**CURRENT GUIDELINES FOR PLYMOUTH U3A LONG WALKS GROUP MEMBERS**

***IF YOU ATTEND A WALK THEN I WILL INTERPRET THAT AS MEANING THAT THESE MEASURES MEET WITH YOUR APPROVAL OR THAT YOU ARE AT LEAST WILLING TO TOLERATE THEM!***

1. **Please do not attend** any walk if you are feeling unwell, or if you think you have Covid19 symptoms.
2. The group leader needs up to date **contact details,** so please tell me if you CHANGE your number or email address.
3. It is useful to know how many of you are coming, in case of route changes, cancellation etc., **so please sign up in advance if you intend to join the walk.**Feel free to **email me**or if you prefer **call/text me on 07772 180132 or 01752 851148.**The earlier the better, but at the latest by midday on the Wednesday preceding each walk.
4. Walks will normally be circular routes, unless clearly indicated otherwise and will usually start near good parking areas. **Car sharing is encouraged for those who wish to do so.**
5. As always **it is important to ensure that you are correctly dressed and equipped for the terrain and weather conditions**, wearing decent walking boots and carrying waterproofs, spare warm clothing and items such as hats, gloves and sun cream in your rucksack, along with plenty of food and liquid refreshment.
6. May I remind you all to carry your relevant **medical details and emergency contact numbers** in writing. An **ICECARD (In Case of Emergency)** is an excellent idea and they are easily obtained (see [www.icecard.co.uk](http://www.icecard.co.uk)). These details should be kept in an easily accessible (for others) part of your rucksack, such as the outer top or side pocket**. Another simple but useful measure is to fill in the Medical Details and Emergency Contact(s) on your smart phone,** as it can be accessed by anybody without needing to unlock the phone.
7. Additionally, although I totally appreciate the desire for privacy and this is only a recommendation, I think that **the Walk Leader and I ought to be aware of any serious condition that might impact during a walk.** This is particularly true for walks in winter/bad weather or in more ‘remote’ terrain, where the rest of the group may also be put at risk.
8. The Plymouth U3A Checklist also states “Check first aid kit & emergency blanket. Identify any first aiders.” Let me be quite clear on this matter, **WE WILL NOT BE CARRYING A GROUP FIRST AID KIT!** To do so implies that we have someone trained to administer it, with up-to-date qualifications, who is willing to take on all the legal implications of doing so. We don’t.
9. Therefore **anyone attending a walk should carry whatever first aid and medicine they think they might need, as they would if they were walking on their own.** Obviously if something does happen then I will do my utmost to help, as I would with any person I came across in those circumstances.
10. **All routes will be checked out, in advance**, by the walk leader. Route details will be included on the Walks Program and made available to all group members by email and on the group webpage**. Most of us are experienced walkers and our intention is obviously to pick safe and appropriate routes, but we are not experts in the field and are not professional guides.** Therefore please **complete YOUR OWN personal risk assessment**, in the light of any information that I and/or the walk leader gives you and **decide whether you can take part without adverse risk to yourself.**
11. Likewise all participants should **review your own personal health and circumstances and that of others in your household**, and again decide whether you can take part without adverse risk to yourself or others in your household.

To sum up, although the Walk Leader and I do have a duty of care towards you (thus the checking out routes in advance and published walk details), **anyone who comes on the walk is accepting that they walk at their own risk and must take responsibility for their own safety.**You should understand your own capabilities and limitations. If at any time you feel uncomfortable before or during any walk, you should immediately bring this to the attention of the walk leader and act as appropriate.

***If all this sounds a bit melodramatic, please don’t be put off. We haven’t had any major incidents during my time with the group and I do my best to keep everyone happy and safe!***

Barry Copeland 2 August 2022