

Swansea University Hiking Club

Equipment and Safety Guidelines for Committee Members and Walk Officials

These are guidelines and not rules. Although they have been put together to guide safe practise within Swansea University Hiking Club, they should be used at the discretion of walks officials and committee members.

The term "Official" refers to designated individuals who hold responsibilities for the duration of a Club walk. All groups must have at least two officials: a "Walk Leader" and a "Backmarker". The responsibilities of each of these Officials are outlined in sections I-IV below.

At least one qualified First Aider must be present in every group.

I. Responsibilities for the Committee

1. To insure that these guidelines are kept to and that a copy of these guidelines is given to appropriate parties.
2. To insure that there are appropriate Officials for each walk.
3. To insure that there are First Aider in each group.
4. To set maximum number of people for each walk and to keep to them.
5. Assign someone to check the weather forecast.
6. Ensure suitable club equipment is available for the walk.
7. Assign someone to produce a route card, check that it is suitable and has suitable poor weather alternative.
8. Ensure that sufficient copies of the route card are made and distributed to:
 - Walk Officials.
 - An independent person who could raise the alarm in case of the group failing to return in reasonable time.
 - The Walks Folder.

II. Responsibilities for Walk Leaders

1. Lead and navigate in a way appropriate to the prevailing conditions.
2. Insure that the appropriate club equipment is carried in the group.
3. To designate other Officials in the group to aid in the smooth running of the walk.
4. To know the number of walkers in the group and to periodically check that they are all accounted for.
5. To know who the qualified First Aider is and to know whom is carrying the Club first aid kit.
6. Introduce themselves to the group and inform the group about the planned route, including the length, severity and planned lunch and finishing times.
7. To check the weather forecast on the day of the walk, and alter the planned route if necessary (notifying other Officials and Committee Members of any changes).
8. To be in sight of and in verbal contact with the Backmarker at all times during the walk.
9. To carry a whistle, compass and relevant map(s).

III. Responsibilities for Backmarkers

1. To follow the route and to ensure that the Walk Leader is following the route correctly.
2. To be able to take over from the leader if the need arises.
3. To ensure that nobody drops behind and inform the walk leader if a stop is needed.
4. To be aware of the condition of the group members, especially on long walks or in poor conditions.
5. To be in sight of and in verbal contact with the Walk Leader at all times during the walk.
6. To carry a whistle, compass and relevant map(s).

IV. Responsibilities for Committee Members and Other Officials

1. To be aware of the condition of the group members, especially on long walks or in poor conditions and to report problems to the Leader and Backmarker.
2. To aid in the cohesion of the group, particularly where the group size is large or visibility is poor.

V. Club equipment to be carried within each group

It is the responsibility of the committee to supply and the walk leader to check that the following equipment when appropriate is carried on walks:

- Relevant maps, compasses and whistles.
- Route Card
- First aid kits with Emergency card.
- Survival shelter.
- Torches

All club equipment must be returned to the Vice-Chairman after be walk.

VI. Size of Groups

For safety reasons a minimum of 4 people per group.

Group size is primarily determined by the number of committee or approved walk officials present. As guidelines the group size should not exceed the following numbers per two walk officials.

A Walks: 30 people.

B Walks: 20 people.

C Walks: 15 people.

In poor weather conditions, additional officials should be present at the discretion of Walk Leaders.