

CHESTER GREAT OUTDOORS GROUP

Leading an event - some thoughts

Not everyone in the Club is comfortable with the idea of leading an event. Having enthusiastic, sparkly new event leaders is, however, central to keeping the Club thriving and vibrant.

We understand that the thought of shepherding a bunch of Club celebrities around a walk or bike ride can seem challenging at first! Therefore the following is some guidance and prompts to support you whilst planning and leading a successful CGOC event.

Remember, above all we are a group of friends brought together because we like doing the same sort of outdoor things. Therefore there are plenty of people to seek advice from and who will be happy to help you! We have a 'buddy system' to support you if you feel the need.

Planning

You'll have been badgered by the Events Co-ordinator to run an event - be pleased, this is not an honour they bestow lightly.

Think about what you will be comfortable leading as an activity - this may not be a winter walk around the Snowdon Horseshoe - if in doubt - take some advice.

Choose a date that is good for you and allows time for preparation.

Give some details to the Events Co-ordinator to make sure your event looks interesting on the list (if you are not sure you've made it sound interesting - consult John C or Bernard). Don't give the punters an excuse to stay indoors and watch TV.

Reccy the walk/event, this is good practice and ensures you minimise route finding trauma on your big day. Make a day of it and invite along an 'event buddy' to share the pain/experience.

Think about where you want people to meet up for the event - this is likely to be at Christleton. Don't be tempted to set up multiple rendezvous points along the A55 (other trunk roads are available) - you'll get through a lot of tea but might not get started until after lunch.

Check you've got everything you need for leading your event. Although it is really down to the individuals taking part to ensure they've got enough food, water, first aid stuff etc. you might want to make sure you've got a little extra in case. You'll feel great when able to wave a roll of Band Aid at an appropriate moment.

On the day

Get to the meeting place on time - your public await you!

If new members are turning up to your event it might be good to do a quick check that they've come correctly equipped.

Although your time keeping is impeccable - that of others may be tardy. Always best to wait around a couple of minutes after the allotted departure time. Make polite conversation.

Check everyone knows how to get to the start point of the event. Travel to start.

It is useful to let people know what you are planning to do. For a walk, this might involve running through the route for the day including, the distance, expected timings, the weather outlook, points of interest - think tour guide. Keen people in the group might want to look at the map - depending on the look in their eyes this could be down to panic, policing, or genuine interest - either way best to let them know what you are up to.

It's good practice to see if someone is OK to be your 'back marker' for the day.

Count the troops - you can do this in the style of a teacher (stand on a bench and point) or shepherd (count at the first gate) - whatever floats your boat.

Set off.

Whilst on the move - make sure you don't get too strung out - the exact distance depends a bit on the weather. Remember, it can be really depressing being at the back of a group all day watching rucksacks bobbing at speed a mile ahead.

Let people catch up and allow everyone in the group a chance for a breather. The best place for this is not always at a stunning viewpoint - these can be windy and cold.

Make time for snack stops and lunch.

Assess progress as you go along. Depending on the nature of the group on the day and the weather conditions you might need to shorten what you planned to do.

Whatever you choose to do, make sure that your team are comfortable with what you suggest.

Finally

Remember we do all this to have a good day out - make sure you do too.

Don't get too stressed and don't be afraid to ask for help.

Other sources of information

There's loads out there - mainly from people with far more experience than any of us - check out BMC website for example.