

Leading a walk with the Ramblers – practical

Your choice

You are the leader – you can choose the area where you want to lead a walk.

Distance – Wednesday walks are normally about 5 miles – Sunday walks are about 10 miles – can **you** do the distance?

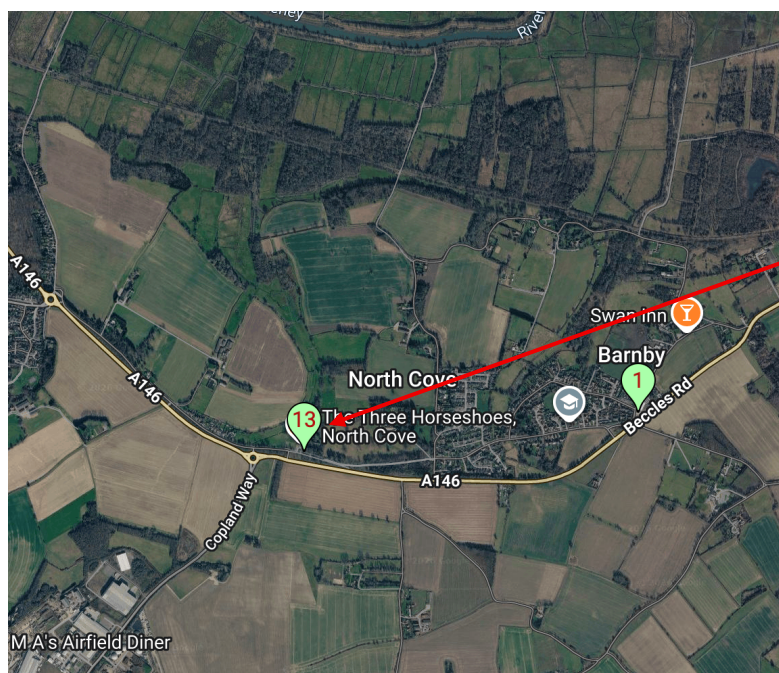
Choose your starting point

When choosing a starting point, think about how many cars will need parking. The Wednesday walks can have 20+ cars turn up. Village halls and free public car parks are a good choice. If it's a public car park, is it free for the likely duration of a walk? If not, how is parking paid for? Best avoid those car parks that rely on an app. Many people don't carry cash and don't have smartphones with a parking app.

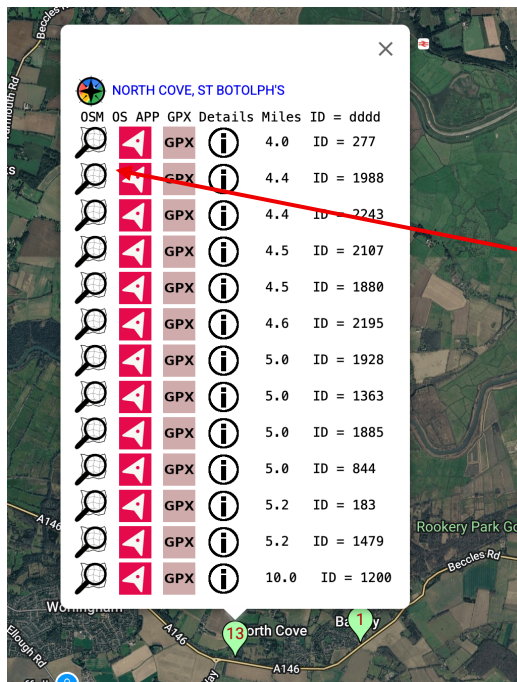
If it's a village hall, get in touch with them. The contact details will be displayed on the hall somewhere, or you may find them using Google.

Choose the route

Unless you have a walk in mind, use the route finder on our website at <https://www.waveneyramblers.org.uk/routes>. There are over 1000 walks listed. I will use the North Cove starting point as an example

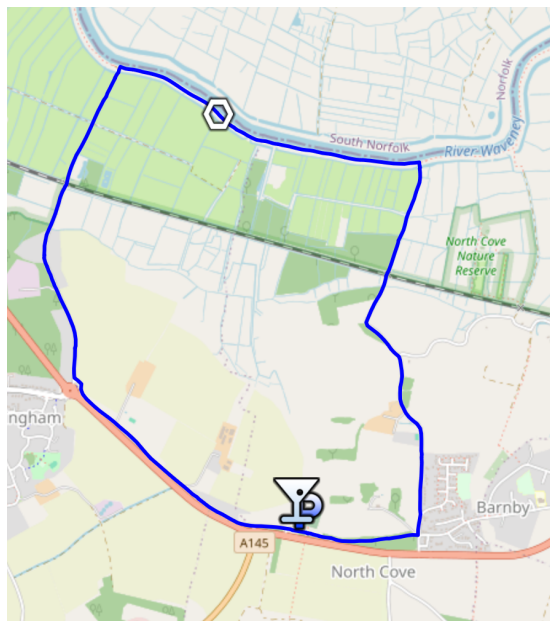


Click on the green balloon to see the list



For the exercise I have chosen this route – it's a simple, circular walk with no loops or cross overs

Clicking on the magnifying glass symbol will bring up a route map.



You can print out the map shown or transfer it to a paper map.

If you have and can use the OS or Wikiloc apps, or an app that imports the GPX file, use whatever you are comfortable with, but I won't elaborate on those here.

Walk the walk!

Once you are happy with the route, go and walk it.

The 'recce' is an **essential** part of the walk planning.

It is important that you are familiar with the walk and won't get lost whilst leading the group.

Take a small notebook with you if you don't want to mark up your paper map, or you are using a smartphone for guidance.

Take a pair of secateurs to cut any brambles or similar obstructing the path.

Note any hazards or obstacles on the route. These could include;

- Walking along or crossing busy roads
- Stiles
- Steep or awkward steps, ascents or descents
- Cattle
- Dilapidated bridges
- Sections where single file is called for

Select a halfway point – preferably with some trees to provide shade and some hedges for discreet 'comfort'.

When you have finished the recce, complete the template risk assessment sheet.

https://www.waveneyramblers.org.uk/Risk_Assessments/Risk%20Assessment%20and%20Diary.pdf

Upload the walk.

Once you are happy with the route, enter the details onto the Ramblers website.

You must have completed the Ramblers walk leader training to log in to this section.

https://walks-manager.ramblers.org.uk/walks-manager?check_logged_in=1

{ I will add the basic instructions once I have finalised a date for walk }

On the day

Be at the start 20 to 30 minutes before the walk commences and wear a high-vis so that people know you are the leader.

If there is a collection for the parking at a village hall or similar, start collecting a during this period. It also gives you a chance to meet and greet new walkers to the group.

A couple of minutes before the start, gather everyone around for a walk briefing. It is handy to have this written down. A suggested minimum briefing is;

- A welcome to all walkers and introduce yourself
- A brief description of the walk
 - Length

- Mix of paths and roads?
- Any notable hazards/obstacles
- Livestock
- Reminder to obey the Highway Code when walking along roads without a pavement
- Halfway stop – could be more than one if very hot.
- Arrangements for lunch (if you have made any)
- Reminder to pay for car parking if not already done.
- Note or ask about any new members on the walk and request that they be made welcome
- Request for a back marker

And they are off!

You are the leader, so you stay in front and set the pace. But be mindful of the group's age and pace.

Look back regularly to make sure the group is not too spread out. In open stretches, can you see the back marker?

Consider stopping to let the group catch up, especially at junctions where the path meets a road or after stiles.

At some point, note the number of walkers and, after the walk, let Neil Bauers know.

Lunch

You are not required to organise lunch after the walk.

The walkers are adults and can make their own arrangements.

If you are prepared to organise lunch;

1. Pick a pub within an easy drive of the walk
2. Or pick a pub for the start of the walk
3. Check with the pub that
 - a. It will be open on day!
 - b. It can cater for the anticipated number of walkers (suggest 15 for a Wednesday walk, but with the numbers to be confirmed on the day after a show of hands at the briefing)
 - c. Whether pre-ordering is required. Inconvenient, but does mean that the meals are not spread out.
 - d. Whether the pub will/can be open at the start so that walkers can choose and pre-order their own meals.

