

Spring Vale Rambling Class Darwen

Health and Safety Policy

Statement of Policy

This Health and Safety Policy for the Spring Vale Rambling Class Darwen (also known as Spring Vale Ramblers or the Club) is designed to prevent accidents and to provide adequate control of risks arising from our walks for walk leaders, participants, and members of the public.

It adopts the risk management guidelines of the Ramblers, the nation charity for walkers, for each activity where they are applicable.

This policy has been reviewed and approved by the Officers of the Club and will be reviewed to reflect current best practice.

1. Spring Vale Rambling Class is committed to ensuring, within reason, the safety and well-being of its members whilst participating in its programme of walks.
2. The organisation accepts no responsibility for the safety and well-being of its members whilst travelling to and from a walk and at a location having completed the walk.
3. In registering for membership of Spring Vale Rambling Class Darwen newcomers are requested to reveal any health issues which may affect their ability to complete a walk. The Committee reserves the right to refuse any person, whose health issues are a serious cause for concern, until that person has sought guidance from a medical professional.
4. Walks are clearly graded according to distance and level of challenge. It is the responsibility of the participant to opt for those walks they are confident is within their capability. Reference should be made to the Walks Syllabus and the Risk Assessment document which will set out the risks involved.
5. Members are encouraged to carry 'In Case of Emergency (I.C.E.)' cards.
6. Members are expected to act in a manner that is conducive to their own safety and well-being and to that of other persons.
7. All walks are planned to keep to public footpaths, footways and permissive routes or on land designated as Open Access.
8. All routes will be subject to seasonal risk assessments which will take note of such things as ground conditions, possible trip hazards, obstructions, vegetation and ground works.
9. Prior to commencing a walk, participants will be given an update on aspects of health and safety pertaining to that walk. If relevant, reminders relating to additional precautionary measures, e.g. bottles of water in hot conditions, may be given.
10. In the event of bad weather the Walk Leaders retain the right to cancel a walk if conditions are deemed unsafe, e.g. snow, ice, high winds or high tides in relation to flooding.
11. No walk will assemble at a location where due to the number of participants it may create a danger to individuals e.g. a roadside without a footway.
12. Walks will be undertaken by at least two volunteers – a leader and a back marker. The back marker will be identified by the leader and when needed, mid-markers will also be utilised.

13. Official leaders will have available and will wear high-visibility vests when the route condition demands additional precautions.
14. Official leaders will carry a basic First Aid kit on all walks. If required, the availability of a First Aid App on a mobile phone (British Red Cross or St John Ambulance) would be advantageous.
15. When walking on highways without footways, walkers may be asked, as per the Highway Code, to walk in single file and on the right so as to face oncoming traffic. The Walk Leader wearing the high-visibility vest will walk at the front. Occasionally, when it may be safer to walk on the left e.g. blind bends, the back marker wearing the high-visibility vest will walk at the very back. At all times it is intended that the group should be as visible as possible to all approaching traffic.
16. Whilst a walk is underway, the fastest walkers will be instructed not to walk in front of the official Walk Leader. The back marker will walk with the slowest walkers.
17. Cafes and Public Houses are frequently visited immediately after the walks. Although pleasant 'after walk' social occasions are enjoyed by most participants, they are not part of the official Spring Vale Rambling Class Darwen walk.
18. In the unlikely event of an accident, the details will be recorded in an accident book which will be retained by the Secretary.
19. The club, from time to time, may publish additional or updated advice to members in the walk syllabus or on the club website. Visit: www.springvaleramblers.co.uk

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