

SKIBBEREEN WALKING GROUP (SWG)

GUIDELINES FOR WALK LEADERS AND WALKERS

(Nov 2021 rev4)

LEADERS:

Registered and Insured. Leaders must be paid up members of SWG. All members must sign in on the log sheet, guests must also sign in prior to walking. Completed log sheet to be returned to Club Secretary.

1. Leaders should have conducted a recent recce to ensure the walk is safe and suitable for the type of walk advertised. Before the walk the leader should nominate a sweeper and make this known to the participants in the introductory briefing before the walk.
2. Where circumstances require car-pooling from a designated meeting point to the designated start point of the walk, the leader should nominate a sweeper-car for the car-pool convoy.
3. Leaders should be equipped with a map covering the route area and a compass depending on the walk type, also a SWG First Aid kit and two yellow hi-visibility jackets for leader and sweeper. (The jackets and kit should be obtained from the leader of the previous walk. The Leader should be familiar with the contents of the first aid kit.
4. In the introductory briefing to a walk, the leader should try to ensure that all participants are potential or current SWG/MI members or associate members and announce to everyone that non-MI members are not covered by the MI insurance policy, beyond their 3 free walks, and they walk with the group entirely at their own risk. If any of the committee are present, they should be introduced to the membership as not everybody goes to the AGM.
5. Give a brief description of the route conditions and length/time of the walk and make sure that all participants agree that they are suitably equipped and fit for the walk.
6. Lead from the front, depending on conditions on roads or hills, the leader and sweeper can wear a hi-vis jacket or advise other walkers to wear them.
7. The nominated sweeper should stay at the rear of the group to make sure that no-one falls behind and deal with any issue the leader may not be aware of.
8. When on a public or private road which may carry motorised traffic, observe the general rule of walking on the right of the road. The Leader should make this clear at the briefing before the walk starts. The leader should use their discretion as to the best way to walk on the road they are on.
9. Count the number of walkers before, during and after the walk to ensure that no-one is missing.
10. Stop every so often, wait for all walkers to catch up “do not take off again as soon as the sweeper arrives with the last person” and if possible, (some prior research may be advisable), point out and give a short explanation of any item of interest along the walk.

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WALKERS

1. All participants on any SWG walk who are currently full or associate members of SWG and therefore also full members of Mountaineering Ireland (MI), will be fully covered by the MI insurance policy.* All Members should bring their valid MI membership card with them on all walks.

2. All walkers with the Group are reminded that they understand and agree to the following: *"I accept that walking and rambling are activities with a danger of personal injury and death. I am aware of and accept these risks and wish to participate in these activities voluntarily and shall be fully responsible for my own activities and involvement. I have read and will comply with the SWG Rules and Guidance Notes for Walkers and Walk Leaders"*.

All walkers must comply with instructions from the walk leader/sweeper or organiser

3. No dogs are allowed (even on a leash).

4. People under 18 years of age are not allowed on walks.

5. Everyone intending to take part must make themselves fully aware of the nature, duration and difficulty of the walk to be undertaken and be confident that they are in the necessary physical condition.

All participants must be suitably equipped, i.e. appropriate footwear, waterproofs in case of rain, and food and drink on the longer walks which start in the morning.

6. Each walker must have available a medical information card giving details of any medical condition. They should also discreetly inform the leader of any medical condition.

7. If a participant wishes to leave the walk before the end, they must inform the leader.

8. If you go ahead of the Walk Leader & group, then you are no longer considered to be part of the group and you are responsible for your actions and for those who follow you.

The Leader might have to send walkers ahead but ideally should be able to see the front walkers and the sweeper behind from their position in the group.

All participants must keep to the IFA farmland code of conduct:

- Respect farmland and the rural environment
- Guard against all risk of fire, especially near forests
- Leave all farm gates as you find them
- Always use gates, stiles or other recognised access points and avoid damage to fences and walls
- Take all your litter home, leave no trace.
- Take heed of warning signs - they are there for your protection
- Walkers should keep to a trail rather than walking beside it, this can lead to extra paths being formed across for example a boggy area which could lead to erosion.