

GUIDELINES FOR CHARITIES ORGANISING CROSS BAY WALKS OVER THE KENT ESTUARY

Transport and Parking

The usual route for the walk is from Arnside to Kents Bank, though this may be changed if conditions on the Bay make this route unsafe.

There is very limited parking at Arnside and at Kents Bank. Charities are strongly encouraged to use one of the car parks in Grange (Grange is two miles from Kents Bank) and organise a coach transport to Arnside and a coach shuttle at the end of the walk from Kents Bank back to the car park.

If you encourage people to park on the residential roads in either Arnside or Kents Bank then it is only polite to the residents of those locations that you provide sufficient stewards to ensure that people park considerately. There have been problems in the past which local residents being blocked in or access being blocked for emergency vehicles. It is the responsibility of charity walk organisers to ensure that their plans minimise the disruption to local residents.

Trains to Grange from Arnside sometimes have insufficient capacity to take large numbers of people to the start of the walk and you are advised to speak to the train operators.

Charities organising coach travel from Grange to the start of the walk in Arnside are advised to use the Windermere Road car park in the town as a collection point. This car park has four coach parking bays and space for seventy two cars. There is a two minute walk from here to the public toilets at the ornamental gardens and a five minute from the Main Street car park which has space for ninety two cars (there is no provision for coaches at the Main Street car park).

Risk Assessment and Insurance

Charities are expected to undertake and be responsible for the preparation of a risk assessment for their walk. A sample risk assessment is enclosed for information but the responsibility for preparing the risk assessment for walks is solely the responsibility of the charity which must take individual circumstances into account.

Charities should organise their own public liability insurance for their walk and the Guide over Sands Trust takes no responsibility for the organisation of walks or for individual walkers.

Cancellations and Changes to the Route

It is sometimes necessary to cancel a walk at short notice if the guide, at his sole discretion, considers conditions out on the Bay to be dangerous. Whenever possible the guide will arrange an alternative route which necessitates a different starting and/or finishing point. Charities need to ensure that they can contact their walkers in the eventuality of a walk being re-routed or cancelled. In the event of a cancellation the charity will need to reorganise with the guide an alternative date which will be subject to availability and cannot be guaranteed.

The charity organiser should contact the guide a day or two before the scheduled walk is due to take place to check for any changes.

On no account should anyone attempt to cross the Bay without a guide as to do so would potentially be life threatening.

Numbers of Walkers

The maximum number of walkers that can be booked in to walk at any one time is limited to 500 for safety reasons. It is important that charities or other organisations do not exceed their booked number and will check with the guide as to whether other charities are already booked on that

day and what numbers they have booked so that the total number of all charities or organisations does not exceed 500.

Who is Suitable to Carry Out the Walk

The walk can be up to ten miles long and includes crossing the channel of the River Kent. This is usually between knee and thigh high. The start of the walk is across a stony beach and the end of the walk is across mud flats and gullies which each walker will need to step or jump across. Walks proceed at a reasonable pace and the walkers need to be able to keep up. It is advisable that the walk is not suitable for children under eleven years old unless they are used to reasonably strenuous walks. Under 16's should be accompanied by a responsible adult. There is a separate note on what to expect on the "walk" which gives more detailed information about the walk and can be downloaded to be made available to walkers before they book.

Stewards

All charities or organisations **must** provide their own stewards for the walk and it is recommended that the minimum number of stewards are required per walker at a ratio of:

1 steward per 50 walkers

You may wish to assign some tasks to additional stewards e.g. registering walkers at Arnside, ensuring on road parking is adequately supervised etc.

Charities should ensure they compile a record of names and contact details of everyone walking with them. It is strongly suggested that all walkers personally indemnify the charity or the organisation of all liability in connection with the walk.

If you are sharing the walk with other charities, can you check with the guide, the contact details of the other organisers sharing the walk with you. Charities organisers should liaise well before the walk date to discuss

stewarding arrangements. We recommend that stewards from different charities work together to steward the whole walk rather than each charity stewarding their own walkers. Stewards should wear high visibility vests so that they are easily identifiable by all walkers.

Steward Responsibilities

- Ensuring that walkers parking on the street do so considerately.
- Assisting people accessing transport.
- Registering people on the day at Arnside.
- Ensuring that all walkers follow the instructions of the guide and his assistants during the walk.
- Health & Safety, e.g. assisting walkers in the event of medical emergency.
- Ensuring the group stays together on the walk with no stragglers. Two stewards should bring up the rear of the walk with a further two stewards positioned at the front.
- Helping people over gullies during the final approach to Kents Bank. The gullies can be quite wide and can be slippery when wet.
- Ensuring participants cross the level crossing over the train tracks safely at the end of the walk at Kents Bank station.

Stewards must follow instructions from the guide and his assistants at all times. Stewards should bring mobile phones and share numbers so that they can liaise with each other whilst on the walk if necessary. Please share your stewards mobile numbers with the guide and his assistants.

Assembly Point

Groups usually assemble on the lower promenade down from the steps from the clock tower at Arnside. At the agreed departure time for the walk please make your way to the far end of the promenade where the Guide will meet you and the walk will begin.

Toilets

Charity organisers should be aware that there are no public toilets facilities at the end of the walk at Kents Bank.

There are public toilets in Grange located in the ornamental gardens within a few minutes' walk of the Windermere Road and Main Street car parks.

What to Expect on the Walk

This is arduous and takes about four hours depending on the route. You must have a reasonable level of physical fitness and be able to walk ten miles comfortably. The walk usually starts from a stony foreshore at Arnside, proceeds on to the sands and across the channels of the River Kent. The walk involves crossing two river channels which are cold and sometimes fast flowing. The height of the river is usually between knee and thigh deep. Old comfortable shoes or trainers are recommended rather than expensive walking boots or wellies and shorts or trousers which can be rolled up. You will get wet during the walk so bring a change of clothing to change in to at the end. The walk is on varied terrain including sections of sand, shingle, pebbles, rock and salt marsh. The last part of the walk over the salt marsh involves crossing gullies, these can be quite wide and slippery so walkers need to be agile enough to get across.

The weather can be anything from driving rain to hot sun so come prepared to protect yourself against the elements. It is very exposed out on the Bay with no shelter so bring sunscreen, a sun hat or waterproofs depending on the conditions.

Make sure you bring a bottle of water and a snack that you can eat on the move. There are no toilet facilities during the walk or at the end of the walk at Kents Bank.

Parents should assess whether the walk is suitable for their children. The walk is onerous and may be difficult to carry children if they become tired.

Children should be able to negotiate the river channels with minimum assistance.

Walks can be cancelled at short notice by the guide if conditions make it unsafe to cross.

The walk usually ends at Kents Bank a mile and a half from Grange-over-Sands.