



EAST CHESHIRE RAMBLERS PROTOCOL FOR VULNERABLE WALKERS

A. PRINCIPLES

1. A group walk needs to be safe, enjoyable, and inclusive for everyone.
2. Walks are planned and led by volunteers
3. We need to understand the individual needs of a walker to plan for a good walking experience for all
4. East Cheshire Ramblers will do its best to support full participation of everyone. However, there may be circumstances when walkers with disabilities/specific needs may not be accommodated due to the type of walk or a lack of appropriate and reasonable support available. Sometimes we have to say a walk is not suitable, but this does not necessarily mean every walk is unsuitable
5. The key is for both sides to consider what can be reasonably expected

B. PROTOCOLS

In order to secure these principles East Cheshire Ramblers has agreed a set of protocols to secure both inclusion and enjoyment for ALL walkers.

1. East Cheshire Ramblers has a bank of experienced Walk Leaders and a varied walk programme. The walker or carer will need to contact the relevant Walk Coordinator to establish the suitability of each walk
2. Disabled/vulnerable walkers can bring someone along to support them on the walk, when it's appropriate and safe to do so. Please note that ECR may not be able to provide support on every walk.
3. It is reasonable for ECR not to offer additional support if they choose not to do so. However, if walks can accommodate a person with specific needs then this is also great!
4. Local Wellbeing Walks, where such walks are available, might be more suitable. Again, this needs to be assessed on a case-by-case basis

If additional support is required, the disabled/vulnerable person/carers should be able to identify this from other sources e.g. a social worker or specific charities.

C. THE RESPONSIBLE ADULT/CARER/PARTNER MUST:

1. Provide a contact phone number and the name and phone number of person who can act as an emergency contact.
2. Provide confirmation that the vulnerable person is capable of coping with the normal conditions of a walk with a Walking Buddy for additional support.
3. Ensure that any prescription medication is taken before and after the walk.
4. Ensure the vulnerable person has sufficient food, drinks and clothing for the length of walk and weather conditions.
5. Ensure they are contactable during the day if the Walk Leader has to contact them for any reason.
6. Arrive on time to collect the vulnerable person at the end of the walk.
7. If a friend or adult accompanies the vulnerable person they must ensure they comply with the above and walk under the direction of the Walk Leader at all times.
8. Be aware that if the vulnerable person needs somebody to be responsible for them, then they must provide a Carer to walk with them.

D. BEFORE THE WALK

1. Walks are posted on the East Cheshire Website at least four days before the walk date.
2. The responsible adult/carer/partner identifies a walk on ECR website.
3. The responsible adult/carer/partner contacts the Walk Coordinator **at least 4 days** before the walk and explains what kind of individual support is required. Ideally, they have already identified a 'Buddy' to walk with the vulnerable person.

Long Walks Weekend	John Galligan	john.galligan@btinternet.com	phone
Long Walks Midweek	Anne Ball	anne.e.ball@googlemail.com	01625 520030
Medium Walks Weekend	Paul Higinbotham	paulhiginbotham@yahoo.com	
Medium Walks Midweek	Andy Davies	Maggie Swindells Chair	07729327940
Short Walks Weekend	Jane Gay	maggieswindells@gmail.com	
Short Walks Midweek	Dave Collorick		

4. The Walk Coordinator/Chair contacts the relevant walk leader and explains that the vulnerable adult wishes to join their walk. It is the Walk Leader's right, as a volunteer, to have the final decision as to who can attend their walks. The Walk Leader's responsibilities remain the same and are clearly defined in the Ramblers Walk Leaders' Checklist. The Walk Leader is covered by Ramblers Insurance, as long as a risk assessment has been undertaken.
5. If the carer/partner has done their utmost, but been unable to provide a buddy, the Walk Leader and Walk Coordinator will do their best to seek a member of the group who is prepared to act as the vulnerable walker's buddy. **This might not always be possible.** The buddy must not be the Walk Leader or Back Marker. The Walking Buddy's role is to supplement the role of the Back Marker, to ensure that the vulnerable person doesn't become detached from the group, and to provide additional oversight to monitor whether the vulnerable person needs help, for example guiding over a difficult section of terrain.
6. After the walk, the Walk Leader provides a short feedback email/phone call to the Walk Coordinator to report any issues.