

# Ealing Outdoor Club

## Welcome Pack



[www.ealingoutdoorclub.org.uk](http://www.ealingoutdoorclub.org.uk)

**The committee warmly welcomes you to the Ealing Outdoor Club. We hope this welcome pack includes everything you need to get started walking and or cycling with the group. If you have any further questions, please email the club or ask members on a walk or cycling ride.**

**We look forward to seeing you very soon!**



## General Information

We are a friendly outdoor group based in West London. Our main outdoor activity is walking. The walks vary between 8 and 12 miles and occur on most Sundays. We also do some cycling which may occur on a weekend but is mostly mid-week.

In addition, we also organise a variety of trips, from few days (usually long weekends) in UK or longer trips in UK or abroad, focused on either cycling or walking.

There are also some weekday and evening walks, social events such as pub nights and meals. More information on our activities can be found on our website – [www.ealingoutdoorclub.org.uk](http://www.ealingoutdoorclub.org.uk). Membership is open to people of any age, gender, ethnicity and religion.

Please read our club policy (found on the club website) regarding participation in club activities.

Membership is by annual subscription.

[www.ealingoutdoorclub.org.uk](http://www.ealingoutdoorclub.org.uk)

## Affiliations

Ealing Outdoor Club is affiliated to the Chiltern Society. We also support and are members of the Ramblers Association.

## Committee Information

The affairs of the club are regulated by the Club Constitution and managed by the committee, comprising of three Officers (Chair, General Secretary, Treasurer), an Outdoor Secretary and up to five general members. An Annual General Meeting is open for all members to attend in November.

## What sort of physical activities do you offer and when?

We aim to organise a walk on most Sundays throughout the year as well as occasional cycle rides and trips away. A programme is e-mailed to members quarterly and published on our website [www.ealingoutdoorclub.org.uk](http://www.ealingoutdoorclub.org.uk). An e-mail reminder with further details of the walk or ride is sent out weekly before each event. Day rides are not scheduled at regular intervals so may not be included in our quarterly programme but are instead shared with our members via e-mail.

As you will find on the programme, the club regularly walks and for this reason a lot of the information found in this pack has emphasis on walks. However, most of it is equally applicable to cycle rides whether for day trips or longer trips away.

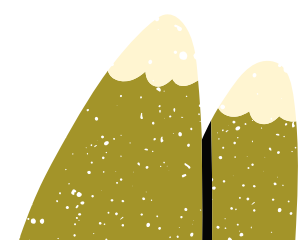
## Where are the Sunday walks?

These are mostly in the countryside within a short distance from Ealing, including the Chilterns, North Downs, River Thames, with occasional urban walks. When walking in the countryside it's important to abide by **The Countryside Code**.

[www.gov.uk/government/publications/the-countryside-code](http://www.gov.uk/government/publications/the-countryside-code)

## How long are the walks?

Most walks are between 8 and 12 miles, with occasional longer or shorter walks. Expect to be out until 4 or 5 pm. The programme will generally give an indication of the length and difficulty of the walk. The walk leader will usually send an e-mail with more information in the week before the walk. It is your responsibility to choose walks which are appropriate to your level of fitness. If at all unsure of the suitability of the walk, contact the walk leader in advance.



### Do I have to book?

No, there is no formal booking required for a walking or cycling day trip. However, if you are new to the club, it is a good idea to contact the leader and they will look out for you at the meeting place.

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### Communication with the walk/cycling Leader

All members attending any activity must have with them the leader's mobile telephone number which is included in the weekly e-mail. They should also have a fully charged phone to be able to communicate with the leader should the need occur.

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### Before arriving at the walk/cycling meeting point

Prepare yourself by reading that week's walk/cycling details, check the weather to decide what to wear, arrive early/on time, (have cash to pay for car share if needed), ensure you have your ICE (in case of emergency card), food/snacks, a charged phone and the leader's number.

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### Where do we meet?

Meeting places are:

- Leopold Road (W5 3PB), near Ealing Common Station, where there is free parking on Sundays.
  - For some destinations, it is more convenient to meet at other places, usually stations. This will be clearly stated in the programme and the e-mail.
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### How do we get to the start of the walk?

We usually drive to the start of the walk. You do not have to own a car as we share cars and contribute to costs for that journey. The contribution to costs is agreed between the driver and passengers but a committee recommended cost per mile (shared between the occupants) is usually applied. Please note, any car sharing arrangements are a private matter between members and please be considerate regarding muddy clothes and boots. We will do what we can to ensure everyone gets a lift but this cannot be guaranteed.

Some walks will be by public transport and details will be on the programme or sent by email. Occasionally arrangements are changed at the last minute, and you should be prepared for this eventuality. Always bring an Oyster Card and/or other travel cards/passes just in case. For journeys on mainline trains, there is usually a Group Save discount which reduces the cost by up to one third [www.nationalrail.co.uk/times\\_fares/46506.aspx](http://www.nationalrail.co.uk/times_fares/46506.aspx) for details.

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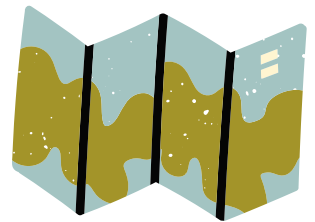
### What are the eating arrangements?

We either stop at a pub/café or have a picnic. Members can always bring their own food and find their own picnic spot. Prior notice of the eating arrangements is always included on the email.

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### What walking equipment should I have?

We walk in all weathers and would not normally expect to cut a walk short due to inclement weather. You need to be well equipped. We suggest walking boots (although for some shorter, easier walks walking shoes are fine), a waterproof and windproof jacket, waterproof trousers and a warm mid-layer. Sometimes you might need a hat, gloves, sunglasses or sun cream. Walking poles are very useful both for walking and in muddy conditions. A whistle may also be good to carry and may be helpful if a member gets detached from the group and if for any reason the mobile telephone signal is not working.



A small backpack is most comfortable for carrying your belongings: spare clothes, maybe lunch or a snack and water to drink. The amount of water you will need will vary with the season but allow up to 0.5 litres for winter and 1.5 litres for summer.

To ensure the safety and enjoyment of the whole party, if you are not properly equipped for the day's walk, the leader may refuse to take you on the walk.

### How can I be prepared for an emergency?

We want to ensure that walks are as safe and stress free as possible, so all members must respect the need for the Walk Leader to keep the group together. Please do not overtake the Walk Leader or contest the route that the Walk Leader has chosen, unless there is a problem arising that the Walk Leader is possibly not aware of. Everyone on a walk has a responsibility for their own safety and that of other walkers.

If there is an emergency the leader will take charge, but nevertheless, in addition to a working charged mobile phone, it is recommended that you carry a whistle and a torch in your backpack. You should also carry the aforementioned ICE card with next-of-kin details and any medical information that might be appropriate to share in an emergency.

You may also wish to consider carrying a "power bank" with you to be able to recharge your mobile phone. This is particularly useful if tracking apps or other on-line map apps are being used. It is also possible to set up a mobile phone with emergency contact details that can be accessed even if the phone is locked – details of how to do this can be provided upon request. It is even possible to set up a facility on one's mobile phone whereby help from the emergency services can be summoned by text rather than the normal voice call. This could be very useful in areas of poor mobile reception. You may also wish to consider installing 'What3Words' on your phone so that your exact location can be communicated to the emergency services, should the need arise.

### First Aid

All walkers are requested to carry a simple first aid kit. The contents of the kit can be altered depending on the duration and place of the walk. Examples of what may be included are; plasters, dressings, bandages, antiseptic wipes, scissors, safety pins, pain relief tablets, hand sanitiser, tweezers and tick remover.

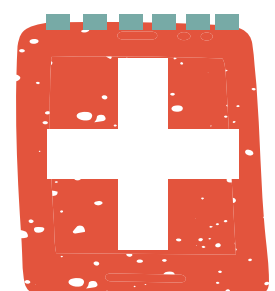
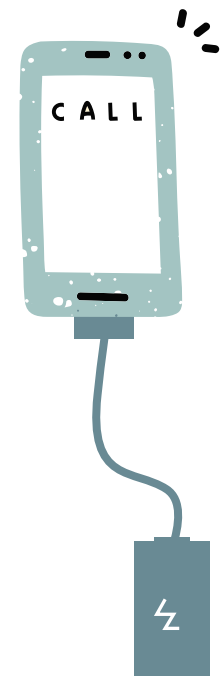
### What to do if you become separated from the group:

All walkers are asked to remain near the group. If you leave the group for any reason, you must inform another member preferably the walk leader or backstop.

If you become lost or separated you should stay calm and remain where you are or if you left the path, then go back to the path and stay put and phone (preferably) or message the leader. If the phone signal is weak, a text message is a better option. If phone contact is not possible then a whistle should be used to attract attention. (The internationally recognised distress signal is six blasts, repeated after a break of one minute. The response is three blasts).

### Can I bring my dog?

No. Our walks may pass through land with livestock, where dogs may cause a hazard. Assistance dogs are permitted, but we ask that you talk to the walk leader in advance to check that it is safe for an assistance dog to come along on that particular walk.



### **I have an idea for a walk/event. What should I do?**

We welcome new walk leaders and event organisers. If you wish to lead a walk or organise an event, contact the Outdoor Secretary or another committee member [ealingoutdoorclub@hotmail.com](mailto:ealingoutdoorclub@hotmail.com). If you are not confident to lead a walk, we can arrange for one of our experienced leaders to help you.

### **Do you walk only on Sundays?**

We concentrate on Sunday walks, which are popular with our members, but occasionally have some mid-week and evening walks in the summer.

### **Trips away**

We aim to organise about 5 walking trips a year to a variety of areas, including mountains, hills, forests and coastal areas in the UK and abroad. Walks will be led by experienced walk leaders but you too have a responsibility for your own safety and that of other walkers. The difficulty and length of each walk will depend on the terrain and individual leader's preferences. You do not have to participate in every walk and are free to visit local attractions if you prefer. Details of trips are published on our website [www.ealingoutdoorclub.org.uk](http://www.ealingoutdoorclub.org.uk), in the quarterly programme and are e-mailed to members. Reports of recent activities are also published on the website and in our newsletters periodically.

### **What sort of accommodation do you stay in?**

We stay in a range of accommodation that includes hostels (private and YHA) and hotels as well as tents when we are camping. Where the Club books accommodation, it will generally do so on the basis of members sharing, ideally in twin rooms.

Usually, the organiser will suggest one or more options available in that area. If you prefer to stay in alternative accommodation (e.g. B&B) then you are free to book the accommodation yourself, but you will need to get yourself to the start of the walk each day. In all cases, you must inform the trip organiser of your intentions.

### **Staying in Hostels**

#### **Do I have to be a YHA (Youth Hostel Association) member?**

No, you do not need to join the YHA to be included in a club hostel booking. However, many of our members do belong to the YHA and this may entitle them to a discount when booking on behalf of the club.

#### **What facilities can I expect in a hostel?**

YHA hostels are very varied and many are converted from old and interesting buildings. You can find out more about facilities of a hostel from the YHA website, [www.yha.org.uk](http://www.yha.org.uk) or ask the trip organiser. The communal and relaxed nature of youth hostels provides a good way of having a great time and getting to meet people but also requires a certain amount of consideration for fellow hostellers. It is advisable to bring clothing changes but note that storage space is limited. Accommodation is usually in shared bunk-bedded (single sex) rooms.

Bed linen, pillows and duvet are normally provided (bring your own towel). It may be a good idea to bring ear plugs with you!

Showers, washrooms and toilets are usually nearby.

Most hostels have drying rooms which are useful for muddy boots and wet



clothing. Hostellers are usually honest, but rooms do not always have locks and it is your responsibility to take care of your belongings.

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### What are the eating arrangements?

Many hostels offer a catered service for breakfast and dinner and provide packed lunches. Evening meals are usually ordered a couple of hours in advance; breakfast and lunch requirements are normally ordered the evening before. Alternatively, members can cook their own food in a communal kitchen. The walk leader will tell you whether you need to take a packed lunch with you or whether there is a planned lunch stop in a pub or café. Hotels and Bed and breakfast vary often offering breakfast. Eating in local pubs and restaurants in the evening is often an option. It is essential that you inform the leader of your plans.

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### What are the travel arrangements?

Members travel by car or public transport. The organiser will try to match those needing lifts with drivers who are willing to take passengers, but if they are unable to do so it will be your own responsibility. Passengers in a car-share are expected to contribute to costs and whilst this is entirely at the discretion of the driver, the generally accepted position is that fuel costs will be shared between all occupants of the car. A further £20, divided between the passengers, is then offered to the driver as a gesture of thanks. Members also make their own travel arrangements such as by train but must inform the organiser.

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### What equipment should I have to keep myself and others safe?

Equipment is as that suggested for the Sunday walks above. Please bear in mind that the weather in mountains can change with extraordinarily little warning, so it is essential that you can keep warm and dry. If you are not properly equipped for the day's walk, the leader may refuse to take you out. This is to ensure your safety and the safety of the whole party. For weekends away a suitable size backpack is essential for day walking. For walks in mountainous country, please familiarise yourself with the information published by the British Mountaineering Council: [www.thebmc.co.uk/essential-hill-walking-knowhow](http://www.thebmc.co.uk/essential-hill-walking-knowhow).

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### How do I book?

The EOC publicity information will include a booking form, to be completed and returned to the Club email ([ealingoutdoorclub@hotmail.com](mailto:ealingoutdoorclub@hotmail.com)) as well as the organiser, together with the money requested. Bookings can fill up quickly, so be prompt as there can be limited availability and our policy is 'first come first served' basis. If the club bookings are full, you may be able to arrange your own accommodation in the hostel or a nearby B&B or hotel. If you do your own booking and wish to walk with the group, you still need to complete and return the booking form as the walk leader still needs to know who will be walking each day and who to contact in the case of an emergency.

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### What if I have to cancel my trip?

All bookings are subject to the terms and conditions of the accommodation provider including their refund policy. Where possible the Club, through the organiser, will try to reallocate your place to another member. If we are able to do this, we will do our best to minimise or avoid cancellation costs, although this cannot be guaranteed in which case the cancellation charge will have to be paid by you. So, if you need to cancel your trip, please let the organiser know as soon as possible.

