

## **Brunel Group: Walk Leader's Checklist**

Before the Walk – N.B. Leaders must be paid-up RA members

*Choose the Route (which can be from a book of walks)*

- area, length/timing, circular/linear, consider terrain/elevation/ascent/season and decide provisional “boot” level (see programme notes for definition of these)
- plan: car parking (could walk start point be accessible by public transport?), timings, lunch options, rest stops, bad weather alternatives/. Research points of interest
- choose the meeting point in Bristol (if possible accessible to public transport) - regular meeting points are: Water Tower on the Downs; Somerfield car park, Bradley Stoke; the car park opposite St Mary Redcliffe
- if the leader is not Bristol-based, consider obtaining services of someone who can co-ordinate a Bristol meeting point.
- choose a pub (though teashops also go down well, principally on the shorter walks) to go to after the walk.

*Pre-Walk*

- if possible with do this with your back-marker, or perhaps a potential new leader
- walk the full route, note critical navigation points, check car parking, timings, lunch options, rest and toilet stops, distance and grading.

The week before

- Make sure you have a group first aid kit (or your own if you are prepared to offer that for the use of others) or that someone with a group one will definitely be there
- Be prepared for telephone queries; newcomers may want chapter and verse about the group, as well as the walk. Also be ready to advise whether dogs are acceptable.
- Some callers may want lifts to the meeting point. Be as helpful as possible, take their number, and if you know of someone in their area who may be walking, ring that person.

### The day before

- Check and assess weather forecast, review alternative routes if necessary
- Check personal gear and first aid kit
- If applicable, check public transport, warn pub if necessary

### On the day – at the meeting point/start

- If applicable, be prepared with directions/maps to the start of the walk
- Be early, be welcoming, especially to newcomers
- Check fitness and equipment of party, identify anyone with special needs
- Appoint a back-marker if you want to
- Look after non-RA people, give membership details
- Advise dog-owners if you wish the dogs to be kept on leads.
- Introduction: welcome, yourself, back-marker, walk details, points of special interest, refreshments and rest stops, estimated return time
- Count party and signal the start

### On the Day – During the Walk

- Set a pace reasonable for the party. Watch for stragglers, and reduce the pace if necessary. Don't allow walkers racing ahead to set a pace above the grade and that required for the walk. If you are not at the front, make sure those at the front always know when they should stop and wait for others to catch up.
- Keep an eye on timings
- Always give clear instructions at critical points, e.g. where to go for lunch/tea-stops, where and when to re-assemble.
- Always wait at hill-tops for everyone to recover their breath, and allow sufficient water stops, particularly in the summer.
- Be alert to problems (individual, weather, road walking etc.), involve others in the party as necessary, although remember there will be times when you need to decide what to do and when leaving it to the group is inappropriate.

### At the end of the walk

- Check everyone has returned and can get home.
- Report any incidents and obstructions (see links on the website)