' may find some of the tips helpful. Some events have been less successful, with dissatisfied walkers and frustrated helpers, and it is hoped that these *Guidelines* will reduce the number of such cases in future.

Anyone contemplating organising an event for the first time may feel the task rather daunting but, like most jobs, it is not so bad once one gets down to it. Perhaps the main requirements for a walk organiser are a willingness for hard work, the ability to involve others, an enthusiasm to share the joy of walking, and plain common sense. A sense of humour also helps!

Organisers have no control over certain aspects of a walk, notably the weather. However, it is clear from reports that many walkers enjoy well-run events even in poor weather, with the support and camaraderie compensating for the conditions. In listing an event organiser should say what the particular demands of the walk are (e.g., a tough winter event with minimal support covering x miles and y feet of ascent), so entrants can assess their ability to meet such a challenge.

These *Guidelines* concern cross-country challenge walks. Those organising walks of other types, for example road walks or charity walks, may find some parts relevant and useful. In Appendix G there are several links to guides to organising other types of outdoor events. Note that there are separate guidelines *How to Organise the Hundred* (see [Toolkit](#)) for the LDWA's annual 100-mile event.

The LDWA is keen to encourage and promote well-organised challenge events. The LDWA [Challenge Events Secretary](#) and [Risk Manager](#) are happy to answer queries and provide advice on any aspects of events. Queries on reducing Covid-19 transmission risks to the Challenge Events Secretary in the first instance.

Chapter One – The First Steps

1.1 What is a Challenge Event?

A *Challenge Event*, *Challenge Walk*, or just an *Event* is a cross-country walk of a significant distance that is undertaken by walkers on the same occasion to be completed within an allotted time. Over the years, a general 'style' of event has emerged and become increasingly popular with LDWA members; these *Guidelines* concern such events. In an LDWA event:

- There is a set date for attempting the route.
- The route is mainly cross-country with road walking kept to a minimum.
- The event is not a race, and the emphasis is on walking rather than jogging or running, though often runners are allowed.
- Sufficient time is allowed for reasonably fit walkers to complete the route without running.
- There may be several routes, but at least one is 20 miles or more in length.
- There are checkpoints (staffed or unstaffed) to be visited en route in a set order.
- No leader is provided for the walk.
- The main aim is for participants to enjoy a long-distance walk and the challenge and comradeship that it provides.

In addition, an LDWA event is likely to have some of the following features:

- A set route, either defined or implied.
- A start and finish and checkpoints.
- Water provided and possibly some food taking into account managing Covid-19 transmission risks.
- Walkers issued with numbers and check cards or tallies or devices that can record an entrant's arrival at a checkpoint and at the finish, so progress can be monitored and checks made for lost entrants.
- A certificate and/or badge for finishers.
- A list of finishers and report sent to participants or posted on a website.

Events vary enormously within these broad parameters, from 20 miles to 100 miles or more, from a few dozen to several hundred walkers, from field paths or tow paths to trackless moorland and hills, from a high degree of self-support to checkpoints where some support is supplied.

As a Governing Body, the LDWA has a duty to ensure that the events that it promotes attain certain basic standards; this is to protect organisers as much as participants. Events vary so much that it is impossible to lay down precise requirements. Nevertheless, for an event to be supported and publicised by the LDWA there are a number of conditions that must be fulfilled, in particular concerning safety, the environment and legal obligations. These requirements are listed in Appendix A and discussed in more detail throughout these *Guidelines*.

1.2 The event committee

The idea of staging a new event usually stems from one or two keen individuals, or perhaps grows amongst the members of a club. They probably have some conception of the area and style of the walk, the rough number of participants and perhaps other features, for example they may want to use a particular location as a base. For all but the smallest event they will need to enlist several helpers for the planning stages as well as further assistance on the day of the event. Often it is the enthusiasm of those conceiving the event, and their ability to infect others with that enthusiasm, that determines whether the event will be a success or, indeed, whether it will become a reality at all.

As soon as it has been decided to organise an event, an Event Committee should be set up to decide on policy matters and to make plans thorough enough to ensure a successful event. Putting on a successful challenge walk will involve far more work and time than anticipated, and it is *essential* that there is enough commitment to form a good working committee without too much work falling on any one individual. Several committee members should be capable of taking the initiative and responsibility for different major aspects of the event. Attempting to put on an event without a strong core of organisers will be highly stressful for those involved and lead to a poor event.

The size of the committee will depend on the scale of the event, in particular its length, duration and the number of entrants anticipated. For a very small and informal event a Chief Organiser and a few others to assist generally might be adequate. For a major walk there should be a named Chief Organiser or Chair responsible for overall planning and co-ordination. Officers with the following responsibilities should be considered for the committee along with deputies for the main roles in the case of a larger event:

- Chief Organiser
- Covid-19 transmission mitigation and risk assessment
- Treasurer
- Entries Secretary
- Walk HQ
- Checkpoints
- Route planning
- Transport
- Communications
- Publicity
- Equipment
- Safety and medical
- Data Protection Officer (usually the Entries Secretary)
- Results

The Chief Organiser is key to the whole event. They should have previous experience walking or, preferably, helping on events, should be familiar with the requirements and expectations of walkers and helpers, and be aware of the safety and legal obligations relating to the event. . They must be able to delegate major aspects of the organisation to others - there have been disasters in the past because the Chief Organiser has tried to take on too much themselves or been unwilling to delegate. The main officers should not participate in the walk on the day, but should be actively involved with their duties. Ideally several of the committee should have taken part in an event or helped to organise one previously. Otherwise, people with such experience should be invited to join the committee in an advisory capacity; for example, an LDWA Local Group might be approached for help. The Chief Organiser should be aware of what is in these *Guidelines*, and other committee members should be familiar at least with the sections relating to their duties.

The committee should meet as often as necessary before the event, and it is useful to have a meeting soon afterwards to discuss any problems and improvements that might be made if the event is repeated. Whilst there is no need to produce formal minutes of committee meetings, a brief record of decisions taken and a check list of action points noting who has to do what and by when, should be produced and circulated to the committee - the *Walk Planning Timetable* in Appendix B gives some idea of when decisions need to be made and actions taken.

Many events are organised annually by a group, and planning and policy require little new discussion. Nevertheless, care still needs to be taken to ensure that everything gets done, and inevitably some changes occur. In particular considerable planning will be needed to reduce the risk of Covid-19 transmission in line with Government guidance

1.3 Early planning and policy

Many of the problems that occur on events are the direct result of shortcomings at the planning stage. Early decisions need to be made on matters of policy which will determine the scale and nature of the event, including:

- The date of the event.
- A rough outline of the route and its length.
- Staggered start arrangements with bands of starting times may be appropriate to reduce risk of Covid-19 transmission within large groups.
- Consideration around the number and nature of checkpoints to reduce risk of Covid-19 transmission without compromising safety standards.
- How the route is to be specified (e.g. route description, grid references).
- The maximum number of entrants – no more than 150 during Covid-19.
- The level of help required for what is envisaged.
- Undertake an initial Risk assessment.

Once these basic decisions have been taken, there are many matters that will require detailed planning. Depending on the scale and nature of the event, these will include many of the following:

- Location and booking of HQ and checkpoints.
- Planning the route, production of the route description and GPX files, grid references, etc.
- Overall safety of the walk for walkers, marshals and public including reducing risk of Covid-19 transmission.
- Assessing where toilets may be required (e.g. walk HQ and key checkpoints) and signposting to public toilets, exclusive use toilets in buildings, or hire of portable toilets.
- Any restrictions on entrants.
- Financial details and budget, sponsorship
- Entry fees, arrangements for entering (whether to operate a reserve list if oversubscribed).
- Insurance.
- Publicity for the event, local and national.
- Public relations, liaison with police, landowners, Safety Advisory Groups etc.
- Rules for the event.
- Minimum kit requirements, arrangements for kit checks.
- Compilation of and putting on a website and/or entry forms and details sheets, final details, risk assessment, etc.
- Administration of entries.
- Design and production of badge, certificate, check cards, etc.
- Design and production of other souvenirs such as tee-shirts, etc.
- Merchandising.
- Recruitment of and liaison with helpers and marshals.
- Organisation and operation of start/finish and checkpoints.
- Effective procedures for control of the walk including a written risk assessment covering all aspects of safety.
- Communications.
- Retirements.
- Transport for marshals and retirees.
- Emergency and first aid provision.
- Car parking arrangements.
- Production and distribution of report and results.

These inter-related matters are discussed in detail in the chapters that follow.

As soon as the basic parameters for the walk are decided, the event should be registered using the *Challenge Event Notification Form* (in the [Toolkit](#)) which will enable the event to be included in *Strider* and on the LDWA website.

1.4 Covid-19 Transmission Risks

It is essential that organisers consider how best to reduce the risk of Covid-19 transmission in every aspect of planning and running the event. The event must also follow current government guidance.

- Challenge event organisers must be cognisant of Covid-19 guidance published by the Government.
- Challenge event organisers must communicate to entrants to ensure all arrangements are clear and any concerns raised by individuals e.g., covid hygiene measures are properly considered and reasonable adjustments made.
- Entrants and volunteers must not attend challenge events if they or a close contact has recently been diagnosed with or show any Covid-19 symptoms, are awaiting test results or are self-isolating under current Government guidance.

Chapter Two – Designing the Walk

An event should provide a challenging and enjoyable walk through some of the best countryside in the locality, in a way that is safe, environmentally friendly and with minimal disruption to the local community. This chapter concerns the early planning that will determine the nature of the event. Most topics mentioned are discussed in greater detail in Chapters 3 and 4.

2.1 Choosing a date

To allow time for adequate organisation and publicity, there should normally be at least a year between first deciding to organise the event and the day of the walk. For very small events 6-8 months might just be possible; for LDWA Hundreds there is a lead time of 3-4 years. The exact date should be decided at the outset. Availability of a suitable headquarters for the start and finish and to a lesser extent accommodation for other checkpoints is a key factor in deciding the date.

In some areas, farming or gaming activities, such as lambing, harvesting, grouse breeding or shooting, may make events difficult to arrange at certain times of year. On certain routes the effect of path erosion is much less in drier months. In popular tourist areas bank holiday weekends and the high season are best avoided. Local enquiries can avoid clashes with fun-runs, village galas, etc. if any are taking place. Entry numbers are likely to be low if the date clashes with other nearby challenge events – approximate dates for annual events can be gleaned from the previous year's calendar in *Strider* or on the LDWA website and other organisers can be liaised with directly. The LDWA Events Secretary may be able to advise further. Once the date is decided the walk HQ and checkpoints should be booked as soon as possible.

2.2 Location of walk headquarters and checkpoints

Walk HQ

Walk HQ management is a key issue to consider in reducing risks of Covid-19 transmission and it is essential that personal responsibly and caution is reinforced to ensure that both marshals and entrants are kept safe.

An adequate Headquarters is crucial and must be identified and booked early on and should be proportionate to the size of the event. A typical walk HQ will be a village hall, small school, cricket pavilion, etc. that can provide cover for marshals, control, communications, first aid, etc., Consideration of how walkers use HQ should be considered to reduce risk of Covid-19 transmission e.g. registration, shelter, toilets or other purposes. An open area outside the building, perhaps providing some shelter may also be appropriate. In inclement weather marshals could erect gazebos to protect themselves and paperwork, etc. from rain. Alternatives might be marshals in a car with an open window or at the opening of a tent.

Both public and private sector premises may be worth exploring to find reasonably priced premises. Factors that affect their suitability include the space and facilities available, the provision of adequate car parking space for the number of walkers and helpers expected, convenience of access and proximity to the desired walking area. The venue should be easily accessible from outside the locality, including by public transport, with adequate overnight accommodation nearby and road links to other checkpoints on the walk. Ideally it should provide a clear start to the route with no stiles, restrictive gates or narrow paths in the first two or three miles. Consider the impact on the local community: well-organised events are usually welcomed provided that they do not give the impression of an invasion.

Depending on the scale and nature of the event, space may be needed at the walk HQ for the following facilities:

Before the start:

- Facilities for general enquiries.
- Facilities for registration and kit declaration.

- Storage of walkers' belongings (not all walkers will have a car in which to leave belongings not required on the walk).
- Adequate toilet facilities for the number of participants and helpers (See Section 4.1 'Toilet facilities').
- Equipment storage.

From several hours after the start (i.e., once finishers and retirees start returning):

- Facilities for recording finishers.
- Location for certificates and badges – to avoid handling these might be sent by post or there might be a printable version provided online.
- First aid.
- Storing returned baggage if there is a 'baggage point' en route.

Throughout the event:

- Storage of walkers' belongings.
- Walk control.
- Event management system such as PACER (See Section 4.2).
- Radio operators.
- Enquiries, information and displays.
- Telephone.
- Notice boards.
- Facilities for marshals, including resting and sleeping areas.
- Merchandise.
- Adequate parking for marshals and walkers.
- Lost property.

Additional considerations for the location of HQ may include:

- Accessibility from major roads, from rail/coach stations.
- Proximity to off road walking, with broad tracks and no stiles for the first few miles to avoid congestion and frustration.
- Facilities for parking caravans/motor homes and pitching tents in the grounds may be useful.

The hire charge and exactly what is included should be agreed in writing when the HQ is booked. In particular it should be clear whether gas or electricity costs are included, and which rooms will be available for use and when. There is often room for negotiation; for example, some schools are willing to charge on a per room per hour basis, so money can be saved by vacating rooms when they are not actually in use. It may also be useful to have access the night before an event to set up. It is important to check the insurance position of the HQ and what restrictions there are on use of the facilities.

A contact name, address and phone number should be obtained at the outset. It is worthwhile contacting the caretaker of the site early on — they are worth 'cultivating' and can often find a quick solution to any problems. Once the initial booking has been made, organisers should keep in touch with HQ staff regularly. Fostering good relations with HQ staff is important, though staff can change, and it is important that any replacements are aware of the event. The event can be good publicity opportunity for both the LDWA and HQ and this is worth mentioning in the negotiations.

The organisation and operation of the walk HQ is discussed in Section 4.1.

Checkpoints

Checkpoint management is a key issue to consider in addition to minimising the risk of Covid-19 transmission.

The route will depend to some extent on the location of suitable checkpoints. Checkpoints ensure that walkers follow the prescribed route and help keep track of walkers. As with HQ, checkpoint requirements will depend on the type and length of the event and the time of year.

The interval between checkpoints varies between events, but 5-8 miles is typical under normal circumstances, perhaps further apart early on in a walk but closer in later stages or on night sections. However, to reduce the risk of Covid-19 transmission organisers should minimise the number of checkpoints used but without compromising safety standards.

Checkpoints should record walkers progress, provide refreshments, and perhaps provide toilet facilities. There should also be adequate shelter for marshals.

To reduce the risk of transmission of Covid-19 walkers could be encouraged to remain outdoors and/or not linger at checkpoints. Nevertheless, some shelter is desirable to keep marshals and equipment dry. Possible locations for checkpoints include village halls with sufficient adjacent outside space, small marquees, open barns, cars in a layby, or even someone's house and front garden. In all cases appropriate permission must be obtained and the operation of the checkpoint carefully thought through, See Sections 4.2-4.3.

Depending on the nature of the checkpoint, space for the following may be needed:

- Recording walkers.
- Toilet facilities.
- Provision of refreshments for walkers and marshals.
- Shelter for marshals.
- PACER and RAYNET operators (See Sections 4.2 and 4.10).
- Storing of baggage at a baggage checkpoint.
- Retiring walkers awaiting transport.

When estimating the space and facilities required, remember that walkers soon become spread out and the number of walkers at a later checkpoint at any given time may be small.

Permission must always be sought for an outdoor checkpoint even if it consists just of a tent or a wayside table.

Unstaffed checkpoints are useful to ensure that walkers go over specific parts of the route to minimise the possibility of short-cutting, or when the locations are not easily accessible or manageable by marshals. Tallies can be clipped, or other options can be explored. One option is a 'treasure-hunt' checkpoint where walkers record the answer a simple question on a card e.g. 'What is the number on the trig point?' Alternatively, a single marshal may be stationed to check that walkers pass a point by recording walkers' numbers. Such checkpoints should be clearly mentioned at the appropriate point in the route description along with a grid reference. Alternatively, there can be 'unannounced' checkpoints in which case walkers should be warned that they will occur somewhere on the route. If GPS trackers are in use such checkpoints will be unnecessary.

More details on checkpoint organisation and their operation is discussed in Sections 4.2-4.3.

2.3 Planning the route

Route planning and location of checkpoints needs to be completed between 6-18 months (depending on distance) before the event so that the route can be checked and groups staffing checkpoints given details. Once the route description has been completed by the Route Manager it is worth getting hold of two or three experienced LDWA members from outside the area and asking them to walk the route in sections. Someone planning to do the main event or the Marshals' event will welcome the opportunity to do a 'recce' of the route description and report on any parts which are unclear, where more detail, e.g., distance to next stile, would help, or where inserting a compass bearing or a grid reference would be useful. Non-local people are likely to pick up points which locals may have missed.

The route should be planned as early as possible, minimising Covid-19 transmission risks and particular consideration should be given to avoiding narrow paths and paths where there are large numbers of the public to avoid potential conflict. Many changes are likely before the route is finalised. Special consideration must be also given to the safety of the route and to areas of ecological sensitivity or where erosion is of concern. Avoid public roads wherever possible, though short stretches of minor road may be unavoidable to link footpaths, tracks, or open access land. Main roads and roads without footpaths can be dangerous, particularly at night. Try to avoid them except where they need to be crossed. The checkpoint locations available will affect the route chosen, and adjustments may be required to get the desired length of walk. Careful route design and judicious placing of staffed or unstaffed checkpoints will reduce the possibility of short-cutting.

A first draft of the route will come from a combination of the organisers' local knowledge and from studying maps; the Ordnance Survey 1:50,000 (Landranger) maps will give an overview with 1:25,000 (Explorer or Outdoor Leisure) maps allowing more detailed planning. The next stage is to walk out the proposed route to ensure that it is practicable and to see what changes to the route are needed or where path clearance or repair of stiles, bridges, etc., is necessary. Changes may be needed if parts of the route are unsuitable for the passage of a large number of walkers, for safety considerations, for environmental reasons, because of possible nuisance to local residents and landowners, or because a route might cause undue inconvenience to other walkers.

Unless prior permission has been obtained to cross private land, use only public rights of way or designated access land (or core paths or established paths in Scotland). Even then the inconvenience to farmers and other residents must be considered. Permission is needed to use forest tracks and tow paths that are not rights of way. Be aware of the law concerning rights of way and access, remembering that it differs in England and Wales from Scotland. Some relevant books, leaflets and websites are listed in Appendix G.

2.4 Length of the route

One of the LDWA's objectives is to promote walks of 20 miles or more; shorter walks may not provide a sufficient challenge to long distance walkers. Factors in deciding the length of an event include the topography, the terrain, the time of year and the condition of paths used.

To cater for different abilities and requirements several different distances, e.g., 35, 28 and 20 miles, are sometimes offered on the same occasion. By careful planning, the shorter routes might just be variants of the longer one, for example by cutting back to the start from appropriate points or cutting across a loop. Thus, shorter walks can often be offered with very little extra required in the way of route planning and checkpoints. Some events provide subsidiary walks of less than 20 miles to occupy and encourage families or children of those taking part in the main event. Such short walks might be of 7-10 miles and either have a simple map or route description, or be a 'quiz' walk, requiring answers to questions about features on the route.

An initial approximate estimate of the distance of the route can be made from the map. There are two ways of measuring a route's length and total height ascent accurately. Packages such as *OS Maps* or *ViewRanger* can be used to plot closely spaced points along a route on a large-scale electronic map to obtain the distance and total ascent. Alternatively, one can physically follow the route on the ground using a GPS app to record the distance and ascent, see Section 2.10. There are many suitable apps including *MapMyWalk*, *Fitbit*, *ViewRanger* and *Strava*. Getting several independent estimates should lead to an agreed consensus. (Any stated distance will inevitably be an approximation – to refer to the 'exact' distance is meaningless, and it is pointless to state distances more precisely than 0.1 miles or ascent more accurately than 10ft.)

2.5 Time limit

Enough time should be allowed to complete the full distance walking at a reasonable pace, remembering that many experienced long distance walkers will average 2-3 miles per hour over longer distances. The time limit should never be so short that only runners can make it, but nevertheless it might provide a healthy challenge for the slower

walker. Time limits will largely be determined by the length of the route and the nature of the terrain. Allow extra time if intricate navigation or night walking are involved.

Sometimes the time limit may be dictated by the period of availability of the start/finish and checkpoints, but this should not be allowed to impose an unreasonably short time for the distance.

The following time limits are typical for average terrain:

- 20 miles - 8 hours
- 25 miles - 10-11 hours
- 30 miles - 10-12 hours
- 50 miles – 20-24 hours
- 60 miles - 24-26 hours
- 100 miles - 48 hours

In order to reduce the chances of bunching and causing congestion as well as increased risk of Covid-19 transmission when faster walkers catch up with slower walkers, faster walkers and runners should start the event before the slower walkers. However, checkpoints may have to be kept open longer to allow the slower walkers a reasonable time. To reduce risk of Covid-19 transmission a staggered start can be considered to reduce congestion at HQ and early on in the walk, either with walkers allocated to particular start times in advance, or perhaps with walkers setting off as soon as they have registered at the start.

It is important to plan the walk to be inclusive and allow walkers with specific additional needs to attend and participate if they wish to do so. This may mean making specific allowances around time limits or other reasonable adjustments, for example allowing earlier start times or offering alternative ways of providing route descriptions to enable participation.

The rate of progress along the route is normally controlled by checkpoints having opening and closing times, which should be stated in the route description or event details. Unless the rules specifically exclude running, most events will attract some runners or joggers, and opening times should allow for this. Do not, however, allow the attitude of runners to make the event more competitive than is intended.

A checkpoint opening and closing calculator has been created and can be used to calculate the expected times of walkers / runners based on their speed v distance v height ascent. The [calculators](#) are currently stored in the PACER section of the LDWA website.

Closing times should be calculated as the arrival times of someone walking at constant speed so as to finish the route just within the overall time limit. In general, anyone arriving at a checkpoint any later than this is unlikely to finish the event in time. Walkers should not be allowed to check in before the opening time, nor should they be allowed to continue the event if they have not left by the closing time. (Exceptionally, there may be extenuating circumstances e.g., a faster entrant who has stopped to assist or wait with an injured person may be still capable of recovering time to complete the walk within the time limit.) On the other hand, when considering closing times, it is particularly important to minimise the necessity for slow walkers to be timed out so as to avoid the difficulties of transporting walkers back to HQ.

2.6 Specifying the route

It is important to ensure that the walkers remain on the route. Considerable bad feeling will be aroused if walkers trespass on to private land. Good relations are vital. The route may be specified in several ways.

A **route description** is normally provided on challenge events and will contain instructions enabling walkers to follow the route and include grid references at strategic locations in order that it is clear where the route goes when annotated on a map. Even so walkers should always be required to carry maps or *adequate and reliable* electronic mapping in case of doubt or if they stray from the route. Section 2.9 concerns writing route descriptions.

An alternative is to provide an **annotated sketch map** that marks sufficient features to make the route clear. This requires careful drawing; copyright questions arise if annotated OS maps are used.

Electronic GPX files of routes are increasingly often provided in addition to route descriptions for use in GPS devices and for viewing on electronic maps thus enabling an entrant to see exactly where the route goes.

A simple alternative to a route description is to specify a route by giving a **list of grid references** sufficient for the route to be obvious when they are transferred to a map (i.e., by giving grid references of path junctions, etc.). The event details should emphasise that entrants are expected to map-read the route themselves and that they must be competent with map and compass.

On some events known a **limited list of grid references**, perhaps just of checkpoints (staffed or unstaffed) are provided, allowing some choice of route. This is particularly suitable for events in open access areas and provides a greater navigational challenge. Walkers should be reminded to keep to the Countryside Code and not climb over walls or fences, and some notes of guidance may be needed to keep walkers off private land and also so they avoid paths that make social distancing awkward. On such events it can be difficult to locate any misplaced walkers unless they carry GPS tracking devices. It also may be difficult to ensure that walkers.

A variant of this is termed a **Kanter** where there here is no set route, but as many checkpoints as possible must be visited within a given time limit, rather like orienteering. Sometimes a score is awarded according to which checkpoints have been visited, with penalty points for finishing late.

A route may be **waymarked**, that is defined by temporary markers put up specifically for the event. This is rarely done for the entire route on LDWA style events though waymarking for short parts of a route is sometimes appropriate, see Section 2.11. Waymarking is very labour intensive, and markers are subject to vandalism, particularly where the route passes through villages. A route should *never* be advertised as 'way-marked' unless the route will be obvious from the markers in all conditions. Nevertheless, there are plenty of ready way-marked long distance paths that might be incorporated in a route.

Most events are for individual entrants, though in practice walkers form into groups naturally and grouping is sometimes enforced, see Section 4.8. However, sometimes **team events** are organised for pairs or even for teams of three or four who must keep together throughout the walk; they must maintain social distancing unless they are in the same household or bubble. Such events are especially suitable for difficult terrain where safety is a particular concern, again social distancing is essential.

2.7 Consultation and liaison

Particularly for larger events, early consultation with statutory bodies, landowners and the local community will promote good relations and ease matters considerably for the organisers. It is of enormous benefit to contact local organisations and residents before they seek out the organisers. People are suspicious of unexplained activities going on around them but will often become helpful and enthusiastic if they are approached courteously and told that a Challenge Event is going to take place. It is particularly important that organisers liaise with local communities and landowners to reassure them about the potential impacts of a challenge event taking place in their area.

Establish links with statutory and other bodies as soon as possible. Event organisers must consult with local council(s) or Safety Advisory Group (SAG). SAGs are usually co-ordinated by a local authority and made up of representatives from the local authority, emergency services, other relevant bodies, and the event organiser. They may be event or location specific but otherwise tend to be based on local authority boundaries. SAGs provide a forum for discussing and advising on public safety at an event. They aim to help organisers with the planning and management of an event and to encourage cooperation and coordination between all relevant agencies. They are non-statutory bodies and so do not have legal powers or responsibilities and are not empowered to approve or prohibit events from taking place. Event organisers and others involved in the running of an event, retain the principal legal duties for ensuring public safety. Whilst it is desirable to have the approval of local councils or SAG, the decision to proceed is ultimately with the event organisers.

Compromises may be made to the route to avoid sensitive areas and to facilitate social distancing. Formal approval may be needed if a challenge event crosses certain land, for example water board areas. Do not underestimate the length of time that obtaining such approvals can take.

Depending on the area, consultation could include:

- Safety Advisory Group (SAG).
- Rights of Way Department, Local Authority.
- Local police.
- Local Authority Countryside Management Service.
- Rescue organisations.
- Natural England, Scottish Natural Heritage, Countryside Council for Wales (for SSSIs).
- Forestry Commission (England)/ Natural Resources Wales / Forestry and Land Scotland
- Canal and River Trust (England and Wales)/ Scottish Canals (for towpaths).
- Local Wildlife Trusts.
- Landowners on the route.
- Council footpath officers.
- Regional offices of Country Land and Business Association (CLA) and National Farmers Union (NFU).
- Parish and Community Councils.
- National Park office
- Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB) / National Scenic Area (Scotland) office.
- National Trust.

Contact farmers and landowners, particularly on stretches where the route passes through gates, across pastures or close to farms. Often some diplomacy is needed to break down initial doubts and mistrust before curiosity and interest foster a more helpful reaction. Finding the 'right person' on the staff of National Park or other authorities can save a great deal of time in identifying landowners, making contacts, liaising with farmers, etc. The head ranger may be a good person to approach first. Similarly, early contact with the local NFU may be valuable. Having a suitable committee member who has a good rapport with farmers and landowners, perhaps someone with a farming background themselves, can make a huge difference in establishing good relations.

If county, district, or unitary authorities are notified early about missing bridges, broken stiles, etc., they may be persuaded to carry out restoration work; indeed, some local authorities have found that a challenge walk provides a 'focus' for their maintenance programme. Again, the council may be prepared to insist that a farmer carries out his legal obligation to restore a path across a field after ploughing or cropping. Many councils have a full-time footpaths officer who can be very helpful but sadly many local authorities have suffered budget cuts and the support they can offer may be severely diminished.

It is particularly important to contact people living close to the HQ, checkpoints and in isolated houses and farms close to the route, especially if walkers will be passing at night. It is courteous to call on residents to explain the situation or to send a circular letter stating the date and time that walkers will be in the area. If local people know what is happening then suspicion usually turns to interest.

If possible the Event Organiser should maintain a high profile locally in the weeks before the event and should remain accessible throughout the event. Arranging for notices to be placed on village notice boards will be useful to alert people and to provide a contact telephone number (but remember to take all such notices down afterwards).

Reducing the risk of Covid-19 transmissions as part of the liaison is critical and organisers can contact the [Challenge Events Secretary](#) and [Risk Officer](#) for advice.

2.8 Environmental considerations

A Challenge Event should not damage the very environment that walkers come to enjoy. Thus, the organisers should have regard to the impact of the event on the environment and be prepared to modify the event to avoid unacceptable impact. Like other outdoor recreational organisations, the LDWA believes that with good planning there need not be serious conflict with conservation interests, see the LDWA *Environment Policy* (see [Toolkit](#)) and *Consulting with Environmental Groups* (see [Toolkit](#)). There are two main areas of potential difficulty: ground erosion by large numbers of walkers and disturbance to wildlife and habitat. These factors must be considered when deciding the route.

Ground erosion

A considerable number of paths in Britain have become scars on the landscape from the passage of numerous walkers and challenge events should avoid exacerbating this situation. The geological and meteorological factors that render a path susceptible to rapid boot or shoe erosion are complex, but clearly a well-drained path or a stony track is likely to suffer far less than a path across boggy moorland or scree. It is important not to create new paths where they do not already exist and also not to turn attractive paths into eroded eyesores. One school of thought argues that the most important thing is to avoid paths that are just starting to become eroded as a substantial number of walkers in a short time can take the situation past the point of no return. Some paths are obviously unlikely to become eroded in the foreseeable future, for example rarely used paths or hard tracks, and these are very suitable for such a large event. Routing the walk along little used rights of way can help keep the path network in a useable state, even though some prior clearing may be required.

Avoid the notorious over-walked routes such as popular sections of major long distance paths and well-worn climbs of popular hills. Slopes are particularly vulnerable to erosion with most damage caused by descending walkers. Encourage walkers to be environmentally conscious, by walking along a path itself rather than along the moor just next to it or cutting corners.

Disturbance to wildlife

Certain wildlife habitats are sensitive and are best avoided particularly in the nesting season. For example, moorland areas, crags and watersides are breeding areas for certain birds, and, except for well frequented routes, should be avoided in the breeding season. Certain moorland areas, screes and rocky gullies support delicate and rare plants and mass trampling is undesirable. Some areas are designated SSSIs (Sites of Special Scientific Interest) or NNRs (National Nature Reserves). There the landowner has a duty to give the relevant authority (Natural England, Natural Resources Wales, or Scottish Natural Heritage) four months' notice of any action which is likely to be damaging, and this could result in restrictions being imposed on an event. Lambing could also make some areas sensitive at certain times.

National Park wardens, local rangers, nature reserve wardens, etc., can often advise at the planning stage how to minimise erosion and environmental disturbance. Several National Parks have their own written guidelines for organised activities.

Normally the LDWA will not publicise or promote events with over 500 starters in order to limit the impact on the environment. For many events, a far smaller entry limit may be appropriate for environmental conditions or indeed for other reasons such as small venues or a limited number of available helpers, see Section 2.13.

2.9 The route description

Writing a route description requires considerable time and skill. Normally a route description is intended to suffice without reference to a map. However, walkers should always be required to carry paper or electronic mapping in case of going off route, and indeed many walkers like to use the description in conjunction with a map. A good description will enable a walker unfamiliar with the area to follow the route with confidence. A poor description will lead to frustrated walkers and perhaps to conflict with farmers and landowners resulting from walkers straying onto private land.

Most route descriptions originate with the writer following the intended route with a notebook, or recorder in hand. It is good practice to record too much detail while out on the route. This helps ensure that there is enough information to avoid ambiguity and may well reduce the number of return visits needed. The first attempt at writing a description from the notes will have many gaps and queries. Several further reconnoitres and rewrites will be needed before an adequate draft is produced and then rigorous checking is needed. The following points may help in composing route descriptions.

Style:

Written style varies considerably from one route description to another. A series of instructions in short sentences is probably most common; long involved sentences are best avoided. Short paragraphs or bullets are often used. A route description should be consistent. For example, words such as 'road' (metalled), 'track' (unmetalled but suitable for farm vehicles) and 'path' (unsuitable for any four-wheeled vehicles), should be used with consistent meaning. If several walkers contribute draft descriptions for different parts of a route, one person should write the final version to ensure consistency of style.

Level of Detail:

A good description will have enough detail for the reader to follow the route correctly *and to know that they are correct*. 'Turn left after house' may leave the walker with an uncertain feeling of whether the correct house has been passed, whereas 'Turn left after house called Green Gables' removes any such uncertainty. On the other hand, unnecessary detail can be confusing. An instruction such as 'Follow left-hand edge of six fields to reach road' may well be obvious to follow, whereas 'Cross field to stile in left-hand corner, along left side of next field to go through gate by cattle trough to next field...' requires much more concentration.

As a general rule, when one instruction in the description has been completed, another instruction should be provided. A walker reading 'Follow track to top of ridge' will expect a further instruction on reaching the top, even if it is just 'and continue along track for a further 400 yards'.

Particular care should be taken at the following places.

- Ways through farmyards, grounds of houses, etc. Walkers going even slightly astray may lead to justifiable annoyance on the part of the owners.
- Leaving hill-tops and descending open hill sides. It is easy to miss paths leading off summits, and clear instructions and a compass bearing should be given. Concentration often lapses with the relief of starting downhill, and one of the commonest navigational errors is to descend in the wrong direction. The danger is even greater in mist or at night.
- Turning off a good track onto a minor or concealed path. To quote Newton's Law of Inertia, 'A body (i.e. a walker!) continues in a straight line at a constant speed unless subject to external influence'. Ensure that the walker is so influenced, preferably by identifying a landmark close to the turn. For example, 'Pass wooden seat and in 25 yards turn right into narrow woodland path'.

Try to identify places where walkers are particularly likely to go astray and emphasise the danger, for example 'Continue along path which veers away from wall' or 'Ignore the paths branching off to the left'.

Ambiguity:

A phrase which seems clear to its writer may be read by others with a very different meaning. The classic example, 'Pass barn on left', occurs regularly in route descriptions. Some will take this to mean 'Pass barn on your left', whilst others will understand 'Pass to left of barn'. At every stage ask, 'Can this phrase be misinterpreted?' Independent checking by other walkers also helps to identify double meanings. Avoid mentioning features which could easily be removed or changed, e.g., 'Turn right by wreck of old tractor' even though the feature may have been there for years.

Abbreviations:

There are a few standard abbreviations which will reduce the length of the description slightly: L/R (left/right); TL/TR (turn left/right); BL/BR (bear left/right); SO (Straight On); RD / TK / FP / BW (road / track / footpath / bridleway); JCT

(junction); X-TKS (cross tracks); FB (footbridge); SP (signpost); ST (stile); LWG (large wooden gate); SWG (small wooden gate); LMG (large metal gate); SMG (small metal gate); KGT (kissing gate); FLD (field); YDS (yards). It is a good idea to include a list of abbreviations at the beginning of the description.

Distances:

More than almost anything else, including distances between key features can make all the difference between a route description that is hard to follow and one that inspires confidence. 'Continue along track to stile on left' could refer to a stile after 10 yards or after 2 miles. After a few yards doubts will enter walkers' minds as to whether they have missed a stile hidden in the hedgerow. 'Continue along track for 500 yds. to stile on left' gives a much better indication. Distances may be estimated by pacing or from a map (but don't just guess). They should be given in a consistent form, either using miles and yards, or kilometres and metres. A common convention is to use yards for distances up to 1/2 mile, and miles for greater distances (e.g., 700yds, 0.75 mile, 1.2 miles).

Compass Bearings:

Compass bearings can give confidence in places where a walker might be uncertain about the route. Give magnetic compass bearings in degrees wherever the route cannot be described adequately using visible landmarks. This includes any sections where there is no obvious path (or maybe where there is a confusion of paths) and no obvious feature such as a fence to follow. Include bearings across tracts of open moorland and across fields where the exit stile or gate is not visible from the entrance. Always give bearings off the tops of hills. In mist, common on mountains or moorland, bearings may be essential. Rather more bearings will be needed for night sections, including across any fields where the path is not absolutely clear. Paths across grass that are obvious in daylight may be virtually invisible by torchlight.

Grid References:

It is helpful to provide grid references at intervals, perhaps every mile or so. This locates a point on the map for any walker who has gone astray to return to and is a great help for marking up maps prior to a walk.

Other Features:

It is helpful for a route description to indicate public toilets, shops, taps, etc. Unusual features that could otherwise be missed are also of interest to walkers.

Private Land:

Some challenge walks cross private land with the owner's permission. That this is the case should always be made clear on the route description so that anyone following the description on other occasions, such as to pre-walk the route, will be alerted to avoid trespass. It is often expedient not to release the details of the route that passes over the private land until just before the event. Many entrants now reconnoitre the route and if they access the private land, the entire event might be placed in jeopardy if the landowner withdraws the permission due to walkers trespassing on the private land. In these circumstances, alternative routes with rights of way should be provided for those who wish to pre-walk the route.

Format:

Think about the form and layout of the description. Walkers appreciate a clear, reasonably large typeface, particularly if it needs to be read by torchlight. Short paragraphs separated by clear gaps are easiest for the eye to follow. If possible, page turns should occur at checkpoints (paper does not last long if repeatedly turned over in wind and rain!) Providing entrants with electronic copies means that they can adjust the font size to suit their personal needs such as a large typeface. When producing the route description try to keep the electronic formatting as simple as possible just using normal tabs and paragraphs; Microsoft Word is commonly used. Using a hierarchy of different styles or circulating a .pdf file makes the description much harder to reformat to individual needs.

Other Information:

At the appropriate points in the description, give the number and name of each checkpoint, along with the grid reference and opening and closing times. Include the distance and ascent/descent between consecutive checkpoints

and cumulative mileage. The emergency phone number should be printed in the footer of each page of the route description as well as on the tally card.

Checking:

The route description must be checked carefully by at least one walker unfamiliar with the area, walking the route using only the description. Sections which may be walked at night on the event should ideally be checked both in daylight and at night. The checker should be asking 'How clear will this be to someone who is soaked through, tired and unfamiliar with the area?' The author should expect and appreciate constructive feedback.

The Marshals' walk provides a check on the route shortly before the main event and there should be a final check of the route a few days before the event. There are sometimes new gates, fences or signs that necessitate a change of wording. Any amendments to the route description can be communicated to entrants via email and an updated version uploaded to the event website. Alternatively, or in addition, changes can be notified at the start or distributed on strips of paper.

It may be useful to divide the route into sections and to allocate it to Route Wardens who have responsibility for regularly walking their section of the route, checking for any changes e.g., gates replacing stiles, and identifying any access issues which can then be followed up by the Route Planning officer.

Distribution to entrants:

Although walkers like to see route descriptions perhaps several weeks before the walk, descriptions should not be made available unless they are essentially complete and accurate. Normally the route description and electronic GPX file for use with GPS devices (see Section 2.10) is put on a website or emailed to entrants a few weeks prior to the event and it is the entrants' responsibility to print off their own route descriptions. However, there may be entrants who do not have electronic facilities, and they can be sent a paper copy. Last minute changes may be unavoidable, and a final version can be substituted a few days before the event. If the walk crosses private land for which permission has only been obtained for the day of the event, an alternative route can be given until the final draft to avoid walkers trespassing and possible jeopardizing the event.

2.10 GPX files

A GPX file (short for GPS exchange format) is essentially a computer file consisting of a list of map coordinates, which represent closely spaced points along a route that may be followed by a traveller, in our case a walker. The coordinates are based on the GPS (Global Positioning System), the world-wide satellite-based system that enables one's location to be pinpointed instantaneously. Increasingly, walking events make a GPX file of the route available to entrants via the website or email to enable walkers to navigate the route using a handheld GPS device or smart phone.

The easiest way to create a GPX file is to follow the route around with a handheld GPS device set to auto-record, or alternatively a smart phone loaded with a GPX app (iPhone or Android app stores have many suitable free or paid for apps, for example *GPX Creator*, *My Tracks* or *GPS Map*). Care is needed since any deviation from the correct route will be recorded. The file can then be downloaded onto a computer and made available to entrants and can also be used to plot the route on OS or other maps. If GPX route files are produced in several sections, then the files can be merged to cover the whole route using a text editor on a computer. The distance and ascent of sections of the walk and the entire walk are automatically calculated by the software.

It is possible to produce a GPX file on a map on a computer by plotting a sequence of closely spaced points along the route, making sure that points at corners or bends are plotted, but this will not be as accurate as one obtained by walking around the route with a GPS device.

A GPX file should not be regarded as a substitute for walkers carrying a route description. There will be things on the route description that will not be picked up on a GPX file, for example the location of checkpoints and self-clips, places where special care is needed, etc. Moreover, batteries may run down or handheld devices may be dropped and broken.

2.11 Safety

The safety of walkers, helpers and the general public must be borne in mind at all stages of planning and organising the event.

Organisers have a duty of care to paying participants to ensure a level of safety comparable with what is regarded as acceptable within the sport, judged by best current practice. Walking is perceived as a 'safe' activity though there are additional risks in challenge events such as lack of stamina or prolonged bad weather. Minor injuries (blisters and bruises) are common but a major injury resulting directly from participation could have serious implications. It is difficult to provide precise guidelines in view of the potential for litigation in what is largely unexplored legal territory.

Walking, particularly in remote areas, will always carry some risk and entrants must necessarily take primary responsibility for their own safety, but also for the safety of those around them, whilst walking the route. Indeed, entrants have a responsibility towards the organisers and helpers to ensure that their safety is not jeopardised, for example by having to search for missing walkers. Nevertheless, entrants can reasonably expect to have better safety provision when taking part in an event than if walking the same route by themselves. In fact, this will be the case almost automatically by the 'safety in numbers' principle.

Safety consideration falls into two parts: designing the event to minimise the chance of Covid-19 transmission and of an accident given the terrain and hazards, etc., and ensuring that help can be obtained quickly in the event of an emergency.

Keeping walkers on the route

Accidents that occur on the official route are likely to be noticed soon by other walkers or by sweepers. Thus, the chance of a serious problem going undetected will be very much reduced by minimising the likelihood of walkers wandering off route. A good route description, requiring entrants to be experienced at navigation, judicious waymarking, etc., contribute to safety in this way.

Waymarking

Temporary waymarking short stretches of the route may be appropriate, particularly near cliff edges, quarries, or dangerous bogs, and also where walkers would cause a nuisance if they were to go off route, such as near private property or in environmentally sensitive areas. Waymarks may also be helpful at likely spots for navigational errors, which can usually be anticipated or may become apparent from the marshals' walk. For instance, a minor path turning off a main path is often missed, and even one marker may be enough to catch walkers' eyes. It is better to waymark parts of a route than to risk walkers going off course and consequently upsetting landowners or causing the organisers worries over lost walkers.

Brightly coloured tape tied to trees or undergrowth, or flags or tape tied to canes in the ground are usual forms of waymarking. At night in open country a light, fixed or flashing, may provide the extra assurance required. In recent years, highly visible Solas (reflective) tape has been used and the advantage of this tape is that it is barely noticed in daylight, but when a headlight or handheld torch is used the tape is seen easily from a considerable distance away, something that is particularly useful when crossing large fields. Someone who is very certain of the route, perhaps a helper at a nearby checkpoint, should be detailed to set up waymarks, and arrangements must be made to remove them immediately after the event and this is often done by the sweeper. The landowner's permission should be obtained before waymarking is used.

Clothing, equipment and experience

Organisers must ensure that participants are fully aware of what must be worn or carried for safe walking. The rules or event details (see Section 3.7) should clearly specify the minimum clothing to be worn or carried and equipment and food to be carried, as well as the level of experience and map-reading ability needed. Similarly, the details should state what support is provided by the event and should emphasise that the walk is not led or waymarked.

Requirements will depend on the nature of the walk and time of year; typical items are listed in Appendix E. Draw particular attention to the need to wear or carry full waterproofs and clothing that remains warm in adverse conditions. For mountain or moorland walking, clothing of wool or a suitable thermal material should be worn or carried; cotton or denim trousers are not considered adequate. Entrants should plan carefully, taking into account their experience, terrain, and weather conditions. Walkers are recommended to reduce the transmission of Covid-19 by bringing their own masks, hand sanitiser and first aid kits, and sharing of equipment and clothing should be discouraged.

Other safety matters

Other safety matters are discussed in Chapter 4 concerning operations on the day. These include ensuring that emergency services can be summoned rapidly (see Section 4.12), briefing the organisers and helpers of what action to take if an emergency occurs (see Section 4.12), good communications (see Section 4.10), first aid provision (see Section 4.12), mechanisms for detecting and taking action to locate missing walkers (see Section 4.5) and kit checks (see Section 4.4). Covid-19 precautions should be considered in all aspects of the event.

As mentioned in Section 2.7, the Safety Advisory Group (SAG), who will be able to offer safety advice and suggest alternatives, if necessary, should be consulted early in the planning stage.

Note that safety on events extends beyond physical safety to ensuring that walkers and marshals are treated with respect and that no form of abuse is tolerated. The organisers have particular responsibility for young persons and vulnerable adults, for more information see Section 2.14 and the LDWA's documents *Safeguarding Adults at Risk* (see [Toolkit](#)) and *Safeguarding Children and Young People* (see [Toolkit](#)).

2.12 Risk assessment

The Event Organiser can share a risk assessment with the LDWA [Risk Officer](#) for a second opinion if required prior to advertising the challenge event. Completion of a robust risk assessment demonstrates that the organisers have discharged their responsibilities correctly and will help defend any claims against the organisers personally of negligence if anything untoward arises. More importantly it will help improve the smooth running and safety of event for participants and marshals alike.

The purpose of a risk assessment is to identify and address foreseeable risks associated with the event and thus minimise the likelihood of injuries, accidents, Covid-19 transmission or a chaotic event, as far as is reasonably possible. Risks cannot be eliminated completely, but the aim is to reduce the chance of them occurring and to reduce their impact should they occur. For example, a good route description will reduce the risk of a walker getting lost and a good tracking system will detect a lost walker rapidly, and careful checkpoint layout will reduce the chance of Covid-19 transmission. The risk assessment form should be placed on the event website prior to the event so entrants are assured that risks have been addressed. If there is a significant incident during the event the authorities and/or insurers may require to see the risk assessment and other paperwork. Copies of the risk assessment should be provided for checkpoints as well as HQ.

A risk assessment form should be used to identify and address risks associated with the event and should be compiled early on in event planning. One committee member, usually the Chief Organiser, should be responsible for setting up the risk assessment form in consultation with other officers. Compiling the risk assessment will identify aspects of the walk that may need to be modified. The form is then used as a reference for event planning to ensure that appropriate and timely action is taken to reduce the risks.

The *LDWA Risk Assessment template* (see [Toolkit](#)) for organisers includes standard entries, other risks may also need to be added. The form is in two parts. The first part, the *Event Risk Assessment* has the following columns.

- Column A: Identify all significant hazards and risks associations with the event including financial and reputational risks.

- Column B: An assessment of the level of risk that these hazards or risks impose (High/Medium/Low) before inserting the control measures. This will also reflect the impact and likelihood of an accident/incident occurring.
- Column C: An assessment of the level of risk that the same hazards or risks impose after inserting the control measures in Column D.
- Column D: The proposed measures to be undertaken in order to control the risk. Possible actions are described in the various sections of these *Guidelines*.
- Column E: The timescales and identification of personnel in order to ensure that the measures proposed are actually implemented.

If any risks remain rated 'High' in column C, then the event cannot take place unless further action is proposed to reduce the risk.

The risks that this section relates to include:

- Organisers' skills.
- Entrants' ability and experience.
- Overall route.
- Reducing risk of Covid-19 transmission.
- Access issues.
- Cancellation of event.
- Walk HQ Issues.
- Checkpoint Issues.
- Communication.
- Health and safety
- Emergencies.
- Lost walkers.
- Transport.
- Budget.
- Rubbish disposal.

The second part, the *Route Risk Assessment*, concentrates on specific risks at points on the route and has the following columns.

- Column A: Paragraph number of the hazard or risk in the route description.
- Column B: Grid reference of the hazard or risk.
- Column C: Description of the hazard or risk.
- Column D: An assessment of the level of risk that the hazard or risk imposes (High/Medium/Low) before inserting the control measures. This will also reflect the impact and likelihood of an accident/incident occurring.
- Column E: An assessment of the level of risk that the same hazard or risk imposes after inserting the control measures.
- Column F: Control measures suggested.

Such hazards or risks include:

- Busy road crossings.
- Rough or dangerous sections, particularly rocky descents.
- Areas of difficult navigation or remote sections.
- Cliffs, quarries.
- Dangerous stiles, bridges, etc.

- Cattle or other livestock on the route.

For a longer walk, particular consideration should be given to risks for overnight sections when visibility is limited, and walkers and marshals are tired and more apt to make mistakes. With usual starting times, virtually all parts of a route after 30 miles will be done by some entrants in the dark.

Note that risk assessment is an ongoing process: risks may change in the run up to the event, for example heavy rain may lead to flooding rendering parts of the route dangerous. Reassessments on the day before to the event and on the morning of the event may also be necessary, particularly in relation to the weather conditions and forecast. The possibility of cancelling the event must always be an option in extreme circumstances, see Section 3.8. Alternatively, in poor weather conditions the route may need to be altered or and/or grouping imposed. One possibility is to prepare beforehand an alternative lower-level version of any sections which cannot be crossed safely in high winds or driving rain. If conditions are so bad that it is deemed that a section is not safe, a sheet with the alternative route description could be issued to walkers at registration or at the checkpoint before the alteration. Any changes of the risk assessment can be shared with the LDWA [Risk Officer](#) for a second opinion where appropriate.

2.13 Restrictions on entrants

In principle, events should be open to all who wish to take part. However, certain restrictions may be appropriate.

- A maximum limit on the number of entrants or starters may be necessary. This may be because of physical limitations on HQ and checkpoints, car-parking space, transport available, number of helpers available, or for other organisational reasons. A limit may also be desirable on environmental or safety grounds and this should be discussed with National Park and other authorities (see Section 2.7). In normal times the LDWA will not promote or publicise any event which has more than 500 starters. However, a smaller limit may be well be appropriate for individual events.
- The organisers may wish to restrict entry to, or give priority to, members of a particular organisation or club.
- Walkers who have little chance of finishing will gain little from an event but frustration and can be a high safety risk. Thus, a longer or more severe event may be restricted to those with appropriate walking experience by requiring that entrants have completed a walk of a specified length in, say, the previous year. This should be advertised long enough in advance to give prospective walkers time to fulfil the requirement. Entrants may be asked to include a copy of a certificate or results to demonstrate they have a suitable qualification. However, qualifications may be difficult to monitor, and some discretion may be needed.
- A lower age limit may be necessary (see Section 2.14). In particular, specific additional needs of individuals under the age of 18 and vulnerable adults must be considered and reasonable adjustments made.
- Many events do not permit walkers to bring dogs, though some allow dogs if they are kept on leads throughout the walk. Restrictions on dogs should be set out in the event details and rules. In particular, walkers with dogs must confirm that they have liability insurance for each dog. Farmers and gamekeepers are often more concerned about possible worrying of stock by dogs than any other aspect of a challenge walk. The LDWA has a *Dogs on Walks* policy (see [Toolkit](#)).
- Walkers (and marshals) must not attend the event if they or members of their permitted bubble or household have recently been diagnosed with or show any Covid-19 symptoms, are awaiting test results or are self-isolating under current government guidance.
- Organisers must check with marshals and walkers to ensure that individuals with additional needs of vulnerabilities can be accommodated.

2.14 Young participants and vulnerable adults

Event organisers have a special responsibility to participants under 18 years of age and to vulnerable adults. Challenge events should give such entrants a positive and enjoyable experience of walking in a safe environment,

ensuring they are protected from abuse whilst participating. Not least, youngsters should be welcomed as the long distance walkers of the future!

The LDWA and organisers have a duty of care to safeguard and promote the welfare of young participants and vulnerable adults and must ensure that safeguarding practice reflects statutory responsibilities, government guidance and complies with best practice. Event organisers should familiarise themselves with the LDWA's policy documents *Safeguarding Children and Young People* (see [Toolkit](#)) and *Safeguarding Adults at Risk* (see [Toolkit](#)) and ensure that marshals understand their roles and responsibilities in safeguarding youngsters and vulnerable adults. These include being alert to any inappropriate behaviour, working in an open environment so no-one is alone with young people or vulnerable adults for any significant period of time and avoiding any gestures or remarks to be made which may be misunderstood or unwelcome. If there is any alleged or suspected abuse, the procedures laid down in the Policy and Procedures should be followed, showing a caring and listening attitude to the young or vulnerable person but also ensuring confidentiality of all parties. A written record of allegations should be made and the form in the document *Reporting Safeguarding Incidents* (see [Toolkit](#)), which includes a flow chart on actions to take, should be completed as soon as possible; this should be sent to the local group Safeguarding Representative or the LDWA [National Safeguarding Representative](#) who will take appropriate action.

Whilst photographs of events are often sent to *Strider*, local newspapers or put on a website, photographs that include those under 18 should not be published without the consent of a parent or legal guardian.

Individuals under 18 should be accompanied by a named adult on challenge events and/or should also have the written consent of a parent or legal guardian. Similarly, vulnerable adults must be accompanied.

Furthermore, organisers should set an appropriate minimum age, depending on the length and nature of the walk and must comply with the Adventure Activities Licensing Regulations, see below.

It is generally regarded as inadvisable for young people to take part in very long walks to avoid damage to growing limbs and joints and for reasons of safety. Moreover, youngsters can be put off walking for life by a traumatically tough experience or by failing to complete a walk. It is difficult to be precise about appropriate maximum distances; the severity of the route and conditions will be a major factor. The following might be a very rough guide.

- Up to 15 miles : no age limit
- 16 - 20 miles : 11+ years
- 21 - 26 miles : 12+ years
- 27 - 30 miles : 13+ years
- 31 - 40 miles : 14+ years
- 41 - 50 miles : 16+ years
- 51 - 70 miles : 17+ years
- 71 miles or over : 18+ years

The [Adventure Activities Licensing Regulations](#), which concern participants under 18 years of age, were introduced in 1996 following the Lyme Bay canoeing tragedy. Challenge events come within the scope of the legislation, and the LDWA will not publicise events which do not comply with the regulations; indeed, failure to comply constitutes a criminal offence.

The regulations apply to adventure activities, which include 'trekking', defined as journeying on foot over terrain (a) which is moorland or more than 600 metres above sea level, and (b) from which it would take more than 30 minutes travelling time to reach any accessible road or refuge. (An accessible road is one which is accessible to an ambulance, a vehicle not suited to rugged terrain.) Many lowland and other events do not come within the definition of 'trekking', in which case the restrictions do not apply.

The basic legislation requires that a person or organisation charging for providing facilities for such adventure activities for persons under 18 years of age must hold a licence from the Health and Safety Executive. The licence fee (£200 plus costs of inspection) together with the conditions that would need to be met, mean that a licence is not a feasible option for most events organised on an occasional basis. However, there are exemptions to needing a

licence. The most relevant exemptions are (i) where the facilities are provided by a voluntary organisation for its members and (ii) when a young person is accompanied by a parent or legal guardian (no other adult will suffice).

Thus, the options open to organisers of events that fall within the definition of 'trekking' are, essentially, to allow those under 18 to take part only if:

- They are accompanied by a parent or legal guardian, *or*
- They are members of the organisation putting on the event.

Thus, for events organised by the LDWA or its local groups that come within the definition of 'trekking', those under 18 may only take part if either they are accompanied by a parent or legal guardian, or if they are an LDWA member, either as an individual member or as a member of a family holding family membership.

2.15 Equality, diversity and inclusivity

The LDWA is committed to equality, diversity, and inclusivity in all its activities, and this must be reflected in challenge walks and their organisation, whether or not they are organised by LDWA groups.

Everyone should be encouraged, supported, and given the opportunity to take part, whatever their circumstances. In particular, entrants' circumstances and attitude to risk around transmission of Covid-19 must be respected and people who disclose additional needs must not be excluded or discriminated against.

Freedom from discrimination is essential for long distance walking to flourish in a modern society but it is also an obligation under the Equality Act 2010 which prohibits discrimination on grounds of the following protected characteristics.

- Age.
- Disability.
- Gender Reassignment.
- Marriage and Civil Partnership.
- Pregnancy and maternity.
- Race and ethnicity.
- Religion and belief and non-belief.
- Sex (Gender).
- Sexual Orientation.
- Socioeconomic Status (this is not covered by the Act but is included in the LDWA constitution and policy).

Such discrimination includes direct and indirect discrimination, harassment, victimisation, and bullying. Discrimination arising from a disability is unlawful when a disabled person is treated unfavourably because of something connected with their disability and this unfavourable treatment cannot be justified.

Further information may be found in the LDWA's *Equality and Diversity Policy* (see [Toolkit](#)).

Sporting organisations are required by law to make *reasonable adjustments* for disabled people such as providing extra help or making changes to the way in which they provide their services. What is 'reasonable' is not clearly defined by law, but organisers should be prepared to make extra effort to accommodate those with disabilities where this is practicable. For example, blind walkers accompanied by a guide have often taken part in challenge events. Deaf walkers are helped by good signage and marshals speaking slowly and clearly whilst facing them to permit lip reading. Whilst many cross-country routes will not be suitable for wheelchairs, there are an increasing number of paths and path networks that are being adapted for wheelchairs and it may sometimes be possible to put on a wheelchair friendly event. Reasonable adjustments must also be considered for individuals who are or feel they may be more vulnerable to Covid-19 transmission

2.16 The marshals' walk

The *Marshals' Walk*, which is typically held 2-4 weeks before the main event, serves several purposes. It provides the organisers and volunteers who will be marshalling on the main event with the opportunity to walk the route and qualify for a certificate. It provides helpers with an opportunity to familiarise themselves with the area, to check the route description, and to note any last-minute problems or changes on the route. It will also provide an opportunity to test the procedures that have been introduced to reduce the risk of Covid-19 transmission.

For a smaller event, the marshals' walk may just be a self-supported social walk with several walkers going round the route. For a larger event, it may be an opportunity to have a 'dry run' to see how the checkpoints and other aspects work, leaving time to iron out any issues before the main event. In that case, there should be a designated Marshals' Walk Organizer who should work closely with the other committee members who will provide support, although it must be recognised that many of the committee may be walking the marshals' event. A small team of helpers will be needed to help manage the marshals' event and to staff checkpoints. When checkpoints are booked for the main event, it is often convenient to book them for the marshals' event, if required, at the same time.

The marshals' walk HQ is often different from that used for the main event as there are fewer participants and a small venue, or just starting from individual cars, may suffice. However, some Event Organisers like to use the same HQ in order to see how the premises will work in advance of the main event. I. A decision needs to be made as to whether sweepers are required depending on the numbers on the marshals' walk and the nature of the event.

Chapter Three - The Administrative Side

3.1 Finances

It is important to ensure the financial success of an event. Challenge walks are not generally intended to make a profit, but a financial disaster will deter enthusiasm for future events. Somebody has to cover any loss, and this can lead to ill-will and recrimination.

An event budget can be substantial, perhaps over £40,000 for a large-scale event, and organisers must be seen to handle the finances in a careful and proper manner. Except for a very small event, a separate Treasurer, who should have some financial acumen, is essential. A bank account is needed for receiving entry fees and making payments. Often a local group or club account can be used but under no circumstances use an individual's bank account. For larger events, a bank account should be opened to keep event funds separate from other finances, though setting up a bank account can be time consuming given the security checks that are needed. Check on account charges that may be made.

The Treasurer is responsible for preparing a budget for the event, for maintaining a proper set of accounts, backed up by receipts, and for exercising financial control to ensure that those involved in the organisation do not overspend or misspend. As protection for the Treasurer another committee member should check over the accounts from time to time.

A detailed budget must be prepared early on, certainly before deciding the entry fee. The budget should be discussed and approved by the whole committee; if the event is run under the auspices of a club its approval may also be required. Some costs will vary with the number of walkers whereas fixed costs, such as checkpoint hire, will be independent of the number of entries. Thus, it is a good idea to consider budgets based on minimum and maximum entry numbers, as well as the expected number. As costs and numbers become clearer, the budget can be refined.

The following headings might appear in the budget and accounts:

Income:

- Entry fees.
- Sponsorship.
- Merchandise.
- Other sales.

Expenditure:

- Hire of Walk HQ for both main event and marshals' walk.
- Hire of checkpoint premises including those used for the marshals' walk.
- Transport, including minibuses and vans for luggage transfers.
- First Aid at Walk HQ.
- Merchandise.
- Printing, including certificates / waterproof tally cards / signage / other.
- Postage.
- RAYNET expenses.
- Badges.
- Marshals' and organisers' expenses.
- Contingency allowance.
- Donations.

Allow for donations to deserving organisations and individuals who provide voluntary help. For example, a small contribution to farmers who have loaned barns or scout troops who have helped marshal the event fosters good relations. Similarly, a donation to a charitable trust (e.g., National Park authority, National Trust or a nature reserve) may be appropriate if the walk goes over its land. Currently LDWA local groups organising events are requested to add a surcharge of £2 to entry fees to pass on to LDWA central funds to pay for technology that the Association will need in the future. Also, organisers are encouraged to pass on the excess entry fee charged to non-LDWA members to the LDWA for their fund for sustainability of the Association.

Landowners and other bodies should not charge for events using rights of way across their land though they may charge if a car park being used as a checkpoint or to enable entrants to use toilets. For any problems in this area please contact the LDWA Event Secretary at Events@ldwa.org.uk.

Helpers sometimes waive expenses to which they are reasonably entitled and sponsorship may be obtained later on, so outlay under some headings may be less than anticipated; nevertheless prudent planning is advised.

Inevitably, there will be some initial expenditure before any entry fee income is received, for example booking fees for halls, organisers' travel, etc. If the event is organised by or on behalf of a club a float can often be provided, and for annual events, enough surplus may be built up to cover initial expenses in subsequent years. As a last resort individuals sometimes cover the initial costs themselves in the expectation of recovering them later, but such expenditure must be recorded carefully and done with the full knowledge of the committee.

3.2 Entry fees

Once the nature of the event has been determined and a budget prepared, give careful thought to the level of the entry fee which should be set to make a small surplus. The *Future Events* pages of *Strider*, *SI entries/Fabian 4*, or the listings on the LDWA website give an idea of typical entry fees for events of various lengths and styles. The fee should be related to the costs of putting on the event and donations to the LDWA/local causes. Those events with excessive or unjustifiable fees will be avoided by long distance walkers and will gain a bad reputation. If the fee includes a component which is a charitable donation, for example to a school or scout group helping to run the event, make this clear in event details and publicity. If balancing the budget requires a high entry fee, then consider ways of reducing expenditure.

Entry fees are normally the same for all walkers on a given route, but there may be a lower rate for members of the organising club or for young, unemployed, or retired entrants. In particular, for events organised by the LDWA or its local groups, current policy is to charge a substantially higher fee, perhaps 50% higher, for non-LDWA members to encourage them to join the LDWA and enable the surcharge to be passed to the LDWA to preserve the sustainability of the organisation.

Events are usually run on a 'no extras' basis, with the entry fee covering all hire of buildings and certificates. However, cloth badges are often available for sale to finishers – some walkers love collecting badges, others will not want one. Sometimes a separate charge is made for parking if a car park needs to be hired specially.

The organisers must decide on a policy on return of entry fees in cases where entrants withdraw. If the fee is substantial, it is often returned less an administration charge provided notification is received by a given date (well before the entry closing date). This provides an incentive for those withdrawing to inform the organisers, which allows entry by those on a waiting list and helps gauge numbers. However, particularly for an event that is expected to be over-subscribed, a return fee policy that is too generous may attract entries from those who are uncertain whether they wish to take part, leading to extra administration, loss of income and bad feeling.

If the organisers have to cancel the event for any reason, see Section 3.8, there is a legal obligation for entrants to be offered a full refund. Most long distance walkers are understanding of circumstances beyond the organisers control and of the work nevertheless put in by organisers, and may accept a reduced refund, but nevertheless they can ask for the full amount to which they are legally entitled.

3.3 Commercial sponsorship

For a larger event it may be worth seeking sponsorship to offset the costs. A sponsoring organisation will want something in return, usually in the form of advertising, perhaps on event documentation, at the walk HQ or in press advertisements and reports. A challenge walk offers only limited publicity opportunities for the sponsoring company, so it is not worth spending too much effort looking for sponsors. Assistance in kind is more often forthcoming than a cash donation. This can take the form of free or reduced cost printing facilities, loan of a vehicle or perhaps providing a tee-shirt or other memento for walkers. Alternatively, local firms may be willing to pay for an advertisement on the back of event details or on other documents that are circulated to entrants or potential entrants.

Possible sponsors include local firms, outdoor equipment suppliers, but in particular anywhere there is a good personal contact. Most companies willing to sponsor have a sponsorship budget that is earmarked well in advance, so decide whether to seek sponsorship and approach likely companies as soon as possible, preferably at least a year in advance. A business-like approach is important, perhaps initially with a carefully drafted letter. However, the best way of obtaining sponsorship is personal contact by a persuasive member of the committee or group.

3.4 Insurance

Event organisers must have adequate public liability insurance cover to protect themselves and helpers against claims arising out of the event from the public, from landowners, from walkers, etc. Local authorities or services may require evidence of adequate insurance cover to be produced before allowing their property to be used for checkpoint purposes. Similarly, permission to use private land, particularly forestry or water collection areas, may be conditional on adequate insurance. A minimum cover of £5 million is strongly recommended and often required.

Such liability policies do NOT cover accidental injury to participants, who should be advised to check that they are covered by their own personal accident insurance. The event entry form should include a disclaimer pointing out that participation is at entrants' own risk. Entrants bringing dogs on events, if this is allowed, must have their own insurance for their dogs.

Challenge Events organised by the LDWA, or their Local Groups are covered by the LDWA's own public liability insurance policy. At the time of writing the LDWA has a £10 million liability policy which covers ONLY those events and walks organised by the LDWA or its local groups. This policy covers liability for damage, injury, loss, liability assumed under contract, trespass, nuisance, products liability, officers' liability, including local group officers, event organisers and voluntary helpers at checkpoints, libel, and slander. The policy extends to cover organisers when they are reconnoitring the route at the event planning stage. The current *Insurance Policy* and *Certificates* are available on the LDWA website within the [Toolkit](#). Authorities who may be affected by the event often wish to see the insurance certificates and they can be given a link to the online documents.

In the event of a possible claim the [LDWA Treasurer](#) should be contacted without delay; failing the Treasurer contact the Local Groups Secretary, the Chair, or the General Secretary. [Contact details](#) are in *Strider* and on the LDWA [web pages](#). Depending on the nature of the claim, an incident form may need to be completed and the insurers may require documentation relating to the event including the risk assessment and the entry form. When confronted by a possible claim, organisers and helpers must not admit any liability, nor reassure any allegedly injured party that they will be covered by insurance.

Non-LDWA events will not be publicised by the LDWA unless the LDWA National Executive Committee is satisfied that they have an adequate public liability policy and Covid-19 transmissions risks have been assessed and mitigated via a

risk assessment. This must be confirmed when registering the event with the LDWA. Organisers of such events are advised to consult a qualified insurance broker with FCA (Financial Conduct Authority) permissions to recommend a suitable insurance policy for their needs. If an event is put on by an organisation (e.g., a sports club or Scouts) a suitable policy may be in place, though the cover should be carefully checked.

Marshals and helpers using their own cars to help run the event should take care that they keep within the terms of their own car insurance policies. These normally cover activities done in a voluntary capacity, but any indication by the organising committee that such costs will be reimbursed could be interpreted as invalidating the person's voluntary status and thus their personal car insurance. An *ex-gratia* payment to a geographical group is a different matter and should be considered as outlined in Section 3.1.

3.5 Publicity

A challenge event is an ideal opportunity to raise the profile of the LDWA. One committee member should be responsible for publicity and all media enquiries should be referred to that member. The event publicity officer should contact the LDWA [Communications and Publicity Officer](#) for advice on what can be done to maximise the publicity available.

Some advertising will be needed to attract walkers to the event, but it should be geared to the number of entrants sought. Turning down entries disappoints applicants and creates extra work for the organisers. Advertising should be targeted to the type of entrant required. Do not make the walk sound too easy and make it clear if they need to complete a qualifying event.

There are two aspects to publicity: Internal and External Publicity.

Internal publicity

By utilising the various LDWA platforms it is possible to inform all members of the planned event and any up-dates as they arise. For an event to be supported and publicised by the LDWA, whether organized by an LDWA group or independently, complete the *Challenge Event Notification Form* (in the [Toolkit](#)), to register your event, giving the basic information about the event. Provided that the event conforms to the LDWA requirements the event will normally be included in the listings in the LDWA magazine *Strider* up to a year ahead and also listed on the LDWA website [Challenge Event Listings, social media and SI entries/Fabian 4](#). In case of difficulty contact the LDWA [Events Secretary](#).

LDWA Facebook Page:

The LDWA [Facebook Page](#) is a 'closed' page that may be accessed by both LDWA members and non-members. As with the LDWA Forum, members may exchange information but can also share photographs and other electronic files. This page is particularly successful with over 9,700 followers. The event Publicity Officer should make use of the page to keep interested members apprised of up-to-date information. It has been particularly useful in recent years when providing urgent information to members such as trees down on a path.

LDWA forum:

There is a dedicated forum for [Challenge Events](#) on the LDWA website where LDWA members can exchange information and where questions from members may be answered.

Email:

Most entrants register with an email address, so it is possible to send a bulk email to entrants to advise them of any urgent news.

External publicity

There are many ways of bringing an event to the attention of interested people who are not LDWA members. This also raises the profile of the LDWA and brings the uniqueness of the challenge events to the attention of other walking groups and local communities. However, it is particularly important to emphasise that the event has been planned to be Covid-19 safe.

LDWA Website and Facebook page:

These are publicly readable, see above.

Event website:

The Event Organiser should arrange for an event website to be created. For events organized by LDWA or its local groups an event website may be set up using the LDWA template. For the annual Hundred, there is a special template for which access may be given by the NEC Internet officer (contact details in *Strider* or on the LDWA website).

Event Twitter page:

Twitter is a great social media platform for sharing newsworthy items. It can be used to provide information about the progress of the event's planning or perhaps providing information about issues with the route. If this is linked in with the LDWA Twitter Page any re-tweets will be seen by a much wider audience.

Event Instagram page:

Instagram is a social media platform which can be used to present an event pictorially.

Local newspapers:

Local newspaper journalists are always looking for stories and well-written articles and pictures provide excellent publicity when entries open as well as shortly before and after the event. Newspapers will like the idea of ordinary people walking long distances in their area and are particularly keen on stories with a personal slant. Be careful when writing articles not to suggest anything that might lead to criticism of the event, such as an irresponsible attitude to safety. Remember that an event is a personal challenge and not a race so journalists will need to be advised of the LDWA ethos. Make sure that you always refer to 'event' rather than 'race' and 'entrant' or 'walker' rather than 'competitor'. This is a real opportunity to promote the LDWA and the event. Most local newspapers are also on-line so a wide audience will read of the event.

Local radio:

As with local newspapers, local radio stations may be willing to run a story about the event. As a result of making contact with local radio, sometimes national radio hears about an event and become interested.

3.6 Data protection policy

This section is included at this point as it relates to entry forms and entry administration, but it is also relevant to other aspects of the event, including recording walkers progress, event results, etc.

The 2018 Data Protection Act implements the [General Data Protection Regulation](#) concerning the handling of personal data and it applies to challenges events along with other organised activities. The Act applies if personal details of individuals are stored either on a computer or in paper records. The LDWA is registered under the Data Protection Act covering events organised by the LDWA and its local groups. It is essential that the Event Organiser, Entries Secretary and others who handle personal data are familiar with the requirements and they should read the LDWA *Data Protection and Privacy Policy* and in particular the *Data Protection and Privacy User Guide* (see [Toolkit](#)), which interpret GDPR as it applies to long distance walking and challenge events in particular. Clear responsibility for Data Protection must be allocated to a named Data Protection Officer, normally the Entries Secretary.

The entry form

The entry form, considered in detail in Section 3.7, must include a Privacy Notice which we duplicate here. On the one hand this allows the organisers to use personal information to the extent needed to run the event, but it also makes clear the responsibilities the organisers have in using and deleting data.

"I understand that the personal information submitted on this entry form will be held by the event organisers and retained securely for up to seven years after the event is held for the purposes of managing this event only.

I accept that photographs are likely to be taken at the event, which may be featured in Strider magazine, group newsletters, on LDWA websites and on LDWA social media. I understand this will be held in perpetuity and I have the right to request deletion where it is physically possible for the LDWA to do so.

I understand that my personal data may be published immediately and may be held in perpetuity for the purposes of providing a record of the event. I have the right to request that all my personal data be anonymised or removed where it is possible for the LDWA to do so.

Please see the Data Protection and Privacy User Guide on www.ldwa.org.uk for further information.”

A sentence may need to be included in the event details stating that entrants’ details will be held in an electronic retrieval system to be used only for the purposes of administering the event and to allow operation of Covid-19 Track and Trace.

Any individual not prepared to provide their name and basic details to the organisers cannot be accepted on an event.

If a third party, such as an online entry company, is used to manage the application and to receive the entry charge for the event, the third party is acting as a data processor for the event and is responsible along with the event organisers for keeping the personal information of applicants confidential.

Use and retention of personal data

On the day of the event marshals and others will need to have access to personal details so that progress through the event and completions are recorded and that the event is safe for participants. Nevertheless, the event organisers must limit access on a need-to-know basis, especially for sensitive information such as medical conditions.

Organisers must ensure that walkers details are uploaded onto the [LDWA Server](#) immediately after the walk so that they can if necessary be made available to authorities to enable Track and Trace (where appropriate) or for insurance purposes..

The event Data Protection Officer must ensure that personal data is held securely, either electronically or on paper, that it is not disclosed inappropriately, and that it retained only as long as necessary. For personal data associated with the event, data provided on entry forms is needed to manage the smooth running of the event and also for insurance purposes and may be retained for up to 7 years after the event. The same period applies to risk assessments which may be requested by insurers. However medical information, such as supplied on entry forms, must be deleted within a week of the event. All marshals and helpers granted access to personal details must also delete and/or hand back all such material to the event Data Protection Officer within one week of the event.

The event results, which provide a record and celebration of the event and recognise individual achievements may be kept in perpetuity. The results will normally include each entrant’s first and family names, time for completion of the event and perhaps times at checkpoints, and perhaps the entrant’s group or club or the number of previous completions of the event.

The Entries Secretary may receive requests from an entrant to take part anonymously. However, due to the need to manage the event and ensure that all entrants are accounted for from a health and safety perspective, including managing Covid-19 transmission, it is not practicable for an entrant to be anonymous for the duration of the event. However, an entrant may request that their name and details do not appear in the event results; in that case they may be recorded as ‘anonymous’ in the results in a way that make them unidentifiable.

The Data Protection legislation requires the organisers, the LDWA and its Groups to be able to identify all personal information held on an individual. In the unlikely event of receiving such a request, the event organiser must be able to identify all the entry forms still held and all the records held linked to an individual. Further information on Data Protection may be obtained from the LDWA *Data Protection and Privacy Policy* and *Data Protection and Privacy User Guide* (see [Toolkit](#)) and [Data Protection Officer](#).

3.7 Entry form, event details and rules

Those entering an event, must be fully aware of the nature, severity and demands of the event, of the event rules, of what is required in the way of equipment and clothing and of what is being provided by way of support and the organisers have a responsibility to ensure that entrants are fully informed. Otherwise entrants not only risk failing a kit-check, but also may put at risk helpers and other walkers as well as themselves. Thus, the *Rules* and basic *Event Details* must be communicated to all entrants so that anyone entering may be assumed to be aware of this information.

Entrants must complete an entry form, available preferably online or on a paper form or both, to provide essential information for the organisers and to confirm that they have read and understand the rules. Normally, one entry form should be completed by each entrant. For team events, there might be a single-entry form per team, but it must be signed by all team members. This section concerns the form and event details, Section 3.9 deals with administration of entries.

Online entry is strongly recommended to avoid cost of printing, environmental damage and to mitigate the risk of Covid-19 transmission. Events should have an event website or social media page where the event details and rules are displayed and an entry form can be downloaded or submitted. There is an LDWA *Standard Entry Form* (in the [Library](#) on the LDWA webpage or in the [Toolkit](#)) be completed by entrants and sent to the Entry Secretary. If entry on this standard form is acceptable this should be indicated on the Event Registration Form, and this will be mentioned in *Strider* and the LDWA event listings; if this form used then the event details and rules must be made available to entrants on a website or by other means.

Electronic entry to events is becoming increasingly used. Here entrants complete an online entry form and make an electronic payment by PayPal or bank transfer. Whilst individual group or event websites are well-suited to providing event details, rules and general information, organisers are warned against setting up their own websites for electronic entry and payment: it is a complex matter and extreme care is needed to ensure financial and personal data security and that legislation such as the Data Protection Act is complied with, see Section 3.6 However, there are a number of professionally run electronic entry systems designed to process entries and entry fees for walking and running events, and these are commonly used for LDWA style events. For these the entry details required can be customised, the fee is paid online and transferred to the event bank account, and a spreadsheet with entrants' details is compiled. Of course, there is a charge, typically 5% of the entry fee. Entry systems often used for LDWA events are [SiEntries](#) and [Fabian4](#)

There should be spaces on the paper or online entry form information required for the purpose of processing the application this may include the following information:

- Entrant's name (in the form to appear on the certificate).
- Entrant's gender.
- Entrant's address.
- Entrant's email address.
- Entrant's mobile telephone number if carried (to make contact with entrant during event if necessary).
- For entrants under 18 date of birth and name of accompanying adult.
- Whether an LDWA member and if so membership number.
- LDWA Group (if any).
- Vegetarian or other dietary requirements.
- Vehicle Parking requirement at Walk HQ.
- Vehicle registration number.
- In the event of a ballot, does the entrant wish to be linked to another entrant. If so whom?
- Arrangements for the staggered start, perhaps with different time bands for slow walkers, fast walkers and runners.
- Declaration and disclaimer (live signature for paper entry, electronic equivalent for on-line entry).

- Emergency Contact name, address and telephone number (and are they on the event?).
- Information on medical conditions or allergies.
- Request not to be listed in published results, or tracked electronically as a participant (if applicable).

The following wording of declaration is suggested:

I agree to the Rules of the Event and understand that no liability is accepted by the organisers or LDWA for any injury, damages or loss sustained by me during the event, or in connection with the event. I confirm that I am in good health and have no medical condition that may cause undue concern or inconvenience to others. In particular I and people I have been in close contact with have not recently been diagnosed or show any Covid-19 symptoms and are not awaiting test results or are self-isolating. I understand that I participate at my own risk and that no liability is accepted by the organisers for any injury, damage or loss sustained by me during the event.

There must also be a data protection declaration (see Section 3.6).

“I understand that the personal information submitted on this entry form will be held by the event organisers and retained securely for up to seven years after the event is held for the purposes of managing this event only.

I accept that photographs are likely to be taken at the event, which may be featured in Strider magazine, group newsletters, on LDWA websites and on LDWA social media. I understand this will be held in perpetuity and I have the right to request deletion where it is physically possible for the LDWA to do so.

I understand that my personal data may be published immediately and may be held in perpetuity for the purposes of providing a record of the event. I have the right to request that all my personal data be anonymised or removed where it is possible for the LDWA to do so.

Please see the Data Protection and Privacy User Guide on www.ldwa.org.uk for further information.”

The *Rules* are, in effect, the conditions of entry. Entrants breaking a rule can expect to be disqualified and for the organisers not to devote further attention to them. Rules may be required to cover the following matters; this list is by no means exhaustive and will depend on the nature of the event.

- Experience required (e.g. ability to use map and compass, night navigation), previous walk distance to qualify for entry (if applicable) and evidence required such as a copy of certificate or results.
- Minimum safety equipment to be carried.
- Minimum clothing to be carried or worn including waterproofs.
- Personal drinking container or mug, cutlery etc. to be carried.
- Mobile phone to be carried (if appropriate).
- Arrangements for kit checks.
- Responsibility of the entrant for their own route finding and safe walking.
- Requirement to follow the specified route.
- The event must be completed exclusively on foot.
- Dogs not allowed/allowed on leads.
- Time limits for the event, including cut-off times at checkpoints.
- The necessity not to arrive at the start before the assigned start time.
- Entrant’s responsibility to be recorded at checkpoints.
- Arrangements for retirement (an *essential* rule is that under no circumstances should anyone retire from the event without informing an official).
- Right of marshals to enforce retirement for walkers deemed unfit to continue.
- Imposition of grouping, whilst maintaining social distancing, for example at night or in bad weather.

- Disqualification information.
- Awareness and Adherence to the Countryside Code/Scottish Outdoor Access Code.

The *Event Details* should include any information that may affect whether or not someone decides to enter. The details might cover any of the above items not formalised into the standardised rules and may include the following:

- Name of the event.
- Date and start time(s).
- Total length and ascent of route.
- Indication of terrain and difficulty of route.
- Location of start and finish including grid reference.
- Vehicle parking arrangements, local transport.
- List and grid references of checkpoints (with opening/closing times).
- Outline of route.
- Route description and GPX files (often distributed later)
- When the route description/final details will be available.
- Maps needed (OS Landranger and Explorer numbers).
- Navigation skills required.
- Opening and closing times for registration at the start.
- Transportation and retirement arrangements, etc. – including mitigating the risk of Covid-19 transmission. for transport back to HQ may only be possible for those having serious difficulty in continuing.
- Baggage arrangements
- First aid provision
- Supporters not allowed at checkpoints.
- What the entry fee includes.
- For events up to 35 miles no food provided at start and finish and at checkpoints. For longer events what the food arrangements are and at which checkpoints food will be provided.
- Location of toilets.
- Minimal facilities at start and finish.
- Certificate/badge.
- Results and report.
- Entry fees.
- Closing date for entries and details of ballot (if required) with information on priority entry for any categories.
- Limit on entry numbers and operation of waiting list.
- Cancellation (entrants should look at the website shortly before the event) and refund arrangements.
- Right of organisers to refuse an entry.
- Statement that entrants' details will be held temporarily in an electronic retrieval system to be used only for administering the event.
- Right of organisers to cancel or modify the event in bad weather or other unforeseen circumstances, and return of entry fees in case of cancellation.
- Reminder that participation is at entrants' own risk and that it is up to entrants to make their own arrangements for personal accident insurance.
- Contact email address for Entries Secretary.
- Data Protection Act clause.

3.8 Cancellation of the event

Of course, the last thing one wants to do after putting time and effort into organising an event is to cancel it, but occasionally this may be unavoidable. Reasons for cancellation include:

- The walk cannot take place because of a national or regional crisis; examples in recent years include the foot and mouth outbreak in 2001 and because of areas of forest or moorland closed because of fire risk.
- Local or national Covid-19 restrictions prevent the event taking place.
- The weather forecast is so bad that the event cannot be held safely. Rain alone rarely warrants cancellation, but high winds, snow, sleet or ice on the ground may well be reasons for cancelling.
- It is too hazardous for entrants to drive to the event venue. In particular, the event must be cancelled if there is a Met Office red alert in force in the area, and serious consideration should be given to cancellation if there is an amber alert.
- There are too few entrants to justify holding the event.

If the organisers cancel the event, they should notify entrants as soon as possible by email (an online entry provider usually has a bulk email facility), by putting a notice on the event and/or group website and Facebook pages, and on the LDWA Events listings. Phone calls might be used to contact those whose numbers are available, but this is very time consuming. If the cancellation is only a day or two before the event or even on the day itself, then contacting walkers is a matter of urgency. However, if the weather is extreme then entrants should realise that cancellation is a possibility and should look at the event webpage to see if there is an announcement.

If the organisers have to cancel the event for any reason there is a legal obligation to offer a full refund. As soon as is feasible the entry fee should be refunded, or entrants might be offered the alternative of transferring their entry if the event is postponed to a later date. If an event is cancelled for reasons beyond the organisers' control most entrants are understanding and appreciate the work that has been put in by the organisers and may be willing to accept a reduced refund, but nevertheless they can ask for the full refund to which they are legally entitled. For an event that is held on a regular basis a sufficient contingency may be built up to cover such exceptional circumstances.

3.9 Administration of entries

Entries may be made online, by post, or a combination of both. Entries should be acknowledged on receipt. Depending on the entry arrangements, this can be done by email, assuming an email address is included on the entry form, or entrants without email should be asked to include a stamped addressed envelope if they require an acknowledgement which can be returned with a standard slip confirming entry included. It is a good idea for the acknowledgement to include a request that the entrant informs the organiser if they later decide not to take part in the walk. An electronic entry system will confirm entry automatically. With postal entries, there will always be a number of incorrectly completed forms or cheques which have to be returned (forms without an address are rather harder to deal with!).

After entries have been received by the Entries Secretary, the essential information is normally transferred to a spread sheet, though alternatively paper entry forms can be kept alphabetically in a file. Entrants should be assigned an entry number which normally serves as a reference number throughout the event. If there is a closing date for entries, assigning numbers to entrants in alphabetical order can make event administration much easier. Any entry that is not accepted should be returned immediately with the full entry fee and the reason for non-acceptance, for example if the entry limit has been reached.

There should be a closing date after which entries should not be accepted. (In reality entries received a day or two after the closing date would normally be allowed.) For major events, the closing date would be about 1-2 months before the walk to enable the organisers to plan for the number of walkers taking part. In particular, during Covid-19 entries on the day are not allowed, so that organisers know exactly how many entrants are expected and who they are.

If it is anticipated that the entry limit will be reached, take care to process entries strictly in order of receipt (applicants will notice otherwise). For very popular events a ballot amongst entries received by a set date might be appropriate. If priority is given to a club's own members, applications from non-members should be put aside (in order) until after a specified date.

If a reserve list is operated, forms from reserve entrants should be filed in order of receipt, and a note sent explaining the situation. Cheques might be retained uncashed until final acceptance or rejection. Confirmation of entry should be sent as and when places become available. There should be a final date after which no further reserves can be admitted, and unsuccessful applicants informed. Applicants who decide to withdraw after being told that they are on the reserve list should have their fee returned in full.

Typically, about 10% of entrants (more if the weather is bad!) will not show up on the day of the event without having withdrawn beforehand, and this may be allowed for by setting the entry limit slightly higher than the target number of starters. On more popular events 10-15% of entrants may cancel their entries (depending on the cancellation policy adopted) and operating a waiting list allows these places to be filled

Many events circulate final details and a route description and perhaps a GPX file beforehand to allow entrants to mark up their maps or pre-walk parts of the route. These may be put on a website, emailed to entrants, or sent out by post to entrants without electronic facilities. The route description can be distributed with entry confirmation, but sometimes it is left until 2-3 weeks before the event to allow late changes to be included.

Shortly before the day of the event, prepare lists of entrants' names and numbers, both in alphabetical and numerical order (if these are different!) for printing and distribution to marshals. Keep the original signed entry forms or electronic versions until after the event and have them available for reference at event HQ.

3.10 Badge and certificate

Walkers completing an event appreciate and, indeed, expect a certificate commemorating their achievement. The certificate usually bears the entrant's name, the distance walked, the date of the event and usually the time taken and is often signed by the Chief Organiser or Finish Marshal. Certificates are usually on A4 or A5 card and are often pictorial and decorative. To save hassle at the finish, entrants names are sometimes written or printed on the certificate beforehand so just the time taken needs to be added. Some event management systems such as PACER allow entrants names and times to be printed automatically on the certificate background using a printer at the finish. Certificates might be emailed to participants for printing out to minimise the amount of paper or card printed and handled by the marshals and walkers.

A suitably endorsed certificate, stating the mileage covered, should be provided for those who do not complete the walk. These may be youngsters or newcomers to events who appreciate some encouragement. Those walking for charity may need some certification of distance to enable them to collect sponsorship money, and evidence of having completed a sufficient distance may provide a qualification for entry to other events. A nice extra is to give certificates with appropriately modified wording to helpers and marshals as a 'thank you' for their services.

Cloth event badges, for sewing onto rucksacks, hats, etc., are a popular memento of events. These are normally available to finishers only and are usually on sale at the finish, though the cost is sometimes included in the entry fee. Again, there is considerable scope for design; bold emblems with simple designs tend to make better badges than lots of finicky detail. Badge manufacturers advertise in various sports magazines. Usually, the cost per badge falls considerably for larger orders, so for annual events it is worth investing in several years' stock.

3.11 Marshals and helpers

This short section is amongst the most important for challenge events.

The route, the number of checkpoints, and the number of entrants have a major impact on the number of volunteers needed. In the run up to the event it is important to decide how many helpers and marshals will be

required on the day, including before the start and after the finish, to cover the tasks needed. Helpers then need to be recruited and allocated tasks. Putting on an event with insufficient helpers is a recipe for disaster.

For smaller events, the organising group or a few friends may be enough. For larger events, the numbers needed may be considerable and you may need to enlist help from other LDWA groups. Alternatively, involving local walking clubs, Scouts, etc. is a good way of raising the profile of the long distance walking. There are likely to be LDWA members living in the area who are not active members of the organising group, but who may be happy to help. These people may be reached, for example, by asking a local group secretary to send a bulk email to members in area. Talk to groups about their preferences, e.g., whether they prefer to run indoor or outdoor checkpoints, and whether they prefer to be earlier or later along the route.

It is extremely useful to draw up a master timetable giving the names of helpers showing what they are doing throughout the event, perhaps allowing for some to move on from one duty to another, and not forgetting their rest periods for long events.

It is unsatisfactory if willing volunteers are unable to function effectively either because they are uncertain of what they should be doing or because their role has not been thought out carefully. Give helpers unfamiliar with walking an idea of the ethos and scale of the event. Those new to helping on events should be allocated tasks alongside experienced marshals. For long events, members of the Organising Committee will need rest and it will be necessary for key roles to have deputies identified.

Ensure that helpers are given clear instructions of their duties well beforehand, including a full briefing on strategies to reduce the risk of Covid-19 transmission.

Chapter Four – Operations on The Day

Although this chapter concerns what happens on the day of the event, it all needs very careful planning beforehand! It is essential that all operations are conducted effectively taking all reasonable steps to minimise Covid-19 transmission amongst walkers, helpers, and the general public.

4.1 Walk headquarters organisation and operations

General

Section 2.2 considered finding a suitable Walk Headquarters; as outlined there, the HQ has to fulfil a variety of roles before, during and at the end of the walk. These functions are now discussed in greater detail. Walk HQ management is a key issue to consider in the light of mitigating the risk of Covid-19 transmission indoors and organisers and marshals should study current government guidance and advice to ensure the safety of marshals and entrants.

Measures should include ensuring that hand washing and hand sanitiser facilities are provided for all marshals and for walkers arriving at the start and finish. Consideration should be given to whether it is appropriate for marshals and walkers to wearing masks whilst officiating at HQ / passing through HQ.

Needless to say, taking good care of the premises, both inside and outside, will have many beneficial spin-offs especially if the event is to be repeated in future years.

Staffing

One committee member should be designated HQ Organiser who should have overall responsibility for running the Walk HQ, to ensure that services operate smoothly, that helpers are deployed effectively and that any problems are sorted out quickly. The HQ organiser must set out clear responsibilities and expectations to all marshals to ensure all agreed Covid-19 prevention measures are adhered to.

The number of helpers required at HQ depends very much on the nature of the event, but for a large event can be considerable. Tasks that may need to be covered are indicated in Appendix C and are discussed below. Headquarters remains operational longer than any checkpoint and for longer events it is particularly important to have enough helpers to allow for breaks for rest and sleep. Jobs which need to be done continuously, such as control and the finish desk, should be staffed on a shift basis, with no-one working for more than 6-8 hours at a stretch.

A master time sheet with jobs on the left and hourly periods along the top that can be filled in with names of helpers is a great help in planning who will be doing what and when. In general, the staffing level at HQ needs to be high during the registration period before the start and then may be reduced until finishers start coming in when the level of activity increases again. Of course, staff can usefully be deployed elsewhere along the route when HQ is quiet.

HQ operations should be thought out carefully and staffed adequately so that entrants can be processed quickly, when registering or finishing. It is particularly important to mitigate the risk of the transmission of Covid-19 that as far as possible walkers should not have to stand in a queue for any length of time, but if they do appropriate measures are in place.

The Chief Organiser will normally be based at HQ and should not be assigned any specific task on the day as they will have the best overview of the event and will be able to deal with unforeseen problems (e.g., reallocating helpers to cover absences or appeasing a farmer if a gate has been left open). Depending on circumstances and communication, it may be possible for the Chief Organiser to visit some of the checkpoints to thank the helpers - a useful public relations exercise. On a long event, even the Chief Organiser will require a deputy to allow time for sleeping.

Car parking

Cars associated with the event must be parked so as not to inconvenience others and not to cause any hazard. Adequate car parking space at or near the HQ is essential. It may be necessary to reject a possible Walk HQ if not

enough parking is available. An ideal HQ will have enough parking space in its grounds, otherwise it might be possible to hire a nearby field or perhaps the car park of a local works that is not in use over the weekend. A small event based in a reasonable sized town might be able to absorb the cars in public car parks.

Details of car parking arrangements should be included in the final details and parking should be well-signed and marshalled. Marshals, wearing brightly coloured tabards, should be on duty on car park approaches and in designated parking areas from at least 30 minutes before registration opens. Some entrants will arrive early but should be instructed to wait in their cars until registration time to avoid congestion and increased risk of Covid-19 transmission. Marshals should ensure that the available space is used as efficiently as possible, but also that cars are not blocked in by others. Parking space for the walk organisers and for marshals collecting or returning equipment needs to be identified and should be reserved and clearly signed. Poor parking arrangements may cause aggravation for the walkers and helpers and bad feeling from the local community.

Walkers' cars are obviously unattended for a long period, and it is a good idea for a helper to patrol the parking areas from time to time so that any suspicious behaviour can be challenged or reported to the police.

Travelling to the event

The event should seek to reduce car use by choosing a start location that is easily accessible to public transport and by encouraging car sharing by members (taking into account any measures to reduce to risk of Covid-19 transmission).

Arrangement of HQ

The arrangement of HQ is important on any event. A good layout with plenty of space will make life much easier for both organisers and walkers. If other indoor rooms are used, perhaps for control, communications and for keeping paperwork and computers dry, only designated marshals should have access to the rooms. Rooms and surfaces should be thoroughly cleaned and sanitised before and after use.

Taking into account the risk of Covid-19 transmission, chairs and tables should be set up for registration, kit check, etc., and later for recording finishers. Consideration should be made around space to form appropriately spaced queues (kept as short as possible) in defined lines. A one-way system could be set up for walkers passing through HQ to minimise the risk of Covid-19 transmission e.g., between walkers and marshals; red and white tape between poles may be useful for routing walkers. If the weather is bad a covered outdoor area might be used for these tasks otherwise they might be done under a gazebo or perhaps talking through a car window or at the entrance to a tent.

Examples of effective management of the risk of Covid-19 transmission may include good signage to remind people of the arrangements

An area will be needed for entrants leaving bags at HQ for the duration of the event. If any baggage is to be transported it should be stored close to vehicle access. Areas are needed for sorting equipment, etc. to be sent to checkpoints.

Registration

A staggered start may be required to reduce the risk of Covid-19 transmission, so walkers should be advised in advance of the event at what time to arrive at the registration, to minimise the time they need to wait between registering and starting. Some latecomers are inevitable so at least one registration desk should remain open until after the last advertised start time.

The main purpose of registration is to compile an accurate list of those starting the walk and confirm their details such as numbers of mobile phones carried on the walk. At registration walkers should be asked to confirm verbally that they and close contacts have not recently been diagnosed or show any Covid-19 symptoms and are not awaiting test results or are self-isolating; if they have they should not be registered for the walk. Where a kit declaration is used this can be dealt with at the same time. Registration marshals should tick the walkers' names on pre-prepared lists of entrants as they present themselves at the registration point. To minimise risk of Covid-19 transmission it is recommended that the 'tally' or 'check-card' is posted/emailed to walkers in advance.

Tallies should be printed on waterproof paper and bear the walker's number in an indelible form, or stored electronically. Printed tallies should be robust enough so the string does not tear through the tie hole. If an electronic recording system such as PACER is used then a bar code on the tally can be scanned by the entrant holding the card by the scanner. Another alternative is to use electronic recording hardware. For example, entrants might be provided with an electronic chip with hardware positioned at checkpoints which will read the electronic chip when the walker passes through. Alternatively, walkers might be provided with a GPS device which, with associated software, allows them to be tracked by HQ throughout the walk.

Tallies designed for orienteering events are often used which may have a stub to tear off on issue which provides a double check on those starting. An alternative double check is to have a 'bucket drop' soon after the start. For this, as well as a tally, each walker is issued with a disc or card bearing their number, which is literally dropped into a bucket held by a marshal alongside the route (the disadvantage of this is that some walkers lose their disc or card before reaching the bucket!).

Sufficient registration points should be set up at HQ on a numerical or alphabetical basis (the advantages of numbering walkers alphabetically have already been mentioned). To reduce the risk of Covid-19 transmission it is important that each walker should be able to complete the registration formalities as rapidly as possible and certainly in less than 5 minutes including waiting time and this can require considerable personnel and space. If queues start to build up, walkers could be directed to a socially distanced waiting area prior to proceeding to the registration desk.

Kit checks are discussed in Section 4.4. If it is decided to hold a kit check at the start, except for very small events the check should not be at the registration desk itself but should take place immediately before or after registration. The checkers should verify from a distance that each walker has certain items from the list of required kit specified in the rules. Issuing the tally might be used as confirmation that the check has been completed. Kit checks at the start can easily cause bottlenecks if there are not enough checkers.

Route description and amendments

Route descriptions are normally distributed to participants electronically or by post before the event. However, it is a good idea to have a few spares available in case of need. Any last-minute amendments can also be distributed electronically, but for the benefit of those who have already printed out their descriptions or those without electronic facilities late changes should be publicised at the start. Either a list of changes can be given to each walker on registration, or several copies of the corrections may be displayed on walls for entrants to note down. A map displayed in the start area with the entire route marked helps walkers mark up their own maps and clarify any uncertainties.

Baggage

On circular walks space should be set aside at the HQ for entrants to leave a bag containing their belongings not needed on the walk until they return, though many walkers will store their property in their own cars and should be encouraged to do so. For larger events it might be necessary for a marshal to store this baggage in a side room in which case bags should be labelled with entrants' walk numbers. Handling and storage of baggage must be managed carefully to mitigate the risk of Covid-19 transmission.

For some longer events arrangements are made to transport a bag for each entrant (containing a change of clothing, etc.) to a half-way 'baggage' checkpoint. Careful planning is needed to ensure that baggage is handled and stored in a secure and safe way. Each walker should be limited to a single bag and the maximum size or weight, or at least 'no framed rucksacks' should be specified. The bag should be labelled with the walker's number. The baggage should be stowed at HQ ready for transport to the baggage checkpoint under the supervision of a marshal. Space will also be needed at the end of the event for storing baggage that has been returned to HQ after use at the half-way point. Note that baggage handling requires very considerable space and manpower – it is heavy and bulky! As far as possible, bags should be stored in walk number order. Careful thought should be given to the communication mechanism for returning 'half-way' baggage to the finish after it has been used, and also to returning the baggage of walkers who retire before reaching the half-way point.

The start

Under normal circumstances walkers start together at a set time (or perhaps two times with a separate start for runners), however to reduce the risk of Covid-19 transmission mass starts are discouraged and staggered starts of small groups should be planned in order to maintain a safe environment. Walkers could be allocated a start time when their entry is processed.

The actual start point of the event should be near HQ (but far enough away to ensure that entrants are well-clear of HQ operations), normally either in the HQ grounds or a few minutes' walk away, clearly signed. Ideally the start should face a wide, open piece of ground or lead onto a quiet road with a wide path. There should be no bottlenecks such as stiles or narrow gates in the early part of the route. Main road crossings near the start should be avoided.

Any photographers should be kept away from the path of walkers. If necessary, road marshals (wearing brightly coloured tabards) should be posted along the very early part of the route to ensure walkers' safety and a minimum of interference with others. If the start is near a public road the police will provide advice and, perhaps, help marshal or hold up the traffic for a few moments at the start.

After the start

After the walkers have departed, walk HQ will seem very quiet. Nevertheless, there are a number of tasks that need doing.

A master list of starters should be compiled as soon as possible, by deleting the non-starters from the list of pre-entries. With several start times this cannot be completed until after the last walkers leave. Depending on the procedures for monitoring the progress of walkers, copies will be needed for HQ, for sending out to checkpoints and for sweepers.

Checkpoint teams will collect equipment from HQ (see Stores below). Often HQ needs to be rearranged in readiness for the finish operation, including the finish desk.

Control

The purpose of control is exactly what it says: to make sure that nothing is left to chance or overlooked and to ensure that any problems that crop up are dealt with effectively. Control is particularly concerned with:

- Dealing with any emergencies.
- Overview of the progress of walkers and retirements.
- Action in the event of missing walkers.
- Opening and closing of checkpoints.
- Effective use of communications.
- Movement of transport.
- Location of helpers.
- Monitoring checkpoint equipment.

These matters are considered in detail later in this chapter. Obviously, the complexity of control grows rapidly with the scale of the event.

The control area should be separate from the finish desk (which is only really a final checkpoint), away from walkers; for a large event control should be in a separate room. The procedures to be used by control must be carefully planned prior to the event. Control should have copies of all event arrangements and previously prepared progress charts. Control will ensure that lists of non-starters reach checkpoints and will receive completed checklists from checkpoints either electronically or in hard copy. If there is an internet-based recording system such as PACER, Control will oversee its use and operation. Control will decide what action to take in an emergency, for example if a walker is missing. If radio communication is used, the radio network control will be at hand. The Chief Organiser or deputy should be available via Control throughout the event.

Computers are often used for control purposes and indeed for event organisation as a whole, but for smaller events they probably save little time given the effort required to set up the system for the event. Any computer usage must

be planned carefully, and spreadsheets, etc., prepared beforehand. It is advisable to have a dummy run, using the keyboard operators who will be employed on the day. Backups should be kept of all information, even an expert can inadvertently cause a time-consuming error, and power cuts in rural areas are not uncommon! Of course, backups should be deleted after the event, not least to ensure data protection compliance.

The finish area

Careful planning is needed to ensure that the finish operation, including recording and providing certificates and badges, is done in a socially distanced manner that minimises cross-contamination.

The route for walkers to follow from the entrance to HQ grounds to the finish desk should be clearly signed. On arriving at the finish desk, walkers should hand in their tally, GPS device or electronic recording hardware as instructed, to the finish marshal or timekeeper who will record the finishing time and elapsed time taken. A separate desk away from the finish desk should be used for writing details on certificates, or they may be printed electronically, and they should be given to walkers in a way that reduces the risk of Covid-19 transmission. Alternatively, an electronic certificate can be emailed to finishers for them to print out. Another (labour intensive) alternative is to post certificates to entrants after the event, perhaps together with the event results and report. Badges may also be available for giving to finishers or for sale, as decided. Walkers who have stored baggage should be able to retrieve this quickly and easily in way that mitigates the risk of Covid-19 transmission.

Once these operations have been completed, walkers should be asked leave finish area and HQ. Many walkers will return straight to their cars, though some will be tired and will need to find a resting space not far away and a suitable location might be indicated.

Some entrants like to keep their tallies after they have been checked. Without clipping, tallies are of limited value in ensuring that checkpoints, staffed or unstaffed, have been visited, but answers to questions from quiz-type checkpoints might be examined at the finish desk, at least for the quicker finishers.

Information on walkers' progress

Participants and friends appreciate information on the progress of walkers. With electronic recording systems such as PACER, or a GPS tracking system it is possible to follow the progress of walkers on mobile phones or computers.

Toilet facilities

There should be adequate facilities for the number of participants and helpers at or near HQ. The event may arrange event exclusive access to indoor toilets at HQ or portable toilets may be hired. Care must be taken to reduce the risk of Covid-19 transmission

Alternatively, there may be nearby public toilets to which participants can be directed using signs.

Sleeping accommodation

For longer walks, and in particular for overnight walks, finishers will need somewhere to sleep before they return home. Due to the close proximity of people sleeping in an enclosed space it is recommended that entrants are not allowed to sleep at Walk HQ. Entrants should be advised to make their own arrangements by either booking local accommodation or by sleeping in the car before returning home. It is dangerous and irresponsible for walkers and helpers who have missed a night's sleep to drive before they have had at least several hours rest and organisers should do their utmost to ensure that walkers get a reasonable rest before driving. Thus, organisers should stress to entrants prior to the event the need to make their own sleeping arrangements and outline the reasons as to why sleeping facilities are not available at Walk HQ.

Information on official campsites and bed and breakfast accommodation is useful for entrants and accommodation lists, or at least the phone number of the local Tourist Information Office, might be put on the event website or circulated with event details.

Provision for marshals

If possible, there should be a separate room or space for helpers and marshals to keep their personal belongings, and for longer events a sleeping space, separate from the walkers, should be provided for the marshals and helpers.

As there are fewer marshals than entrants it might be possible to accommodate marshals' sleeping at Walk HQ, ensuring adequate measures are put in place to reduce the risk of Covid-19 transmission.

First aid

For longer walks, a first aid area is recommended, with qualified members of the Red Cross, St John Ambulance, St Andrew's Ambulance Association, or other providers on duty (see Section 4.12). First aid provision should be in an easily accessible well-ventilated separate room where social distancing can be observed and to allow privacy.

Stores

A room or area at HQ should be designated as stores. Documentation, marshalling equipment, and any bulky supplies such as tents and water containers (see Appendix D) should be divided into clearly labelled piles to go out to each checkpoint. It is helpful for a Quartermaster to be present to help checkpoint teams when they collect their supplies.

Catering

Food can be served at checkpoints and HQ for both walkers and marshals. Specific care needs to be taken in assessing measures to reduce the risk of Covid-19 transmission. It is strongly recommended that any measures introduced are recorded in the Risk Assessment to demonstrate appropriate due skill, care and diligence has been undertaken. These measures could include enlisting the help of a catering expert/professional with the necessary credentials to manage hygiene arrangements for preparation and serving of food. Providing pre-packaged food or encouraging walkers to bring their own snacks are other options to mitigate the risk of Covid-19 transmission.

Information, displays and sales

At the start of a large event, it is worth having a well-signed enquiry desk staffed by someone with a good overview of the event organisation and preferably with a good local knowledge.

Walkers appreciate a notice giving an up-to-date local weather forecast. Information that is particularly useful and can be displayed on notices or made available at the information desk includes taxi phone numbers, local train and bus times, nearby open cafés and perhaps accommodation.

Photographs of the walk or area, historical or geographical information on places enroute or information about the club organising the event are sometimes displayed at walk HQ. The LDWA is always pleased to have its publicity material (available from their Communications & [Publicity Officer](#)) on display. Details and entry forms for other challenge walks are of interest and a table can be allocated for these; indeed, some entrants will ask to display entry forms for their own challenge events.

A stall selling merchandise before the start and at the end of the event may interest walkers and bring in extra cash. For example, tee-shirts or sweatshirts depicting the event might be sold (or orders taken), or a local outdoor firm might be happy to have the opportunity to sell goods to walkers. Any merchandise table should be separate from the operational part of HQ, and at least one staff member should keep an eye on the stock and takings all the time.

Clearing up

Clearing up after an event is a major job to be done when helpers are very tired. In addition, Covid-19 transmission reduction measures mean that all indoor areas used by the event as well as tables, chairs etc. used outside must be properly cleaned and sanitised.

Such cleaning arrangements must be discussed with the caretaker before the event. It may be that the building is cleaned and sanitised by cleaners on a daily basis, but even so the surfaces used for the event should be disinfected, and the caretaker will say what needs to be done and what materials should be used.

The HQ Organiser should ensure that enough people remain to do the work necessary. It is quicker, and far less dispiriting, for half a dozen or so to help than leaving it to a couple of the main organisers. Unless other arrangements have been agreed with the hirers, rooms used must be swept, toilet floors mopped, rubbish put in plastic sacks and disposed of hygienically, signs taken down, furniture returned to its original position, etc.

Aim to leave the premises, inside and out, at least as clean, and tidy as they were found. The HQ Organiser should ensure that no event equipment or lost property is left behind, that lights and appliances are switched off and the keys returned to the caretaker.

4.2 Organisation and operation of staffed checkpoints

The operation of checkpoints is a key issue to consider within planning to ensure that both marshals and entrants are kept safe. Some checkpoints may have first-aid provision. There should be space to accommodate retirees waiting for transport and in an emergency a walker could be accommodated inside a building, subject to measures put in place to mitigate the risk of the transmission of Covid-19

Well-run, *welcoming* checkpoints are much appreciated by walkers and can make all the difference to the success of an event. However, whilst Covid-19 infection remains a possibility, walkers should not be encouraged to remain at checkpoints for any length of time, so it is particularly important that marshals are as encouraging and supportive as possible during walkers' short transits.

Checkpoint location was discussed in Section 2.2, in particular, walkers must remain out of doors whilst passing through checkpoints apart perhaps from using toilet facilities or waiting for retirement transport. Here we turn to the operation of checkpoints on the day of the event. Many of the considerations relating to Walk HQ discussed in Section 4.1 are also relevant for checkpoints.

Staffing

The number of helpers required at a checkpoint depends on the facilities to be provided, the number of walkers on the event and the length of time the checkpoint is open. No walker should have to wait for more than a few moments to have his or her number recorded. On the other hand, there should not be any more helpers than necessary for the smooth running of the checkpoint.

A named Checkpoint Coordinator should be in charge of each checkpoint. The Coordinator has particular responsibility for ensuring measures in place to mitigate the risk of Covid-19 are enforced and must make clear the responsibilities and expectations to all marshals at the checkpoint.

Typically, a checkpoint team will include a timekeeper for recording arriving walkers and a clerk who reads the tally numbers of arrivals (these jobs may need to be duplicated at early checkpoints on high-entry events. If electronic recording or scanning is used then one or two staff are needed for this (even if electronic recording is used, a paper record must be made in case of electronic failure). There should be a person in charge of communications with walk headquarters, usually the Checkpoint Coordinator and someone responsible for coordinating retirements and arranging for their transport back to HQ. There should also be capacity to cope with any emergency or unexpected circumstance so least five or six helpers are likely to be needed.

For checkpoints in the first 10 miles of a large event more helpers may be required because of bunching of walkers, and at later checkpoints on long events a rota of helpers will be needed to allow rests to be taken. 'Baggage' checkpoints (see Section 4.3) will require considerably more staff.

It is a good idea to assign an existing coherent group (e.g., an LDWA local group or scout group) to a checkpoint rather than relying on several individual volunteers who may find it hard to settle down to a working relationship. Some helpers at each checkpoint should be familiar with challenge walks and thus understand walkers' needs. After finishing duty at an early checkpoint, marshals can be moved on to a later one.

The Checkpoint Coordinator acts as a contact with the organisers before and during the event, to allocate jobs to checkpoint staff and to take charge of checkpoint documentation. The event organisers should brief the coordinators on all aspects of checkpoint operation prior to the event, several weeks in advance for larger events, with details given in writing, see below. The Coordinator should inform the rest of the team of the checkpoint location, exactly when they will be required and other advance information. An informal internet briefing of checkpoint helpers before the event might be useful. The Checkpoint Coordinator should ensure that the checkpoint

staff understand what is required of them; some will act on their own initiative, but the less experienced may require specific direction.

A long stint helping at a checkpoint is at least as tiring as the walk itself. At checkpoints open for more than 8 hours a duty rota with rest breaks is essential, and for shorter periods there should be enough cover for helpers to 'stretch their legs' from time to time. It can get very cold standing around for any length of time, particularly outdoors or at night, and adequate clothing is as important for marshals as for walkers. At outdoor checkpoints pay particular attention to keeping the feet warm - standing for hours in wet trainers is unpleasant!

Organisers must ensure that hand washing and hand sanitiser facilities are provided for all marshals and for walkers entering the checkpoint. Marshals must wear masks whilst officiating at checkpoints.

Documentation

Checkpoint briefing notes should be sent in advance to the Checkpoint Coordinator at each checkpoint. Cover ALL the bullet points in this section giving plenty of detail. Also send details on equipment and procedures to the Coordinator well in advance so any queries can be dealt with, see Appendix D.

The briefing notes should include details of:

- The exact location of the checkpoint, details of access and car parking.
- Entry, opening and closing times of the checkpoint, likely busiest times, when premises must be vacated.
- Name of caretaker or landowner with address, email and phone contact number.
- Where and when keys are to be collected and returned.
- Any special requirements of the owners / caretaker.
- Contact details for key personnel on the organising committee, and at previous and next checkpoints.
- Details of available mobile phone networks.
- Details of WiFi access codes (if available).
- Location of the nearest water supply (for outdoor checkpoints).
- Location of taps, switches, fuse / tripper boxes, meters (and coins needed) for any gas, electricity and water (for indoor checkpoints).
- Location of filling stations.
- Arrangements for collection or delivery of equipment.
- Any special requirements of radio operators or first aiders assigned to the checkpoint (e.g., power points or hot water).
- What action to take if a fire alarm sounds, fire assembly points.
- Toilet arrangements for checkpoint if toilet facilities are provided.

Of crucial importance are the procedure notes which deal with control matters including:

- Arrangements for communication with Walk HQ and other checkpoints, including telephone numbers, etc.
- Emergency arrangements (action to take in the event of an accident or a missing walker, names and location of first aiders, location of the nearest hospital casualty department).
- Procedures for opening and closing the checkpoint, role of sweepers.
- Procedure for recording walkers on arrival at checkpoint.
- Procedures for checking for missing walkers.
- Procedures for disqualification.
- Arrangements for retirements.
- Arrangements for returning tally cards or electronic recording hardware devices of retirees and checklists to HQ.
- Transport arrangements.

- Grouping procedures (if required)

Information about the event as a whole should be provided:

- A copy of the event rules.
- The risk assessment.
- Route description.
- List of opening and closing times of all checkpoints.
- Distance, ascent and time to the next checkpoint.

Several weeks before the event an equipment checklist should be produced for each checkpoint, listing the equipment needed and stating whether it is already on site at the checkpoint, to be collected from walk HQ or to be provided by the checkpoint staff themselves (see Appendix D for possible requirements).

All this documentation can conveniently be prepared on a word processor to allow basic notes to be tailored to individual checkpoints. Alternatively, duplicated notes can be used with spaces for filling in specific requirements.

Setting up the checkpoint

Each checkpoint should be ready at least 15 minutes before its scheduled opening time. It often takes longer than anticipated to locate and set up the checkpoint, particularly if it is some distance from the road and heavy equipment and supplies need to be carried. Full water containers are particularly heavy!

Plan carefully the arrangement of the checkpoint with one-way systems, perhaps indicated by red and white tape on poles, to ensure social distancing and minimize bottlenecks. Walkers should flow naturally through the checkpoint, via recording, water provision, possible toilet visit, and departure. Also consider the well-being of checkpoint teams who may be working long hours. If there is any flexibility in the location or arrangement of a checkpoint, it is worth considering what is most pleasant for those running it.

Allow time for putting up signs and arranging tables and chairs for marshals. Welcoming signs are a nice touch, perhaps with the banner of the group organising the checkpoint displayed.

The checkpoint must have a sanitised area where every piece of equipment contained within will have been sterilised and its cleanliness maintained. Cold water may be served in the sanitised area. The Event Organiser will need to ensure that the Checkpoint Coordinator and thus the checkpoint marshals are fully aware of what is required of them to ensure that the sanitised area remains clean.

The equipment required depends considerably on the location and nature of the checkpoint and the scale of walk; possible items are listed in Appendix D. An outdoor checkpoint in the later stages of a longer walk needs adequate overhead cover, lighting (if night-time operation is planned) and seating for marshals.

Marshalling equipment, such as pens, clipboards, and notices, should be collected from Walk HQ. Alternatively, for some events the organisers arrange for everything to be delivered to checkpoints. Arrangements should be detailed in the food and equipment checklists.

Toilet facilities

The organisers will have decided which checkpoints will have toilet facilities available and their form with due regard to appropriate measures to mitigate the risk of Covid-19 transmission. There may be exclusive access to indoor toilets inside a checkpoint building or portable toilets may be hired.

Alternatively, nearby public toilets may be signed or mentioned on the route description.

Checkpoint operation

A marshal should greet walkers on arrival and direct them to the check desk, asking them to wear masks, keep socially distanced and sanitise their hands at the appropriate point. Check walkers in on arrival at the checkpoint using the agreed Covid-19 compliant procedures, see below. Walkers should then proceed to the sanitised area to refill their water bottle, and after that may use toilet facilities if provided before leaving.

Even though the walkers will only spend a short time at checkpoints marshals can still make the event more enjoyable for the walkers with a few words of encouragement. Marshals should be prepared for questions such as 'How far to the next checkpoint / the end?' or 'What is the terrain like on the next section?'

The route out from the checkpoint should be clearly signed; it is surprisingly common for walkers to take the wrong direction out of a checkpoint because of being uncertain as to the exact point where the route description restarts. It is essential that entrants are directed correctly to avoid confusion. It can also be useful if marshals glance around for any property that may have been forgotten.

Recording walkers

For successful control of an event, it is essential that there is an accurate record of the times of arrival of walkers and of retirements at each checkpoint. This must be done in a way that maintains social distancing between walkers and check-in marshals. The importance of accuracy cannot be over-emphasised. Inaccurate records create doubts, worries and the possibility of an unnecessary search being initiated.

The most basic system of paper recording requires two separate lists or check sheets. A *chronological* list has columns for time and number and when each walker arrives their time of arrival and number are recorded with a large R if they retire. The second list is a *numerical or numerical-alphabetical* ordered list of walkers on the event. If this list is just numerical then it is important to have a sheet with numbers paired with names, as difficulties are often resolved using walkers' names. Times and retirements from the chronological list should be written against walkers' numbers on the numerical/alphabetical list when there is a lull in arrivals. Check sheets, with clipboards, clippers, and pens, are usually collected from HQ by checkpoint marshals after the start, though sometimes they are delivered by the organisers. Non-starters and entries on the day can be recorded on the check sheets before they are issued to all but the very early checkpoints.

Alternatively, the numerical/alphabetical ordered list can be a spreadsheet on a computer which can be emailed back to HQ from time to time. For smaller walks, the chronological list might be dispensed with, and times entered directly on the numerical-alphabetical list, but this is more prone to recording errors.

Check walkers in immediately on arrival at the checkpoint by noting the time of arrival on the chronological list. The walk number should ideally be read from the tally by a marshal as walkers do not always remember their numbers correctly. It is a good idea for one marshal to read out the number whilst a second marshal repeats the number in confirmation and enters the time on the chronological sheet. Extreme care should be taken to record arrivals accurately as the majority of 'missing walkers' turn out to have been misrecorded – a single error can waste hours of several people's time.

Increasingly many events are using some form of electronic recording, which allows details to be quickly sent back to HQ. However, with checking of walkers done outdoors it may be necessary to record arrivals on a paper list and periodically take these lists inside the checkpoint building where details can be uploaded.

Walk organisers are encouraged to consider using electronic recording hardware. For example, entrants can be provided with an electronic chip with hardware positioned at the checkpoint which will read the electronic chip when the walker passes through. Alternatively, walkers might be provided with a GPS device which, with associated software, allows them to be tracked by HQ throughout the walk.

Systems such as the LDWA's [PACER \(Participant Activity Control for Events and Results\)](#) which have many useful features are increasingly common. For example, PACER requires the tallies to have a barcode which can be scanned when a walker arrives at a checkpoint preferably by the walker waving the tally in front of a scanning screen. The scanned information is immediately uploaded and it can be viewed from HQ and all checkpoints as well as on individual phones or computers, enabling all to follow the progress of the walk. If scanners are not available checkpoint arrivals can be entered on the computer manually. A disadvantage of such systems is that they depend on Wi-Fi access at the checkpoint, though a dongle may be used.

Even if an electronic system is in use, it is essential to keep a paper record as well. Human errors can still occur, and scanners sometimes fail to record, in particular when several walkers have to be recorded in close succession the scanner may skip one of them, and a paper back up allows checking. Also, in rural areas, Wi-Fi may be intermittent.

Whatever system is used, the positioning of marshals must be considered to minimise the risk of Covid-19 transmission throughout the recording process.

If a checkpoint is notified of retirements from earlier checkpoints these can be recorded, but it is important to distinguish these from those retiring at the current checkpoint. At a 'baggage' checkpoint it is particularly important that recording is accurate, so that walkers' baggage can be returned to HQ once they have left the checkpoint, but also so that the baggage of walkers who retire before this checkpoint also have their bags returned to HQ as quickly as possible – good communication is essential here.

Retirees should be recorded as such on the lists and their tally retained and marked. See Section 4.7 for retirement procedures.

Sometimes it may also be useful to record the departure time of walkers from certain checkpoints, for example on a longer walk at a 'breakfast' or 'baggage' type checkpoint where many walkers will stop for some time. If this is the case, then there will need to be a check-out desk which should be separate from the check-in desk. To avoid recording confusion it should not be possible for walkers to leave without passing the check-out desk, perhaps by placing the desk next to a designated exit door.

The Checkpoint Coordinator has a particular responsibility to ensure that the set recording procedures are followed and that all walkers are accounted for. This includes returning the check sheets to Walk HQ as soon as possible after closing, notifying Walk HQ of retirees, and liaising with Walk HQ about any missing walkers. Whilst it might be tempting to liaise with other checkpoints, it is best for Control at Walk HQ pass the information to the other checkpoints in order to avoid either mixed messages or information from another checkpoint not reaching Control.

Closing the checkpoint

Ideally a checkpoint should be able to close at the specified closing time. However, at least one marshal must remain until all walkers are accounted for or an appropriate official has given permission to close, though after the closing time the checkpoint might be tidied and cleaned, and some equipment removed. Remember that walkers who arrive after the closing time may still need a cover while waiting for transport.

Once it is believed that all non-retired walkers have reached the checkpoint, the records should be checked to ensure all walkers are accounted for. This may involve liaison with HQ and sweepers.

The procedure notes should state who can authorise closure of a checkpoint, perhaps the sweeper (see Section 4.6), or a 'closedown marshal' visiting the checkpoints by car or a message from HQ. A marshal should remain at the checkpoint so long as there remains any chance of a missing walker arriving; this may be until all walkers are accounted for at the next checkpoint, since a lost, injured, or tired walker may retrace steps to the previous checkpoint to retire (see Section 4.5).

Any entrant who is still at the checkpoint when the closing time passes should, unless there are very exceptional circumstances, be retired from the event. Therefore, it is essential that any entrants at the checkpoint close to the closing time are advised of this fact. If the opening and closing times have been based on sensible calculations of walkers' and runners' rates of progress at various stages (see Section 2.5) then changes in the scheduled times should not be necessary. If it is decided, exceptionally, to postpone the scheduled closing time, for example because of exceptional weather conditions or a forced change in route, then earlier and later checkpoints must be told (via Control) and asked to tell walkers about the change. Walkers may otherwise push themselves or even retire unnecessarily in the belief that they will be 'timed out' at a later checkpoint.

When the checkpoint is dismantled, the checkpoint area should be left in a clean and condition with all litter picked up and tables, chairs, etc. returned to their original places. All indoor rooms, surfaces and other areas used should be cleaned and sanitised. Cleaning arrangements should be discussed with the caretaker before the event who will say what needs to be done and what materials should be used.

All checkpoint paperwork, including timesheets must be returned to Walk HQ as rapidly as is feasible.

4.3 Other types of checkpoints

Breakfast checkpoints

On some longer events, it has been customary to provide a breakfast-type meal roughly halfway round the route. Measures to mitigate the risk of Covid-19 transmission and other hygiene risks must be considered. It is strongly recommended that the person responsible for catering at the checkpoint has suitable experiences and catering/food hygiene credentials. For alternative possibilities, see Section 4.14.

Baggage checkpoints

On some longer events a small bag belonging to each walker (containing a change of clothing, etc.) is transported to a checkpoint roughly half-way along the route (see Section 4.1 'Baggage'). At the start walkers place their bag in an area labelled 'Baggage awaiting walkers' sorted roughly by walker number. This is transported to the baggage checkpoint where they collect their bag and, after use, return it to a separate pile labelled 'Baggage for transport back to HQ'. For a large event, transport of such baggage is a major operation (see Section 4.11). Arrangements must be made for returning baggage of walkers retiring earlier in the walk to HQ and this requires good communications. It is important that measures are in place to reduce the risk of Covid-19 transmission. A baggage checkpoint has often been combined with a breakfast checkpoint.

Unstaffed checkpoints

An unstaffed checkpoint is an effective way of ensuring that walkers go over a specific part of the route. Historically this consists of an orienteering type clipper for walkers to clip a designated space on their tally, however the use of clippers is discouraged. An alternative is a 'treasure hunt' style where walkers write the answer to a simple question on the card, for example, 'How many bars are there on the gate?' or 'What does the sign say?'. The walk description should emphasise that there is such a checkpoint and exactly where it is and the location must be obvious, perhaps highlighted by red tape or even by a light at night.

Of course, for walks where entrants are issued with GPS devices so that control can see on a website the route each walker has followed, there is no need for such checkpoints. If entrants are provided with readable electronic chips hardware might be positioned at the checkpoint to read the chip as the walker passes through.

Unannounced checkpoints

Another way to ensure that walkers do not take short cuts is to have one or two checkpoints at unannounced locations along the route. It should be made clear in the event details or at the start that there will be such checkpoints. Their location must be given careful thought so that they cannot be missed by walkers doing their best to follow the route. It is strongly recommended that there is a marshal at each such checkpoint to ensure that no walker passes without noticing the checkpoint.

Cut-off points

Some events have a 'cut-off' checkpoint, from where there is a shorter route back to the finish for walkers arriving after a certain time or for anyone else who wishes to shorten the walk. A route description or map to give to those taking the shorter alternative should be prepared in advance. The walk numbers of those 'cutting-off' should be recorded carefully and there should be a mechanism to ensure that the omitted checkpoints know not to expect these walkers.

4.4 Kit checks

Organisers have a responsibility to ensure that walkers are fully aware of the clothing and equipment that they must wear or carry given the nature of the. Moreover, whilst it is the entrants' responsibility to wear or carry the required clothes and equipment, the organisers have a duty of care to ensure that this is the case. In the event of an accident, the organisers may have to justify to the authorities that they have indeed taken reasonable steps to check that safety rules were being followed.

The form of the kit check will depend on the nature of the event. For a lowland route which is never far from a village a kit check might be light touch. For a walk across remote moorland or mountainous areas the kit check should be rigorous and strictly enforced. It should be made clear in the event details and at the start that kit checks will take place. The following forms of kit check, or a combination of them, may be appropriate.

- Many events hold a kit check before the start. The required kit should be specified in the entry details and a list displayed near the kit check desks. Except for very small events, the kit check should not be at the registration desk itself but should take place immediately before or after registration. The checkers should ask each walker to produce several items from the list in a socially distanced way and record that to show the check has been passed. Alternatively, the tally can be issued as confirmation that the check has been completed. There must be enough kit checkers to avoid bottlenecks and manage any measures to reduce the risk of Covid-19 transmission. The drawback to this is that the entrant can then discard some of their kit before starting.
- Walkers may be told that there will be one or more kit checks en route but not where they will take place; this will ensure that they are still carrying the required kit. If a kit check is held at a checkpoint it should be held in a separate area from the recording area, preferably on the way in. For a reasonable size walk several checkers and plenty of space will be needed as walkers may have to delve into their rucksacks to find items, otherwise queues may form and be unpopular with walkers. It is best to have such kit checks well into the walk to avoid congestion.
- Alternatively, such a check can be held at a suitable point between checkpoints, perhaps at a road crossing.
- In addition, or for a shorter walk perhaps as an alternative, entrants may be asked at registration to sign a declaration stating that they will carry all required kit throughout the entire walk.

For longer events or events passing through remote areas it should be clearly stated in the rules that entrants failing a kit check will be disqualified, see Section 4.9. Ideally one of the kit check marshals should be a member of the organising committee who has the clear authority to disqualify walkers, but two marshals should always be involved in any disqualification. Disqualified walkers should have their tallies removed and be transported back to HQ along with any retirees. It should be made clear that if the walker decides to continue, they will be doing so on their own responsibility and, for an LDWA event, they may be reported under the LDWA disciplinary procedures. If a walker does decide to continue and arrive at subsequent checkpoints, they should be allowed water, since the organisers should not further jeopardise their safety and well-being.

For the LDWA annual 100-mile event stringent procedures are laid down for the check, see the appendices to the document *How to Organise the Hundred* (in [Toolkit](#)). These procedures may be appropriate for other longer events.

4.5 Keeping track of walkers

A major responsibility of organisers is to ensure that no walker becomes seriously lost or missing for any length of time and that any injury receives prompt attention. The worst scenario is for a walker to go off route and then become immobilised by injury. There must be mechanisms in place to detect and react to such incidents as rapidly as is reasonably possible. There is little point in meticulously recording walkers at checkpoints if this information is not used to check for potential problems. Nevertheless, keeping track many walkers widely spread along a route, perhaps for a period of 24 hours or more, can be extremely difficult.

Problems that occur on the route itself are likely to be detected soon by other walkers or by sweepers. Thus, the chance of serious problems will be much reduced if the event is organised to minimise the chance of walkers going off route. Several basic things can contribute to this: requiring entrants to be suitably experienced at navigation, providing a good route description and GPX file, waymarking where appropriate, grouping if appropriate, etc.

The key to effective tracking of walkers is planning, communication and accurate checkpoint recording (see Section 4.2), coordinated effectively by walk Control. The following components are needed:

- Procedures for recording information accurately.
- Lists of starters (allowing for no-shows).

- Numbers and times of walkers passing through checkpoints.
- Retirements at checkpoints and elsewhere.
- Distribution and use of emergency phone number.
- Procedures for collating information and detecting possible missing walkers.
- Action in the event of a walker believed to be missing.

There are three stages in dealing with possible missing walkers. Firstly, a checkpoint, sweeper, marshal, or HQ will become aware from checkpoint records or for other reasons that a walker may have gone astray. The second stage is to verify by whatever means are available that this is indeed the case, rather than just a recording error (as it turns out to be in most cases). Thirdly, if the walker is indeed missing, the Chief Organiser has to decide what action to take and when.

Procedures for detecting missing walkers

Procedures for detecting that a walker might be missing and for alerting the organisers will depend on the nature of the event but must be planned beforehand and notified to all concerned in the procedure notes. On a 20-mile event, all walkers will pass within 3-4 hours, so little will be lost if a full check at each checkpoint is left until the closing time. On the other hand, on longer walk, later checkpoints can be open for up to 24 hours, and intermediate checking for missing walkers is necessary.

Four schemes are suggested below: one for a shorter walk, one for a longer walk, one that may be useful for checking a particularly difficult section, and the possibility of GPS tracking. Many variations and alternatives are possible, and the procedures adopted will depend on the nature of the walk.

1. **Possible procedure for a shorter walk.** Here the sweeper has responsibility for the basic checking. After the start of the walk HQ carefully compiles a master list of starters. This can be the pre-prepared entrants list with non-starters deleted and entrants on the day added, and double checked against check-card stubs if used. The sweeper takes a copy of the master list and sets out along the route, keeping behind or with the last group of walkers. On arrival at a checkpoint, the sweeper and Checkpoint Coordinator compare the checkpoint checklist and the sweeper's list to ensure that all starters who have not previously retired have either passed through the checkpoint or retired there. The sweeper records new retirements on their master list; information on retirements, etc., held by the sweeper may also be transferred to the checkpoint list. If any walker is not accounted for, the procedures for a missing walker should be initiated, see below. Having identified and reported possible problems, the sweeper should not wait too long before continuing, aiming to reach each checkpoint at closing time or with the last walkers, to repeat the checking procedure.
2. **Procedure for a longer walk.** For later checkpoints on a longer event where walkers may be spread out over four hours or more, checking for missing walkers should not be left until the checkpoint closing time. A mechanism is needed to detect walkers who are overdue relative to their time of departure from the previous checkpoint. One way of achieving this is to return the times and numbers of those passing through each checkpoint periodically to HQ where they are entered on a pre-prepared spreadsheet (either manually or on a computer – this has the advantage of producing the event results at the same time). The times of walkers leaving checkpoints are regularly scanned at HQ and anyone not recorded as having reached the next checkpoint within a reasonable time can be identified; for a large event this is a labour intensive procedure. For this to work, each checkpoint must return pages of their checksheets, say every 1-2 hours, either by sending them back with a marshal, by emailing them if the list is being compiled electronically, or by a roving marshal visiting checkpoints in turn to collect the sheets. The checkpoint should retain a copy of their checksheet, and their chronological list of arrivals. For events with relatively few entrants, it may be possible to relay walkers' numbers and times to HQ by radio or phoning through numbers, but for larger events the sheer quantity of information makes this almost impossible.

If an electronic system such as such as [PACER](#) is used then times for checkpoints that have connectivity to the system are immediately available at HQ and elsewhere. Some systems will automatically flag up walkers who have not arrived at a checkpoint by a reasonable time after leaving the previous one, other systems require this to be checked manually and regularly.

3. **Regular checks between consecutive checkpoints.** This technique is more awkward to administer but is worth considering for prompt detection of a problem on a particularly hazardous section for example crossing an open moor or mountain. An update of the walk numbers of those who have passed a checkpoint is sent electronically or by radio, phone or courier to the next checkpoint every hour or so. The walk numbers on this list are crossed off when walkers arrive at the latter checkpoint. Any numbers remaining after a generous amount of time has been allowed for the section indicate that a walker may be in difficulty. Again, an electronic system may allow times to be available to HQ immediately where they can be checked.
4. **GPS tracking system.** Increasingly many events are using GPS (Global Positioning System) tracking systems which have become popular on orienteering or trail-racing events. Each entrant is issued with a small GPS tracker to carry, programmed with their walk number. The position of each walker is automatically checked every few seconds and indicated by a flag on a map which can be accessed by HQ, by checkpoints and, indeed, by supporters and friends of entrants who have been given access to the system. Thus, the position of the entrants can be pinpointed at any time during the event and anyone off route can be identified. Trackers are usually rented for a short period from companies who generally also set up the software required in consultation with the event organisers. The drawback is that renting trackers is quite expensive – typically £5-£8 each depending on the number of entrants and duration. Companies that hire tracking systems are easily found on the internet.

Many other schemes for detecting missing walkers are possible. Matters may be more complicated if, for example, there are alternative start times for runners or if there are several routes with some common checkpoints. The important thing is to plan the procedures carefully beforehand and to ensure that everyone involved is aware what is required of them.

Action if a walker is suspected missing

If a walker appears to be unaccounted for at a checkpoint, carry out a quick check for obvious mis-recording. In particular, if data has been transcribed, check the original version, and look for any other inconsistencies. For example, if walker number 67 is missing, but walker 61 has been recorded twice, it could be someone's bad writing! Identify the name of the missing walker and see if anyone at the checkpoint remembers that person passing through. If the matter is resolved at the checkpoint or in consultation with the sweepers, then it is helpful to inform HQ that no further action is needed since they may have already been heard about the problem.

If such checks are to no avail, Control should be informed that a walker may be missing, telling them why this is suspected along with any relevant information. Control then takes on responsibility for deciding what to do, in consultation with checkpoints involved and sweepers. Each case will need to be treated on its own merits and Control should keep a written record of developments noting what action is taken and when. Control should check that the walker has not already retired or returned to HQ. They should contact the previous checkpoint to see if the walker was then giving any cause for concern or if the walker was in a group. They should also try phoning the entrant's mobile if a number is given on the entry form or at registration, though coverage may be unreliable in remote areas.

Control should contact the next checkpoint to see if the walker has reached there and ask to be notified at once if the walker or the walker's group arrives. Enquiry amongst other walkers whose times were close to the missing walker may be helpful. If there is a baggage checkpoint it may be worth checking if the walker's bag has been picked up. At least one person should remain at a checkpoint location whilst there remains a possibility of a walker still turning up. This could include the checkpoint before the one at which the problem is detected since a walker may decide to turn back to the previous checkpoint.

It may be worth calling the walker's home number or emergency contact number. Walkers sometimes go home without telling the organisers or returning to HQ or they may tell a marshal they are retiring but the message might not have got back to Control. However, care is needed with this to avoid panicking a partner about a walker who might have gone missing or be injured.

A decision needs to be made whether, when and at what level to mount a search for the missing walker and / or alert the police or mountain rescue. This will depend on the circumstances: a walker missing in a lowland area is not

generally as potentially serious as in a mountainous region. Sending a search party back along the route may succeed if a misplaced walker has regained the correct route. It is important that any search party has good communications with Walk HQ. Also, it may be useful for a marshal to drive along lanes close to where the walker may have gone missing since a lost walker will often try to reach a road. If in doubt, inform the police early on and they will decide what action to take and when.

Once a missing walker is located, all those concerned should be informed so that no further time and effort is spent unnecessarily.

4.6 Sweepers

Depending on the size and nature of the event one or more sweepers may walk at the rear of the field. A walk of more than 25 miles is usually swept in sections by different sweepers. If there are staggered start times these may need separate sweepers, at least for early parts of the walk. There is usually no shortage of volunteers to act as sweepers: the option of a good walk, albeit at a slow speed, is an attractive alternative to shivering at a checkpoint. Choose your sweepers with care; after the Chief Organiser, their role is probably the most responsible on the day.

Sweepers should be experienced long distance walkers, able to appreciate both marshals' and walkers' problems and difficulties. They must be competent with map and compass as one or more may need to divert from the route should the circumstances arise, they must have a good knowledge of the route and be capable both of covering the distance and carrying out their duties. The sweeper team may include a radio operator or carry a mobile telephone (though be wary of 'dead spots') to enable rapid contact with HQ and checkpoints. They should carry first aid kits, spare clothing (in particular, waterproofs, hats and gloves) and possibly a sleeping bag which can be lent to any walker who is getting into trouble.

The main duty of sweepers is to help ensure that all walkers are accounted for. Their exact role will depend on the procedures laid down, but they should be briefed with comprehensive written procedures and should be given authority to make on-the-spot decisions, including that marshals remain at a checkpoint until a problem is resolved. Normally, sweepers carry a list of non-starters and an ongoing list of walkers who have retired at each checkpoint. On reaching a checkpoint a sweeper should follow the checking procedures. In doing so, the sweeper must be firm enough to insist that the checking is done fully, no matter how cold and tired the marshals might be and must be diplomatic when a marshal insists that they could not possibly have made a mistake. The sweeper must insist on the missing walker procedures being followed if there is a possibility that someone is missing. Sometimes the sweeper has the authority to close the checkpoints, but often a closing marshal with specific responsibility for 'closing' checkpoints will make the final decision.

Sweepers aim to walk with or a short distance behind the last batch of walkers but must remain socially distanced. Care is needed not to overtake walkers inadvertently (it is not unknown for walkers to drop into a wayside pub or into a hedge to relieve themselves) though anyone going off the route may fall behind the sweeper. The sweeper should provide encouragement to the last walkers but be firm enough to insist on retirement when a checkpoint is reached for those who are out of time or who are suffering unduly.

Sweepers have several other important duties. They should ensure that all gates on the route are secured as appropriate and remove any event signs, waymarking and perhaps unstaffed checkpoint markers and they should pick up any litter which could possibly be attributed to participants. They should note any damage that might have been caused by walkers. Occasionally they may need to calm farmers or locals who have been inconvenienced by the walk.

4.7 Retirements

On a 20-mile event in fine weather there will be few, if any, retirements. For an overnight walk in bad conditions as many as half of those starting might retire.

The rules or event details must describe the procedure for retirement. An essential rule is that any walker retiring *must* get word to the organisers, otherwise unnecessary and time-consuming searches may be initiated, perhaps with police or mountain rescue involvement. Normally, walkers should retire at a checkpoint by informing a marshal and handing in their tally. If, in exceptional circumstances, a walker is unable to reach a checkpoint, they should give another walker their tally to be handed in at the next checkpoint, with an account of the circumstances and whether assistance is required. Alternatively, they should telephone the emergency telephone number, which should be printed on the footer of each page of the route description and/or on the tally and inform HQ of their exact location e.g., by a point on the route description or grid reference.

Unless the event rules specifically say that those retiring must make their own arrangements, anyone who is unable to complete the walk should be offered transport back to the finish or other convenient place. During Covid-19 it may be difficult to provide transport for many retirees and alternatives such as bus or train links could be considered. Marshals may need to use judgement in prioritising transport and may well not look favourably on those who just feel that they have had enough or don't like the rain rather than being physically unable to continue. In any case cars may carry most one entrant (or entrants in one household or bubble) and driver and passengers must wear face coverings in order to reduce the chance of the virus being communicated.

Some form of transport should be available to cater for retirements and emergencies. For shorter walks, marshals' cars may be adequate, either with enough checkpoint marshals available to make the odd trip back to HQ or a roving marshal visiting checkpoints periodically. For a longer walk the logistics of ensuring that retirees do not have to wait an undue time for transport can be complicated and require careful planning and several minibuses may be needed (see Section 4.11) and the Transport Manager will need to plan for the worst case scenario with many retirements. For a retirement at an outdoor checkpoint, it may be best to drive a cold retiree to the nearest checkpoint where they can wait under cover for transport back to HQ.

Exhausted walkers who retire can get cold very quickly and so they may be permitted inside a building there remains 100 square feet of space for all those inside. Especially on longer walks, checkpoints should have blankets or sleeping bags available, but care is needed to avoid cross-contamination. Sometimes walkers arrive at a checkpoint in no fit state to continue the walk, for example in obvious distress or shivering violently. Such walkers will usually be more than willing to retire, though some may require diplomatic persuasion (the suggestion that a hot shower or meal is a few minutes' drive away usually works). Very occasionally they may refuse to retire (which in itself may be a sign of a serious condition such as hypothermia) and marshals may need to enforce retirement. If a walker refuses to comply, they should be advised that they are disobeying the instructions of a marshal and that action following a breach of rules may be taken.

Walkers who arrive after the closing time or remain at the checkpoint after the closing time should also be retired and transport back to HQ arranged for them. Again, this should be done sensitively, by pointing out that they will have no chance of reaching the next checkpoint or finish in time. A walker continuing under such circumstances would again be regarded as contravening event rules.

Retirements at checkpoints should be recorded on the checklist following the procedures laid down. If a retirement is for exceptional reasons, for example because of a significant injury or an enforced retirement against a walker's will, the circumstances should be written down, including times, names of others involved, or witnesses and Control should be informed.

4.8 Grouping

In mountainous or moorland areas, at night or in bad weather conditions, it may be appropriate for safety reasons to require walkers to travel in groups, usually of at least three, on certain sections of the walk. If grouping is even a remote possibility this should be stated in the rules. There are two broad possibilities.

The event organisers may, depending on the experience of walkers and the nature of the route, decide in advance that all walkers will be grouped, perhaps at night or on a certain section or sections of the walk. This should be stated down in the rules and checkpoint procedures. Grouping can be difficult to administer but should be applied fairly. One method is to give checkpoints at which grouping might be enforced a supply of grouping cards. These

need only be simple cards with a pre-printed group number and space to enter the individual walk numbers of those in the group. One member of the group should carry the grouping card and present it at each checkpoint whilst grouping is enforced. Entrants may wish to express a preference on the nature of their group – for example, runners do not always group well with walkers. Waiting time spent by walkers when groups are first formed can be recorded at the checkpoint so the final walk time can be adjusted accordingly — this provides some compensation to a frustrated walker keen to complete the walk within a particular time.

For events with experienced walkers, the organisers often reserve the right to group walkers but only enforce grouping if conditions are bad or to ensure that particular walkers who might cause concern have company over difficult stretches. In this case, the checkpoint marshals have the discretion to require grouping to the next checkpoint.

Although grouping occasionally causes bad feeling, walkers usually form into natural groups as they walk round an event route, and often grouping affects walkers very little.

4.9 Breaking rules and disqualification

One might think that those accepting the challenge of a challenge event would have enough pride and self-esteem not to break the rules deliberately: Alas, it has been known to happen! A small number of walkers may try to take short cuts or skimp on equipment, and others will then complain vociferously about cheats. Thus, it is worthwhile to design the event to minimise the temptation and possibility to break the rules, for example by selecting reasonably direct routes between checkpoints. Judiciously placed unstaffed checkpoints can eliminate obvious short cuts, as can informing walkers that there will be ‘unannounced’ checkpoints or spot kit checks en route. However, any such precautions should not make the walk oppressive for the majority.

Disqualification should only be imposed if at least two marshals firmly believe, with good reason, that a breach of rules has been intentional and not the result of a genuine mistake or misunderstanding. The procedures for disqualification, including the right of appeal, should be clearly explained to marshals. It is important that the entrant’s side of the story is heard.

Possible grounds for disqualification or other sanctions include the following:

- Willful deviation from a set route (there should be no doubt that the deviation was intended — getting lost inadvertently should not be punished).
- Failure to produce a required item of equipment at a kit check, see Section 4.4.
- Acceptance of mechanical assistance (this can be difficult to prove).
- Bringing the event into disrepute, for example by flagrant disregard for safety or breaches of the Countryside Code.
- Impersonation of a no-show entrant on the event.
- Failure to comply with the instructions provided by marshals.
- Failure to follow Covid-19 transmission reduction measures.

Disqualifying walkers for breaking rules should not be done lightly — it will lead to bad feeling and can waste an enormous amount of volunteers’ time in an unpleasant way dealing with appeals. Disqualification should only take place for serious breaches of the rules for which there is incontrovertible evidence.

Any disqualification must be seen to be fair and may have to be justified in case of appeal. At least two marshals should be involved in recommending any disqualification and they should be polite but firm. They should remove the walker’s tally and advise the entrant that they can no longer continue on the event. Of course, it is physically impossible to prevent an entrant from continuing. But, if this is the case, for LDWA events the entrant should be advised that, disciplinary action may be taken and that further sanctions might take place for refusing to adhere to the instructions of a marshal. Entrants may be asked to sign a declaration form that they will continue at their own risk and will not qualify for a certificate or a badge. Under such circumstances, Control should be informed, and

should ensure that all subsequent checkpoints are aware of the disqualification but that they can still provide drink facilities as for other walkers – the LDWA would not want a person to suffer so that they come to harm.

Organisers and marshals should be aware that anyone disqualified on a walk organised by the LDWA, by one of its local groups or by an affiliated organisation, can appeal against the disqualification through the Grievance Procedures (local or national) set out in the LDWA Bylaws, and the person disqualified should be informed of this. If the Chief Organiser, in consultation with the marshals involved, considers that the matter requires more action than just disqualification, for example barring the person from entering the event in future years, this should be notified in writing to the person, who again has a right of appeal. If the occurrence is so serious that the organisers feel further penalty is appropriate, such as suspension from the LDWA, then this may be raised as a grievance under the Bylaws.

A lesser sanction than disqualification is sometimes appropriate, for example adding a time penalty to a walker's overall event time so they appear lower down the list of finishers. This can be effective since it is usually those intent on completing the route in a fast time who are tempted to take short cuts.

Note that for the annual LDWA Hundred there are specific procedures laid down for disqualification which may be relevant for other walks, these may be found in *How to Organise the Hundred* (in [Toolkit](#)).

The names of disqualified walkers should not appear in the event results or report. Organisers may wish to comment on any disqualifications that have been imposed, but the individuals concerned should not be identified.

Enforced retirement of a walker who is judged by marshals to be in no fit condition to continue or of a walker who fails to meet a checkpoint closing time, and who does not continue on their own volition, is NOT a disqualification. Such cases should be recorded in the results in the same way as 'voluntary' retirements and there should be no stigma attached.

4.10 Communications

Information relating to the event will frequently need to be passed between Walk HQ, checkpoints, sweepers, and minibus drivers. Such information includes:

- Emergencies and other important messages.
- Control's requirements.
- Liaison concerning missing entrants.
- Confirmation of opening and closing of checkpoints.
- Reporting the walk numbers of non-starters and retirees.
- Keeping track of and directing transport vehicles.
- Requests for additional supplies or equipment or reporting surplus supplies.
- Relaying the numbers and times of, say, the first and last ten walkers through each checkpoint (very helpful in monitoring the progress of the event). If there is a web-based system Control may already have this information, but confirmation may be useful.

Effective communications are a tremendous asset, but unreliable or undisciplined communications can be a liability. Lives may be lost if a message believed to have been sent fails to reach its destination. Plan carefully how and where to provide communication links, what they will be used for and the procedure for their use. Tests should be made to check the feasibility of links, and, for a large event, a practice run of the communications network is essential. A combination of radio, mobile telephony and cars or riders may be needed for passing information. With electronic web-based systems Control will know who is passing through the checkpoints for those checkpoints that are online, and a GPS tracker system enables Control to know exactly where each walker is. Otherwise, a plan will be required to get lists of those passing through checkpoints back to HQ periodically. In any case paper records should be returned to HQ in case of internet problems.

Walk HQ should have an emergency telephone, with the number known to all checkpoints, marshals and printed on walkers' route descriptions and/or tallies. This phone should NOT be used for any other calls but should be set aside specifically as the event emergency number.

All checkpoints must be able to summon the emergency services (ambulance, mountain rescue or police) rapidly, using a 999 call. Thus, a reliable mobile telephone or nearby public telephone is required, or a message might be relayed via HQ using radio (this can be awkward if the emergency services need to check any details). There must also be some means for checkpoints to send messages to HQ and this should be tested beforehand. Mobile telephones are a real bonus to event organization, but there are potential problems: mobile phone coverage can be patchy or unreliable in rural or hilly areas, and users must ensure that phones are kept charged.

On a larger event there is an almost continuous flow of information between HQ and some or all of the checkpoints, and this can be extremely effective if well-planned. Radio has the advantage of being able to relay information or queries to several locations in a single transmission, for example for broadcasting to all checkpoints lists of non-starters early on and details of retirements periodically throughout the event. However, sending complete lists of those passing through checkpoints is not generally practical: with the amount of data involved it is time consuming and can lead to congestion of the network.

Radio communication must be provided by licensed operators and there are several possibilities. [RAYNET](#) (The Radio Amateurs Emergency Network) have branches across Britain and been helpful and enthusiastic many events. Costs should be discussed early on, with expenses likely to include travel and a food allowance for radio operators, petrol for generators, etc. During Covid-19 radio operators, like marshals should be asked to bring their own food.

Radio communication may prove difficult in hilly country, requiring relay stations which can sometimes be in cars parked strategically, but otherwise the landowner's permission should be sought to set up a relay station, and a full test of the network prior to the event is essential. RAYNET groups will normally arrange all this. At checkpoints, the radio base may have to be located some distance from the checkpoint depending on power supplies and aerial positions, in which case a marshal will need to act as a runner.

The operation and use of the radio communications must be discussed in detail between event organisers and radio operators prior to the event. Radio operators may not be familiar with the organization of LDWA-style events and working relationships between radio operators and marshals must be developed. Radio teams must realise that they are not responsible for the control of the event and that messages passed by radio will be used alongside other information. A radio operator should only send messages he or she is asked to send, and a nominated individual at Walk HQ and at each checkpoint should be responsible for liaison with the operator. To avoid error, messages to be sent should be written down and handed to the operator, who similarly will write down messages that are received over the radio. In particular, HQ should maintain a log of messages and resulting action taken.

Cars or dispatch riders are useful for conveying hard copy or more complicated written information, such as sending to HQ periodic updates of walkers passing through checkpoints.

4.11 Transport

Transport arrangements need to be planned carefully in advance with appropriate measures to mitigate transmission of Covid-19.

The main functions requiring transport are:

- Transport of equipment and provisions to and from checkpoints.
- Transport of retirees back to HQ.
- Transport of entrants' baggage to and from any Baggage Checkpoint.

Transport of retirees is awkward to plan for since the retirement pattern is unpredictable. In bad conditions it is very important to transport retirees back to HQ rapidly, but this is just when most retirements are likely, see Section 4.7.

Particularly for large events, an expected 'retirement profile' should be drawn up to estimate when, where and how many retirements might be expected and what vehicles will be needed. The pattern becomes clear for regular

events, but for new walks organisers of comparable events can provide advice. For long events, the greatest number of retirements takes place at dusk and at the main 'half-way' checkpoint. Make transport plans for three weather scenarios (good, bad, and hot) taking into account estimated numbers and travelling times in each case.

For smaller, shorter events, where relatively few retirements are likely, marshals' cars will probably fulfil the needs. Either each checkpoint should have spare staff who can drive retirees back to HQ as necessary, or designated marshals can run a shuttle service between operational checkpoints and HQ. Note that in rural areas the road distance between checkpoints or HQ can be considerably more than the walking distance!

For large scale events minibuses may be needed. Insurance for hired minibuses requires named drivers over 25 years of age allocated to them. For longer events, at least two drivers per minibus will be required and they should relieve each other regularly. Hiring minibuses locally can be more economical and makes last minute changes in requirements or drivers easier.

The Transport Manager should keep a record of departures and arrivals of minibuses at checkpoints and at HQ, identifying each minibus by a number or perhaps a colour. The Transport Manager will work very closely with Control who will want to know where the minibuses are at any time and using GPS trackers should be considered. A map of the event area with coloured pins to mark minibuses' positions and with travelling times to and between checkpoints marked is very useful.

Given the unpredictability of retirements, good communications are needed to make the best use of minibuses. It is ineffective and costly to have minibuses visiting checkpoints on the off chance that they may be needed. The itineraries of the vehicles need careful planning and will depend on actual retirement patterns and the physical road layout; if necessary, journeys may need to be modified at short notice. Depending on the geography of the area, it may be best to have one vehicle out on a short shuttle getting retirements to a central place of shelter, for example the half-way checkpoint, where they can wait in relative comfort for further transport back to HQ. Alternatively, it may be worth basing a minibus at a distant point of the route for part of the event to reduce delay. To repeat, good communication is crucial, and radios or mobile phones can be of tremendous help in reporting transport requirements and keeping track of vehicles.

Drivers should ideally be familiar with the roads to be used, but in any case, written details and maps of how to get to checkpoints should be provided. It may be helpful to have a navigator in the vehicle, provided that distancing can be achieved. Turning minibuses round at checkpoints is not always easy and turning areas should be identified. Warn drivers of any parts of their routes that coincide with the event route (for example approaches to checkpoints), particularly if there is no pavement or if walkers will be passing after dark.

Checkpoint equipment can be heavy and bulky. Whilst checkpoint marshals will often be able to transport equipment to their checkpoint in their own cars, the organisers should ensure that this is indeed the case. On some events the organisers arrange deliveries to each checkpoint in a van or in a minibus before it is used for retirements.

If there is a baggage checkpoint, then a large van will be needed early in the event to take all the baggage over. Returning baggage to HQ after it has been used is less of a problem since it can be conveyed in small batches as and when it is finished with, perhaps with retirees. However, the routine must be sufficiently flexible to enable baggage to be returned rapidly for walkers retiring before or shortly after the baggage checkpoint.

Identify suitable filling stations beforehand: overnight events will need stations open 24 hours for refuelling. It may be possible to negotiate with a garage a method of payment for petrol that avoids the inconvenience of drivers carrying cash or using personal credit cards.

4.12 Emergencies and first aid

Medical emergencies

Few serious injuries have occurred on challenge events though occasionally an emergency not directly attributable to the event, such as a heart attack or an epileptic fit, may occur. Clearly, it is not possible to have immediate professional medical help available everywhere along a cross-country route. Nevertheless, entrants on the event can

expect emergency support to be at least as good as it would be if they were walking the same paths on their own. In fact, by the very nature of an event, this will generally be the case since there are usually other walkers nearby who can summon assistance.

Organisers must ensure that marshals can react quickly to any serious emergency. In particular, checkpoints and other key helpers such as sweepers must have the means and the knowledge to summon the emergency services rapidly. A 999 call contacts the ambulance and mountain rescue services and they will want to know the exact location, including grid references and / or 'three word' location, of both the incident and from where the phone call is made, as well as the nature and seriousness of the emergency. Control should be informed immediately of any serious incident and should check the entry application of any casualty for any known and declared medical condition, and this should be passed on to the emergency services.

If an injury or other illness occurs on an event, there should normally be enough walkers around to follow good hill-walking practice, with one or more staying with the casualty (and possibly giving first aid) whilst others summon help. Often, a checkpoint is the easiest place to seek help. If the casualty is able to walk to an access point slowly or with assistance (the casualty is usually the best judge of this) a vehicle should be dispatched to the access point and marshals sent to meet the casualty to provide extra support. Otherwise, or if there is any doubt, the emergency services should be contacted by a 999 call and the informant should remain at hand in case further information is needed. A marshal or another walker should be sent to the best road access point for an ambulance and they should liaise with the ambulance team when they arrive.

Control will need to discuss with the hospital or police how to contact next of kin. Marshals and walkers who assist should avoid discussing incidents with those not directly involved and should not admit or attribute responsibility. Marshals should make a written record of any injury or medical emergency as soon as possible, including times, symptoms, actions taken, etc. The Chief Organiser, in consultation with marshals and walkers involved, should complete an Accident/Incident Reporting Form which can be downloaded from the [Library](#) section of the LDWA website or the [Toolkit](#) and which should be returned to the LDWA [Treasurer](#) as soon as possible. This is both to provide information in the case of any claim and so the LDWA can monitor incidents and take action to avoid similar incidents in the future.

First aid

First Aid is the immediate assistance given to someone injured or taken ill, before the arrival of an ambulance, doctor, or other expert help.

Whilst most people can give some form of useful first aid, those who have undergone first aid training are much more likely to be able to provide effective help in a serious situation. In any circumstances, it is a matter of chance whether a first aider is to hand when an injury occurs, though legislation now requires adequate provision in the workplace and at large gatherings, such as football matches, where one qualified first aider is required for each 1,000 spectators. Clearly, it is impossible to provide first aiders everywhere along the route of an event, but it is recommended that qualified first aiders are at the finish and, for a long event, at one or two checkpoints, in particular at checkpoints near rugged terrain. Helpers should be aware of the names and locations of first aiders and how they can be contacted. Increasingly many people have a basic first aid qualification, especially those who work with young people, and it is worth establishing which helpers are so qualified.

[St John Ambulance](#) or [St Andrew's Ambulance Association](#) (in Scotland) often assist at events by providing teams of first aiders and local contacts can be found through their web pages. Their services should be booked in writing, and requirements, duty times and likely costs discussed well in advance. Although these services are voluntary, expenses must be covered and a donation should be made to reflect the size and scale of the event and whether an ambulance is used. They will advise on their needs of space and equipment such as bedding and blankets.

In an emergency there may well be other walkers around who have medical or first aid qualifications. (One walking group noticed that they could offer a choice of two doctors, a nurse, a midwife and a vet!) Those who help on walks regularly, or indeed take part in walks, are strongly encouraged to take one of the first aid courses run regularly in all areas by the [Red Cross](#), [St John Ambulance](#) or [St Andrew's Ambulance Association](#) or by certain outdoor training organisations. The basic qualification involves 16 hours training, usually through weekly evening classes or an

intensive two day course. If a group has several members interested in taking a first aid course it may be possible to arrange a course specifically for the group.

Walk officials who are not qualified should be very cautious in administering first aid. If an incident is life threatening, then clearly all help that can be undertaken should be. For less serious incidents, care should be taken to ensure that an injury or condition is not worsened. If in any doubt, do the minimum to ensure that things get no worse (such as keeping the casualty warm or stopping serious bleeding) until the emergency services arrive. Talk reassuringly to a casualty even if no response is apparent. Tablets or lotions should not be offered since they might result in a serious allergic reaction. Surgical gloves should be worn when handling any injury and especially when there is any bleeding.

For an injury which is clearly of limited extent but which requires non-immediate expert attention, it may be appropriate to drive the casualty to the nearest hospital accident and emergency department.

First aid boxes may be provided at checkpoints for use by first aiders and others. These should be put together in consultation with a medically qualified person, but might include a variety of bandages, dressings, etc.

Minor problems

Blisters, sore feet, and aching limbs are commonplace amongst walkers. First aiders may be able to provide relief, though that is not their primary role, and entrants should take responsibility for themselves with minor issues. The event details should require walkers to carry a small first aid kit to cope with any normal personal requirements, including plasters, adhesive dressing, antiseptic wipes, fixation tape, low adherent dressing and any tablets or lotions that might be needed.

Remember that equipment sometimes needs 'first aid'. Checkpoints and walkers will find string and safety pins useful for quick repairs to all manner of things from broken zips to rucksack straps!

4.13 Dealing with complaints

The need for consultation with local residents has been stressed earlier but complaints can still arise, and it is very important that they are dealt with promptly and with understanding of the other person's point of view. In the event of a claim for damages do NOT admit liability and for LDWA events consult the LDWA Treasurer as soon as possible.

Occasionally a landowner or member of the public complains during or after an event. Typically, a complaint is made to a marshal at a checkpoint near where the problem arises. It may be possible to rectify the problem, for example by re-routing later walkers. It is important that the Event Organiser is informed of any complaint as soon as possible, and it is a good idea if possible, for the Event Organiser to visit the complainant immediately to discuss the problem. Often the fact that the organisers are taking a problem seriously and are prepared to listen will go a long way to placating those involved. Above all, any complaint should be heard politely and patiently. If there has been any damage, it should be verified and perhaps photographed, and the Event Organiser and complainant should exchange addresses. If particular walkers are associated with the complaint, an attempt should be made to identify them (though in practice this can be difficult) so that their account can be heard later.

If relatively small compensation is demanded or considered appropriate in the interests of goodwill, the organising committee should consider this at a meeting after the event. The contingency allowance in the budget would be expected to cover a small sum. If more substantial compensation is involved, it may be necessary to utilise the liability insurance and for LDWA events the LDWA [Treasurer](#) should be contacted as soon as possible.

4.14 Food and drink matters

Whilst walking events have been described as 'low risk' from the point of view of food safety and hygiene, nevertheless food that is sold (directly or through the entry fee) is affected by legislation, in particular, the [Food](#)

[Safety Act 1990](#) and subsequent amendments. You will probably not want to read this lengthy technical document, but a [Government Summary](#) may be more readable. The Act requires that premises (such as schools, village halls, etc.) where food is served regularly (basically on any five days in any five consecutive weeks) must be registered with the local authority. An exception is that places run by voluntary organisations, such as some church halls, where no food is stored on the premises (except tea, coffee, biscuits, and similar dry products) need not register. Regulations about preparation, storage temperatures of food, etc., apply to food served on registered premises. Such premises may be inspected at any time by environmental food officers who can, in principle, halt service of food immediately. The responsibility for Food Act registration is with the owner of the premises, and a one-off event is not in itself likely to make registration necessary. However, event organisers are advised to establish before booking an HQ or checkpoints whether they are registered and what consequent restrictions are imposed. The Food Act does not apply directly to food served in tents, barns, etc.

However, whatever the checkpoint or HQ, the [Food Safety and Hygiene Regulations 2013](#) apply, though again this is a technical document. The obvious hygiene precautions should be followed. Those involved in handling food should wash their hands regularly in a separate sink from that used for cutlery, utensils, etc. and wear appropriate protective clothing. Food preparation, serving and eating areas should be cleaned regularly. Food must be stored safely at appropriate temperatures and kept covered until served. Food that is cooked must be cooked at the appropriate temperature for the length of time needed to kill bacteria. The 'four-hour rule' applies to meat and protein products and hot food, which must be consumed within four hours of removal after refrigeration or cooking.

It is strongly recommended that individuals providing catering have the necessary experience and hygiene certificates/credentials for preparing and servicing food for large groups.

4.15 Supporters

Inevitably some supporters, that is friends or families of entrants, will accompany or transport walkers to the HQ and wish to meet walkers at points enroute. Organisers must consider the risk of Covid-19 transmission and put necessary measures in place.

Supporters should not carry walkers' equipment and the rules may state that no support other than that provided by the event is allowed, in which case they should not provide additional food or drink.

On larger events it may be worthwhile suggesting suitable points enroute for supporters to greet walkers, otherwise they may block narrow roads. Usually, road crossings away from checkpoints are best. A list of suggested meeting points can be put on the event website or circulated with the event details.

Although supporters can be a nuisance, they can be useful if help is suddenly needed, for example to take a retiree back to HQ or as a courier to take something to a checkpoint at a moment's notice.

Chapter Five - Final Matters

5.1 Extra touches

It is often attention to little details and extras that leads to participants (both walkers and marshals) thinking afterwards, 'That was a good, well-organised challenge walk that I thoroughly enjoyed'. The attitude of marshals and officials is crucial. They should appear enthusiastic and cheerful (even though they may be fed up and tired) and should do what they can to encourage the walkers. They should be efficient but not officious in performing their duties.

Walkers appreciate a well-run HQ and checkpoints. The aim should be for an aura of almost effortless efficiency. Queuing and unnecessary waiting should be kept to a minimum though during Covid-19 there may be more clustering and queuing which should be managed efficiently and in a socially distanced manner, with the queuing arrangements clearly signed. Marshals should welcome walkers when they arrive, be concerned with the walkers' welfare and do their best to provide any assistance required. Helpful notices at Walk HQ and at checkpoints are appreciated and improve efficiency, as are signs enroute such as 'Checkpoint 200 yards' or 'You are half-way!' There is scope for artistic talent and humour here. Displays of photographs, maps, information, merchandise, etc., at the start make the waiting time before and after the event more interesting.

An event will be remembered for the route, so it is worth making it interesting and varied to be as enjoyable as possible even if the weather is poor. An unexpected drinks point is always welcomed during hot weather.

Particularly on longer events, there is a sense of occasion when walkers finish. Walkers feel a tremendous sense of achievement in the moments after finishing a long event and they should be allowed to enjoy this.

Some events provide notes on natural or historical features on route, though these should be clearly separated from the route description, either on a separate page or using a different type face.

5.2 After the event

Organisers **MUST** ensure that walkers details are uploaded onto the [LDWA Server](#) immediately after the walk for insurance purposes. Any delays in submission may cause complications at a future date if claims are made and the walk organiser may need to justify why.

There should remain minimal evidence that the event has taken place. Either on the day of the event, or on the following day, all litter, notices, temporary waymarking, etc. associated with the event must be removed. It may be possible for the sweepers and checkpoint marshals to do this, but there should be some final check of the whole route.

After the event, the main organisers may suffer from anti-climax as well as a combination of exhaustion and relief. Unless the committee is very dedicated, the Chief Organiser may be left on his or her own and there may be a strong temptation to put off the remaining jobs. One way of ensuring that things do not grind to a halt is, at the planning stage, to make the target completion date not the event itself but a final debriefing, say two weeks after the event. The Committee will then realise that they have work to do until then.

In practice, there is relatively little left to do after the event compared with previous weeks. There may be the results and report to prepare, borrowed equipment to return, a few bills and expenses still to pay, final accounts to draw up, 'thank you' letters to write and (perhaps, but hopefully not) the odd farmer to appease. If the momentum and enthusiasm of the main committee members can be kept going for another week or two, there should be no problem.

Almost all events produce some form of results which circulated by email or post or put on a webpage to participants and, perhaps, helpers after the event. The results comprise a list of walkers with their times taken, usually in order of finishing. Some results include times at intermediate checkpoints. The distances achieved by retirees can also be included. If checkpoint recording has been electronic these can be produced almost immediately

otherwise times can be copied from timesheets onto an electronic spreadsheet which can be sorted as required – this is sometimes done at HQ during the event as timesheets are returned. In any case the results lose interest if not sent out soon, preferably within two weeks. Care is needed to ensure that the results comply with GDPR, see Section 3.6. Entrants must be aware that their names and times may be published, and they should have the option for their names to be omitted – either their results line can be omitted completely, or they can be recorded as Walker 1, etc. provided this does not identify them.

Many events circulate a report with general comments on the event alongside the results. The report can be a short factual account or can include anecdotes or statistics relating to the event and perhaps pictures. A specific committee member should be responsible for writing and producing the report and results and for their prompt distribution; often an outline report can be prepared before the event leaving a few details to fill in.

Helpers appreciate being named in any report produced, though care must be taken not to miss anyone, and they can be sent a copy. Appropriately endorsed certificates might also be given to helpers as a token ‘thank-you’. Similarly, individuals or bodies who have co-operated with the event might be acknowledged in the report.

Local newspapers are often willing to include a suitable report and photo; this should be written in a ‘punchy’ style and should be submitted immediately after the event to have a chance of inclusion. There is less urgency for reports for magazines such as *Strider*, but even so they should be written and sent in whilst the event is fresh in the writer’s mind.

Inevitably, items of personal property will be found after the walk and a list can be included with the event report. Items of lost property should be handled in a Covid-19 compliant way and retained by one person with responsibility for returning the property to the owner. Normally the owner should pay the postage prior to the item being returned.

The Treasurer should ensure that all outstanding bills are paid promptly and that the accounts are finalised and circulated to the committee. Depending on any surplus made, a donation might be made to a local countryside organisation, to any voluntary group such as a Scout group who have provided help, or another worthy cause. The LDWA strongly encourages local group events to pass a significant donation onto National LDWA funds by budgeting for this in the entry fee either directly or with a higher fee for non-LDWA members.

The Chief Organiser should write or email to thank helpers (individuals and groups) as well as to those who have provided assistance, given their permission, or been inconvenienced by the event – a word processing package can enable personalised variants on a basic message to be produced quickly. Taking such trouble will be of enormous benefit to future events.

If there are any problems raised by landowners or authorities, these should be dealt with quickly, perhaps by a phone call.

Particularly if it is intended to repeat the event in subsequent years, it is worthwhile for the committee to hold a debriefing session so that problems and improvements can be identified while the event is still fresh in people’s minds. A written note should be kept of points arising, otherwise they will rapidly be forgotten.

5.3 The organisers’ responsibility

It will be clear from reading this booklet that the main organisers carry a heavy responsibility for the safe and smooth running of the event. The responsibility extends to ensuring that the event is organised to ensure appropriate measures are in place to mitigate the risk of Covid-19 transmission to entrants, helpers and the general public. Indeed, by accepting entry fees, organisers take on legal as well as practical responsibilities.

If a walker on an event behaves badly or breaks the Countryside Code, for example by omitting to close a gate, it is the organiser who is likely to suffer the wrath of the farmer and face demands for compensation. The event might receive bad press publicity and permission for checkpoint sites or access might be refused for future years. Such incidents give challenge walking a bad name and create difficulties for future events. However, it is rarely possible to identify culprits or impose any sanctions against them.

There have been few accidents on challenge walks. Nevertheless, a major accident, even for reasons over which the organisers have no control, could have far reaching effects on challenge walking as a whole and on the individuals involved, with criticism of the organisers in the press or even in the courts. The litigious ethos, which has almost killed off organised outdoor activities in the United States, is on the increase in Britain. Thus, it is crucial to have adequate insurance cover and to follow insurers' requirements.

Organised activities in general, and walking events in particular, are subject to an increasing amount of legislation, much of which was never intended to cover such voluntarily run activities. Events may be affected by legislation relating to health and safety, Covid-19 transmission reduction measures, food hygiene, rights of way, data protection, copyright, representation of services, equality, diversity, and inclusion, etc.; see appropriate points in these *Guidelines*.

Many walkers who enter events, particularly shorter ones, are inexperienced, sometimes unaware of sensible clothing requirements or unable to map-read and may tend to over-estimate their abilities. Organisers must take care not to lead such walkers into situations that are beyond them, but on the other hand an event can be a learning experience for such people. Nevertheless, making the route too easy and providing too much spoon-feeding will drive away the more experienced walkers.

As emphasised throughout these *Guidelines*, safety should always be borne in mind, and entrants must be informed about matters that may affect their safety. To reiterate some specific points:

- A risk assessment of the event should be made covering all aspects of safety including measures to mitigate the risk of Covid-19 transmission, and appropriate action taken to counter any hazards.
- Entry details should make absolutely clear what is being offered, and not be misleading about the level of support provided.
- Entry details should make it clear that entrants are responsible for their own route finding and basic safe walking and that the event is not a 'led' walk.
- Entry details should state what equipment should be worn or carried (assuming the worst conditions for the time of year for the terrain), including items and the level of experience required.
- Entrants should sign a statement on the entry form that they participate at their own risk, and that they will obey the event rules, including those relating to reducing the risk of Covid-19 measures and the Countryside Code. In particular they should withdraw from the event if they or close contacts have recently been diagnosed or show any Covid-19 symptoms or if they are awaiting test results or are self-isolating.
- It should be made clear to marshals exactly what is expected of them. Other matters which warrant particular care include:
 - There should be reliable communications and procedures for their use.
 - Checkpoints and other marshals must have the means and knowledge to contact the emergency services rapidly.
 - There must be good procedures for recording walkers, for detecting missing walkers and for taking consequent action.
 - Data protection requirements must be followed.

5.4 Was it all worth it?

Although there is a lot to think about, provided that organisers give sufficient time and thought to planning, have adequate assistance both before and on the day and follow a common-sense approach, a good challenge event should result. All events have minor 'crises', but even things that seem disasters to the marshals at the time will go unnoticed by most walkers, and the organisers will laugh about it all after the event.

Most challenge walk entrants fully appreciate the enormous amount of voluntary effort put in by the organisers and helpers and are very grateful for what is provided. Organisers should be attentive to constructive criticism and note

what might be improved in the future but should not be discouraged by the very few 'awkward customers' who blame the organisers for everything including their own inability or unfitness.

The educational value of challenge walks should not be underestimated. A well-organised event will provide an atmosphere in which sensible clothing and equipment and observance of the Countryside Code are the accepted norm. Less sure walkers will be able to gain further confidence and hone navigational skills in the company of more experienced entrants.

Organisers of a successful challenge walk will be rewarded by the thanks of elated walkers as they finish as well as in emails or posts afterwards. They will have the satisfaction of having done a complex job well, of giving others a great deal of pleasure and of sharing their enjoyment of walking. They will have assisted in the LDWA's aim: *to further the interests of those who enjoy long distance walking.*

Appendices

Appendix A - Requirements for events

For an Event to be supported and publicised by the LDWA, the following requirements, which are considered in greater detail in these Guidelines, must be fulfilled:

- The event is mainly cross-country.
- The event has an emphasis on walking and walkers' needs throughout.
- There may be several routes, but at least one is 20 miles or more in length.
- There must be at most 500 starters .
- The event does not require entrants to obtain sponsorship.
- The event is organised with due regard to safety.
- The event follows government guidance on Covid-19 transmission at the time of the event.
- The event complies with current legislation, in particular, Adventure Activities Licensing Regulations.
- The event is organised with due regard to the environment.
- The event is organised with due consideration for the local community and landowners.
- There is adequate public liability insurance cover.
- A risk assessment has been conducted in respect of the event and made available to entrants.
- All entrants sign a declaration that they will observe the rules of the event and obey the Countryside Code / Scottish Outdoor Access Code.
- Written consent of a parent or guardian is obtained for entrants under 18 years of age.
- The entry fee is reasonable given the support and facilities provided.
- A donation to the LDWA is recommended to help ensure the sustainability of the Association.
- The event finances are conducted in a proper manner.
- The event is organised in a manner consistent with the Objects and Policy of the LDWA, including the Equality, Diversity and Inclusivity policy.

Appendix B - Suggested challenge event planning timetable

This timetable gives a very rough indication of when various tasks need to be done when organising a new event.

Action	Small event (up to 150)	Large event (150 to 500)
Decide on date and area	8-15 mths	12-36 mths
Form organising committee	8-15 mths	12-36 mths
Find and book HQ	8-15 mths	12-36 mths
Prepare budget, seek sponsorship	8-15 mths	12-36 mths
Discuss event with key landowners, authorities, and police	8-15 mths	12-36 mths
Compile first risk-assessment to be updated as circumstances change	8-15 mths	12-36 mths
Plan route, locate possible checkpoints	6-9 mths	8-18 mths
Agree rules, prepare entry forms, details sheets, publicity	5-8 mths	6-12 mths
Print entry forms, posters, etc.	4-7 mths	5-8 mths

Advertise in magazines and elsewhere	2-9 mths	2-12 mths
Book radio communications, first aid	4-6 mths	6-12 mths
Check insurance cover	4-6 mths	6-12 mths
Complete detailed route and checkpoint planning and booking, obtain any written permissions from landowners	3-6 mths	4-10 mths
Arrange transport, book minibuses	2-4 mths	3-6 mths
Write route description	3-9 mths	4-12 mths
Recruit helpers and marshals	1-4 mths	3-12 mths
Design and order badges	3 mths	3 mths
Prepare artwork for certificates, signs, etc.	1-3 mths	3-4 mths
Distribute entry forms/ set up internet entry	1-9 mths	1-12 mths
Receive and acknowledge entries	1-9 mths	1-6 mths
Contact local press and radio	2 mths	2 mths
Prepare checkpoint briefing notes, procedure notes equipment and food lists and distribute to marshals	2-8 wks	1-6 mths
Check route description carefully, print route description	2-8 wks	4-8 wks
Distribute route description and/or final details (if any)	2-8 wks	2-8 wks
Print certificates and check-cards	2-8 wks	4-8 wks
Marshals' walk, check route for late changes	2-8 wks	4-8 wks
Final information to police, landowners, etc., reminder to press	1 wk	1 wk
Prepare checklists of entrants	1 wk	1 wk
Final committee meeting, officials' briefing, final checks of accommodation and equipment	2-7 days	2-7 days
Prepare walk HQ	Previous evening / On day	Previous evening / On day
Put up signs, notices, waymarks	On day	On day
Put on event	On day	On day
Remove signs, litter, waymarks, etc.	On day / Day after	On day / Day after
Send out press reports	+ 1-2 days	+ 1-2 days
Write letters of thanks	+ 1-2 wks	+ 1-2 wks
Obtain outstanding expense claims, pay outstanding bills	+ 1-2 wks	+ 1-4 wks
Hold debriefing meeting	+ 1-2 wks	+ 1-2 wks
Compile and send out event report and results	+ 1-2 wks	+ 1-3 wks
Finalise accounts, make donations	+ 1-4 wks	+ 1-3 mths

Appendix C - Jobs for marshals and helpers

Depending on the size and nature of the event, helpers will be needed to cover many of the following tasks. For longer events a shift system may be needed to allow for sleep (e.g., for HQ, longer open checkpoints, drivers). Some jobs, e.g., at the start or at early checkpoints, are short-lived and helpers can move on to other jobs such as transport or at the finish.

1. HQ at Start

- Car parking.
- Setting up HQ, furniture, signs, queuing and one way systems, etc.
- Marshals to ensure activities to mitigate the risk of Covid-19 transmission are enforced.
- Registration.
- Kit check.
- Enquiries and problems.
- Merchandise sales.
- Checkpoint equipment and supplies.
- Baggage storage and handling.
- Marshalling at start.

2. HQ during event and at finish

- Control, including coordinating any electronic recording system such as PACER.
- First aid.
- Communications.
- Baggage handling.
- Marshals to ensure activities to mitigate the risk of Covid-19 transmission are enforced.
- Recording finishers.
- Certificate printing/writing.
- Merchandise sales.
- Provision of takeaway food and hot drinks with due consideration of Covid-19 transmission risks.
- Clearing up (best to involve many people).

3. Staffed Checkpoints

- Setting up checkpoints to ensure social distancing and hand sanitization.
- Marshals to ensure activities to mitigate the risk of Covid-19 transmission are enforced.
- Setting up and operating a sanitised area for water provision.
- Recording walkers' arrival (and possibly departure) on paper and perhaps electronically.
- Providing food or food parcels in a Covid-19 compliant manner (events over 35 miles).
- Toilet arrangements.
- First aid.
- Communications.
- Baggage handling (for a 'baggage' checkpoint).

4. Other Support

- Sweepers.
- Opening and closing checkpoints.
- Setting up unstaffed checkpoints.
- Kit checks en route.
- Setting up temporary waymarking.
- Road marshalling.
- Transporting retirees.
- Transporting baggage.

Appendix D - Checkpoint equipment

Checkpoints may vary from a well-equipped school or hall to an exposed site in open country such as a barn, a tent or the back of a car. Equipment requirements will vary depending on the nature of the checkpoint. The following list indicates what might be required.

1. Accommodation

- Space for outdoor processing of walkers.
- Building, tents, gazebos or shelter giving cover to any or all of:
 - Marshals,
 - Caterers,
 - First aiders,
 - Communications staff,
 - Off duty helpers sleeping space,
 - Retired walkers.
- Chairs and tables for outdoors and indoors operations.
- Space for communications equipment and possibly antennae.
- Windbreak for outdoor.
- Campbeds/airbeds/loungers.
- Sleeping bags or blankets (retirees can get cold very quickly).

2. Documentation

- Briefing notes (with basic information about the checkpoints — see Section 4.2).
- Checkpoint procedures (for checking walkers, retirements, transport, communications, opening and closing, contact phone numbers, etc. – see Section 4.2).
- Checkpoint equipment lists (detailing equipment to be supplied by the event, by the marshals, and on site — see this appendix).
- Food checklist.
- Copy of letter giving permission to use site.
- General event information including location of other checkpoints, etc.
- Event rules.
- Event risk assessment.
- Route description,
- List (and perhaps rota) of marshals at the checkpoint.

3. Marshalling

- List of entrants (numerical /alphabetical order).
- Checklists (numerical /chronological order).
- Other documentation (see Section 4.2).
- Clipboards.
- Pens, pencils, orienteering punches.
- Computer (including power supply), scanners, etc. if electronic recording is used, including full documentation of the recording system and passwords.
- Grouping cards.
- Signs for inside and outside checkpoint or materials to make and erect signs (wood, card, paper, marker pens, insulating tape, sticky tape, drawing pins, string, hammer, nails, etc.).
- Marshals' tabards, armbands.

4. Catering

- Water containers (large) with short hose for filling.
- Jugs for serving water.
- Squash.
- Matches.
- Kettles (for marshals).
- Tea bags, coffee sachets, milk (individual sachets).
- Urn.
- Factory sealed food.

- Ingredients for a simple meal overseen by an individual with professional catering credentials.
- Microwave.

5. Other

- Hand sanitiser for use of all marshals and walkers.
- Sanitising wipes and/or disinfectant for cleaning surfaces, etc.
- Surgical gloves.
- Rented portable toilets.
- Toilet paper.
- Toilet cleaning materials.
- Lights (LED camping lights and spare batteries, or Tilley/Gas lamps and spare fuel).
- Torches for staff (with spare bulbs and batteries).
- Correct coins for meters and phone.
- Mobile phone.
- Rubbish sacks.
- First aid kit.
- Bowls, buckets, cloths, tissues, disinfectant, sanitizer,
- Clearing up kit (broom, mop, bucket, cloths, dustpan/brush, sponges).

Appendix E - Clothing and equipment for entrants

The list below gives typical clothing and equipment requirements for entrants. This list does not cover winter hill or mountain walking requirements, nor should it be regarded as a definitive list.

- Rucksack.
- Adequate footwear (with adequate tread for the terrain and worst conditions).
- Waterproof and windproof jacket (with taped seams and hood).
- Waterproof trousers or waterproof over-trousers.
- Fleece, sweater and/or extra base layer.
- Hat (not Bandana/Buff).
- Gloves.
- Food adequate for the entire route, for longer walks sealed food parcel to send to designated checkpoints depending on arrangements set out in event details.
- Emergency food e.g. chocolate bars.
- Resealable drinks bottle (minimum 0.5 litre).
- Mug.
- Compass with dial calibrated in degrees.
- OS (or equivalent) map(s) covering the entire route and a waterproof map case (or plastic bag). Alternatively, an electronic device that can display maps going at least 1 mile on either side of the route, with adequate power supply for the entire event.
- Route description (hard copy or electronic with adequate power supply) with protection from bad weather.
- Torch (with batteries adequate to cover the total number of hours of darkness for the entire event). Even for shorter 'daytime' walks it is good practice to carry a torch. Many walkers will carry a smaller backup torch for overnight walks.
- Working whistle.
- Reflective material on back of rucksack or on clothing visible from behind (advised for both daytime and night walking).
- Personal first aid kit (should normally include plasters, adhesive dressing, antiseptic wipes, fixation tape and low adherent dressing, any tablets or lotions that might be needed for personal requirements, and perhaps some small bandages and safety pins).
- Survival bag or small bivvy bag (a space blanket is generally considered inadequate).
- Hand sanitizer and face covering to meet specific Covid-19 risk mitigation instructions.
- Mobile phone.

- Sun cream.
- Pencil and paper.

Appendix F - Useful contacts

- Adventure Activities Licensing Authority (AALA). www.hse.gov.uk/aala/
- Country Land and Business Association (CLA), 16 Belgrave Square, London SW1X 8PQ. Tel: 020 7235 0511. www.cla.org.uk
- Fell Runners Association, fellrunner.org.uk
Forestry Commission, 620 Bristol Business Park, Coldharbour Lane Bristol BS16 1EJ. Tel: 0300 067 4000. www.gov.uk/government/organisations/forestry-commission
- Forestry and Land Scotland, 1 Highlander Way, Inverness Business Park, Inverness IV2 7GB. Tel: 0300 067 6000. forestryandland.gov.scot
- Long Distance Walkers Association, General Secretary secretary@ldwa.org.uk ; Membership Secretary membership@ldwa.org.uk ; Challenge Events Secretary events@ldwa.org.uk ; www.ldwa.org.uk
- National Farmers Union, NFU HQ, Agriculture House, Stoneleigh Park, Stoneleigh, Warwickshire CV8 2TZ. Tel: 0370 845 8458 www.nfuonline.com
- National Parks UK, Plas y Ffynnon, Cambrian Way, Brecon LD3 7HP. <http://www.nationalparks.uk/home>
- National Trust, Heelis, Kemble Drive, Swindon SN2 2NA. Tel: 01793 817400. www.nationaltrust.org.uk
- National Trust for Scotland, Hermiston Quay, 5 Cultins Road, Edinburgh EH11 4DF. 0131 458 0200. www.nts.org.uk
- Natural England, Head Office, 4th Floor, Foss House, Kings Pool, 1-2 Peasholme Green, York YO1 7PX. Tel: 0300 060 3900. [Natural England](http://www.naturalengland.org.uk)
- Natural Resources Wales / Cyfoeth Naturiol Cymru, Ty Cambria, 29 Newport Rd., Cardiff CF24 0TP. Tel: 0300 065 3000. <https://naturalresources.wales/?lang&lang=en>
- Natural England, Head Office, 1 East Parade, Sheffield S1 2ET. Tel: 0114 241 8920. www.naturalengland.org.uk
- Ordnance Survey, Explorer House, Adanac Drive, Southampton SO16 0AS. Tel: 03456 050505. www.ordnancesurvey.co.uk
- RAYNET-UK (Radio Amateur Emergency Network) RAYNET-UK, 9 Conigre, Chinnor, Oxfordshire OX39 4JY. www.raynet-uk.net
- Ramblers, 2nd Floor, Camelford House, 87-90 Albert Embankment, London SE1 7TW. Tel: 0207 339 8500. www.ramblers.org.uk
- Sport England www.sportengland.org ; Sport Scotland sportscotland.org.uk ; Sport Wales www.sport.wales; Sport Northern Ireland <http://www.sportni.net/>
- Scottish Natural Heritage, Great Glen House, Leachkin Road, Inverness IV3 8NW. Tel: 01463 725000. www.nature.scot
- Scottish Rights of Way and Access Society, 24 Annandale Street, Edinburgh EH7 4AN. Tel: 0131 558 1222. www.scotways.com
- Trail Running Association. www.tra-uk.org

Appendix G - Useful books and websites

- *Strider* (Long Distance Walkers Association magazine, distributed to members 3 times a year, also available to members on the LDWA website at www.ldwa.org.uk/strider)
- *The UK Trailwalker's Handbook*, 8th edition, edited by Paul Lawrence, Les Maple & John Sparshatt for the LDWA (Cicerone)
- *The Law of Access to Land in Scotland* (Scottish Rights of Way and Access Society)
- *Mountaincraft and Leadership* by Eric Langmuir (4th Ed., Mountain Training Boards of England and Scotland)
- *First Aid Manual* (10th Ed., Authorised manual of the voluntary aid societies, published by Dorling Kindersley)
- *How to Organise the Hundred* (in LDWA [Toolkit](#))
- [Outdoor UK Challenge Events](#) (Institute of Fundraising)

- [UKA Guide to Cross Country Event Organisation](#) (United Kingdom Athletics)
- [How to Organise a Walking Event](#) (Walk for Life)
- [Organised Event Guidance](#) (Peak District National Park)
- [Adventure Activities Licensing](#) (Health and Safety Executive)
- [Rights of Way and Accessing Land](#) (Government information sheet)
- [Access and Rights of Way](#) (Natural England and other bodies)
- [Scottish Outdoor Access Code](#) (Scottish Natural Heritage)
- [Ramblers Policy](#) (Information on access and rights of way across Britain)
- [Countryside Code](#) (Natural England)
- [Countryside Code](#) (Natural Resources Wales)
- [Safeguarding](#) (Sport England)
- [Sport Scotland COVID training module](#)

Appendix H - Key role profiles

This appendix gives brief summaries of the duties that the main members of an organizing committee may need to cover. For a large event, some roles could be split and for a long overnight event some deputies will be needed to allow for rest periods. For a small event, not all these roles will be needed or some might be combined, and not all the duties listed will be relevant.

Role Profile – Event Organiser

Duties

1. To identify, coordinate and harness a team whose experience, skills and commitment will deliver an LDWA ‘challenge event’ that will exceed the expectations of participants and supporters and enhance the reputation of the LDWA.
2. To make the best use of committee members and helpers in the light of the skills each has to offer, ensuring that all tasks are covered and each person knows what is expected of them and when.
3. To ensure that the risk assessment is written and followed, any relevant permits are obtained and that communication with Safety Advisory Groups, Parish Councils etc. are organised and requests fulfilled.
4. To take overall responsibility for ensuring that the event has appropriate measures in place to mitigate the risk of transmission of Covid-19.
5. To ensure the event meets its budgetary targets and satisfies the conclusions of the risk analysis.
6. To oversee preparations for the event and the running of the event on the day.
7. To decide how to address any significant problems or emergencies that arise on the day.
8. To learn and implement lessons from previous events and capture lessons for future event organisers.
9. To ensure everyone involved has fun and goes away with positive memories.

Qualities needed

The Wisdom of Solomon, the patience of Job and massive amounts of tact and diplomacy! The ability to cajole, persuade, bite your tongue and never ever forget that all the helpers are volunteers and can walk away at a moment’s notice. Your decisions will be questioned, someone always has the opposing view and will not be deterred from challenging you and you need to accept that they will sometimes be right. Delegation is key but be prepared to do a job yourself if all other avenues of delegation have failed. Thus check, recheck and then check again that people have done what they promised and be prepared to be disappointed in some people.

Role Profile – Catering Organiser

Overall

To arrange for the provision of catering in a safe and hygienic way. Paying specific regard to putting appropriate measures in place to mitigate the risk of Covid-19 transmission

Role Profile – Entries Secretary

Duties

1. To set up the entry mechanism, either electronic or using paper entry forms (or both).
2. To collate all applications to the events (both main event and marshals' event), and if appropriate checking that entrants are suitably qualified to enter.
3. To prepare event paperwork for the registration process and for checkpoints.
4. To liaise in the compilation of the results.

Before the event

1. Advertise event appropriately, locally and/or nationally, including ensuring the event is listed in Strider and on the LDWA website.
2. If online entry is to be used, identify which entry management system to use (e.g. SI Entries), and advertise the website address.
3. Liaise with Treasurer to obtain event bank account details for online entries.
4. Prepare entry forms and/ or online entry material including the Event Rules and other details.
5. Ensure that entrants are aware of any specific measures in place to mitigate the risk of Covid-19 transmission. E.g. provide their own food, sanitiser, mask and first aid kit.
6. For LDWA group events with concessionary rates for members, use LDWA local group secretary restricted access to the LDWA Admin pages to confirm whether applicants are LDWA members. Query any doubts with the LDWA Membership Secretary.
7. Set up a master spreadsheet to include following, as appropriate, as entrants apply.
 - Number of entrant (perhaps temporary until alphabetical list can be produced).
 - Name, address of entrant.
 - Start time (if there are several options).
 - LDWA membership number (if concessions apply) with check for validity.
 - Qualifying event (if required) with check for validity.
 - Details of emergency contact.
 - Number of mobile phone if carried on event.
 - Medical Conditions/Allergies.
 - Dietary requirements.
 - Entrant to remain anonymous on published material?
8. Shortly before event print off details of every entry and put in file for ease of access on the day if emergency contact details/medical conditions/dietary requirements are needed. (Please be aware of GDPR and only allow certain individuals access to these files whilst ensuring immediate access if required.)
9. Provide list of entrants in appropriate form if an electronic recording system is to be used.
10. Design tally cards to include entrant's number, emergency phone number, spaces for clips at all staffed and unstaffed checkpoints and kit checks, and a bar code if scanning is used. IF GPS tracking is to be used then ensure that trackers are obtained.
11. Once final entry list is known submit tally to printers for printing in a waterproof format. If entries on the day are allowed some unnamed tallies will be needed.
12. If there is a baggage point, create baggage labels to be handed out at registration with numbers on. Conventionally RED for bags to remain at HQ and GREEN for bags to go to the baggage checkpoint.
13. Print off registration sheets with list of entrants for the registration desks. Divide entrants into blocks of at most 100 for each desk to make registration manageable.
14. Print off recording sheets for all checkpoints (chronological sheets to record arrivals and numerical/alphabetical sheets for collating times).
15. Print off sheets for Control Desk /Sweepers / Baggage Team

On the day of the event

1. Supervise the Registration Desk process and be available to resolve any enquiries.
2. Amend the paperwork to reflect non-starters / change of start times and update all paperwork. Liaise with the Event Management System Manager to ensure computer work is accurate.

After the event

1. Liaise with other officers as appropriate to produce results, ensuring that anonymous entrants are not named.
2. Ensure that walkers details are uploaded onto the LDWA server for insurance purposes or to comply with any government guidance around 'track and trace'.

Role Profile – Transport Coordinator

Objectives

1. To make recommendations to the committee on the number of vehicles required and to procure them. To advise on transport budget. For a small event cars might suffice, for a large event minibuses or vans may be needed.
2. To ensure that enough qualified drivers are identified and fully briefed.
3. To ensure that transport of personnel is done in a safe manner, paying particular attention to any measures to mitigate the risk of Covid-19 transmission.
4. To liaise with the Checkpoint Coordinator to support their needs.
5. If there is a baggage checkpoint, to liaise with the baggage team and provide appropriate vehicles for their needs.

Before the event :

For a small, shorter event

1. Identify cars and drivers that can deliver equipment and personnel (cars belonging to the checkpoint team may be adequate), and that can ensure retirees can be returned to HQ promptly.

For a larger event

1. Assess the cars and drivers that may be available to deliver equipment and personnel to checkpoints. In that light consider how many minibuses will be required to ensure an efficient and safe transportation process, bearing in mind the route, its rural nature etc.
2. Identify a company that will hire minibuses and, if there is a baggage checkpoint, Luton style vans suitable for baggage and be prepared to receive them back on completion.
3. Create a schedule so that minibuses visit checkpoints on a rotational basis to collect retirees and return them to Walk HQ to avoid unnecessary long delays.
4. Identify volunteers to act as drivers/navigators/helpers and draw up rota to ensure all drivers get adequate sleep through the event (8 hrs on/8 hrs off is suggested).
5. Obtain driving licences (not copies) from volunteer minibus drivers ahead of event to ensure smooth booking / collection of minibuses.
6. Identify 24 hour garages for refueling of vehicles.
7. Liaise with Checkpoint Coordinator and obtain postcodes for all checkpoints to assist with navigation by Satnav during event. Provide maps showing routes to and between checkpoints and a master map for HQ with pins to show the current location of minibuses and vans.
8. Liaise with HQ Coordinator to identify quiet location for drivers to sleep/rest.

On the day of the event

1. The Transport Coordinator should not be a driver for the event but should be at HQ to coordinate and oversee the transport needs of the event.
2. Brief transport volunteers.

3. Arrange for equipment to be transported to/from checkpoints in coordination with the Catering Coordinator and Checkpoint Coordinator.
4. Arrange to transport sweepers to locations on the route in coordination with the Sweeper Coordinator.
5. Make sure that transport can be sent to pick up a retiree from any road accessible point on or near the route if, exceptionally, they are unable to reach a checkpoint to retire.
6. Arrange for rubbish to be collected from checkpoints as they close in coordination with the Checkpoint Coordinator.
7. If main car parking is not near the event HQ, arrange a shuttle between the car park and HQ before the start and afterwards for finishers. Consider arranging transport from/to a local station or bus station.

Role Profile – Sweep Coordinator

Objectives

1. Ensure the route is adequately swept and coordinate procedures to locate entrants who have left one checkpoint and not arrived at the next.
2. Help make this a safe event for all entrants.
3. Ensure that support is provided to entrants at the back of the field and encourage them to reach checkpoints before they are timed out, or diplomatically suggest that they might retire.
4. Ensure that waymarking and any litter that might be attributed to the walk is removed, that gates, etc. are left in an appropriate state, and that any encounters with farmers or landowners are dealt with diplomatically.

Before the event

1. Depending on the length of the walk, divide the route into sweep sections of about 20 miles each starting and finishing at a checkpoint.
2. Seek volunteers for sweepers, taking account of preferences e.g. some may not be confident to sweep at night sections.
3. Identify sweep teams for each sweep section. Teams will comprise at least two sweepers, at least one of whom should have walked the route before (perhaps on the marshals' walk) and have some familiarity with the area around the sweep section. If appropriate liaise with RAYNET or other communications provider about a radio sweeper.
4. Identify emergency sweepers who can stand in due to non-availability of a sweeper on the day or if a search party is required.
5. Ensure the sweepers have a route description and map of the route area. Brief the sweep teams on any specific hazards or areas of navigation difficulty.
6. Ensure that the sweep teams are equipped to cope with an emergency taking into account any measures to mitigate the risk of Covid-19 transmission, including carrying spare clothing and perhaps a sleeping bag or bivvy tent, basic first aid materials, etc.
7. Ensure that sweepers carry a mobile phone and have phone numbers of HQ and checkpoints. Collate a list of sweepers' numbers which should be copied to control.
8. Instruct sweepers on the time they should report to HQ or the start of their sweep section, when they are likely to start sweeping and the time they might expect to finish.

On the day of the event

1. Be based at HQ, except when delivering and collecting sweepers. Unless agreed otherwise sweepers should report to HQ prior to their sweep duties.
2. Ensure sweepers are transported to and from the checkpoints they are sweeping between.
3. Usually all transport of sweepers will be provided by the Sweep Coordinator, otherwise liaise with the Transport Coordinator to provide assistance.
4. If a sweeper does not arrive or is unable to sweep arrange for an emergency sweeper to be available.
5. Brief each sweep team before they set off. This must include:
 - Emergency procedure on finding injured or incapacitated entrant.
 - Procedure if missing entrant when arriving at checkpoint.

Confirmation they have their mobile phones and the emergency phone numbers.

6. If an entrant is missing and there is concern for their safety, arrange in coordination with control, for sweepers (or emergency sweepers) to search on and near the route.
7. Monitor progress of last entrants and if they are reaching checkpoints significantly ahead of closing times then arrange for the sweepers to start their section earlier than planned.
8. Look after your sweepers. Ensure that they are returned to HQ after they finish their section and are thanked for their efforts. They should be able to have checkpoint food and refreshments when they return to HQ.

Role Profile – Route Coordinator

Objectives

1. To create a route that is appropriate for the event and is suitable for maintaining social distancing.
2. To produce a route description that will enable entrants to navigate their way along the route in conjunction with a map and compass.
3. To produce accurate GPX files for use by entrants who use GPS devices.
4. To produce a route risk assessment identifying and mitigating against potential dangers to entrants.

Before the event

1. Coordinate the route team to produce a draft route description (main event and marshals' event) and route Risk Assessment.
2. Coordinate checkers to check draft route descriptions for accuracy and provide.
3. Appoint one person writes the final route description to ensure consistency of style.
4. To arrange for the route to be walked and a GPX file produced for use by entrants and by the webmaster for displaying the route on a digital map.
5. Identify locations where path clearance may be required and to liaise with the appropriate local authorities or landowners where necessary.
6. Identify where short-cuts might be taken and determine 'unstaffed' checkpoint locations.
7. To highlight where route passes through private land where access has been negotiated for the event and to withhold this from public facing route descriptions until a month before event. In doing so, to provide an alternative route to prevent trespassing in advance of the main event.
8. To make any final revisions to the route description following feedback from the marshals' walk.
9. To walk the entire route personally to get a detailed understanding of the route and potential issues.
10. To write the route part of the Risk Assessment identifying specific issues and outlining what will be done to mitigate potential dangers.
11. Arrange for delivery of notifications (by post, email, or by hand) to landowners, residents, businesses, etc. located on or near the route before event Including:
 - Drafting notification.
 - Developing and maintaining record of landowners, farms, businesses to be notified.
 - Keeping a record of how landowners, farms, businesses were notified (hand delivered, email, post).
12. Source, and arrange for installation of signage, waymarking, and for an overnight event, illuminated wands and reflective discs.
13. To work with the Event Organiser to prepare presentation on event / route / route risk assessment for delivery to Safety Advisory Group (see Section 2.7) to satisfy them that event is well organised and will have limited impact upon emergency services / Local Authority.

During the event

1. Lead on sorting any issues to do with the route. Coordinate installation and removal of en route signage, waymarking, illuminated wands and reflective discs.

Role Profile – Control Desk Coordinator

Objectives

1. To deal with all reported incidents and emergencies in a timely, effective and efficient manner prioritising multiple incidents as required.
2. To ensure and coordinate the safe and successful completion of the event.

Before the event

1. Prepare a rota for staffing control, ideally teams of two to alleviate pressure and in eight hour shifts.
2. Ensure that adequate and reliable communications channels are available, e.g. landline phones, mobile phones, RAYNET, a central email address for checkpoints to communicate with.
3. Ensure that computers and software are set up as required, including PACER or GPS tracking etc. if used.
4. Ensure that checkpoints are issued with emergency and non-emergency contact telephone numbers.
5. Prepare agreed procedures to deal with possible incidents:
 - Timing out of entrants.
 - Managing Retirees / Lost entrants,
 - Reported minor injuries.
 - Identified route issues.
 - Identified checkpoint issues.
 - Checkpoint closures.
 - Complaints.
 - Serious injury / death.
6. Work closely with other main coordinators to ensure that the Control Desk is in possession of all documented information needed to handle any potential incident, including
 - Transport Coordinator – Minibus Schedule.
 - Checkpoint Coordinator – List of emergency and non-emergency medical facilities local to each checkpoint.
 - Checkpoint Coordinator – List of shops and opening times within vicinity of each checkpoint.
 - Checkpoint Coordinator – List of all checkpoint caretakers and contact numbers.
 - Sweeper Coordinator – Details of sweepers and sections to be covered.
 - Entries Coordinator – Copies of entry forms including numbers of mobile phones carried by walkers and any medical details.
7. Compile a contact list for all volunteers.
8. Brief volunteers assigned to work on the Control Desk.

On the main event

1. Act as single point of contact for all event and HQ issues.
2. Deal with each incident in a timely, effective and efficient manner, prioritising as required.
3. Coordinate all communications with available communications channels.
4. Maintain contact with all transport vehicles and agree their next journey or standby location.
5. Maintain a written chronological log of incidents and calls as they occur.
6. Co-ordinate regularly with checkpoints and maintain a log of checkpoint status, e.g., marshals on site, checkpoint ready, checkpoint open, agreement for checkpoint to close.
7. Maintain a log of retirees waiting at each checkpoint and update as they are collected.
8. Coordinate transport to collect retirees.
9. Receive calls from injured entrants, identify their location and dispatch transport for their collection.
10. Maintain a close working relationship with the Event Team / Finish Team regarding entrant progress and retirements.
11. Maintain a repository for found property, if possible recording where each item was found.

Role Profile – Checkpoint Organiser

Objectives

1. To identify and book appropriately located, resourced and accessible checkpoints for the main event and perhaps the marshals' walk.

Before the event

1. In partnership with the route planning co-ordinator, determine approximate locations and stage distances for checkpoints and identify possible checkpoints and assess their suitability, taking all factors into account.
2. Once checkpoints are identified, book and confirm in writing all proposed indoor checkpoints, agreeing cost.
3. Make hall booking secretaries / committees aware of the nature and duration of the event, and liaise to ensure that residents are not disturbed, particularly during night and early morning.
4. Re-check bookings with hall secretaries / committees several months before the event.
5. For outdoor checkpoint locations, identify and liaise with landowners or other authorities for permission to site and operate a checkpoint.
6. Decide checkpoint opening and closing times in conjunction with other officers.
7. Discuss communication with the checkpoints with the communications team, including RAYNET if used.
8. Provide detailed information about resources at each checkpoint, identifying shortfalls of equipment, or facilities such as toilets, determine need for portable toilets.
9. Agree what additional equipment and facilities will be needed.
10. Produce checkpoint notes for each checkpoint for marshals and HQ, including details of access, parking, addresses and telephone numbers of key holders, times of opening and closing, WiFi passwords, etc.
11. Provide each Checkpoint Coordinator with checkpoint notes and details long enough beforehand to ensure that they are fully briefed so that they can coordinate their checkpoint teams with the minimum left until the day of the event, particularly in relation to measures in place to mitigate the risk of covid-19 transmission.
12. Make arrangements for checkpoint opening and closing teams to visit each location at opening and closing times.
13. Be aware of what can go wrong and be prepared to make last minute changes if necessary.

On the Event

1. To be at HQ initially, and be easily contactable at all times during the event.
2. To be mobile and have some load capacity for emergency transport of goods and equipment.
3. To work closely with the Control Desk Coordinator and Transport Coordinator.
4. To work closely with the Communication Manager ensuring efficient and timely operation of checkpoints.

Role Profile – Treasurer

Objectives

1. Exercise financial control on the event and ensure that the finances are properly managed.

Before the event

1. Set up a bank account for the event if there is not already one for the group or body organising the event.
2. Liaise with all key stakeholders and identify their potential financial requirements.
3. Prepare and maintain a budget for the event.
4. Maintain a proper set of accounts, backed up by receipts.
5. Pay booking fees for halls, deposits for minibuses, etc.

On the event

1. Ensure sufficient cash / or other float is available for expenses such as fuel or catering purchases.
2. Ensure ALL receipts are obtained and kept.

After the event

1. Ensure that all outstanding loans and bills are paid promptly.
2. Arrange for the retention or dispersal of any surplus funds in consultation with the Organising Committee.
3. Produce a final set of accounts.