

Ealing Outdoor Club

Guidance for organisers of trips away



www.ealingoutdoorclub.org.uk

These guidelines are to assist the organiser as well as the Club itself, to ensure the trip runs smoothly and meets the Club's criteria. Early engagement and close collaboration between the organiser and the Committee throughout the process will greatly assist in the achievement of this objective.



General Information Relating to all Trips

Put your proposal together

Decide on the type of trip you wish to propose, with dates, duration and a preliminary indication of the type of activities envisaged – e.g. length and grade of walks..

Once you have your information together:

Put your proposal together including as much information as you can, then send it to the EOC Committee for approval. General guidance on what you need to consider and the information which may be required can be found in the "Information to be provided" section below.

The Outdoor Secretary will then come back to you with any questions or suggestions. Once these have been agreed, and only then, should any firm bookings be made with third parties. The Committee will then circulate the proposal to members along with the booking form.

The booking form will give a description of the trip, and payment details. Our preferred method is by bank transfer.

Completed booking forms should be sent to the Club's email address and a copy to the organiser.

It is the responsibility of the trip organiser to keep track of completed booking forms, numbers etc.

Places on trips are on a first-come, first-served basis, depending on booking forms and payments received by the Club.

On receipt of each booking form, check that it has been sent also to the Club. Where this is not the case, immediately email the booking form to the Club so as to avoid any misunderstanding with respect to the order in which bookings are received.

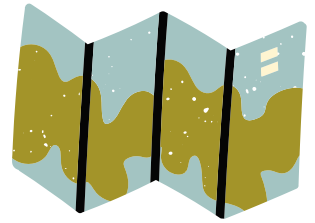
Once the organiser has received completed forms, this will give an indication of experienced walk leaders attending and enable walks to be planned in more detail.

Everyone booked onto a Club trip must be a fully paid-up member and a booking form is required for everyone attending the trip to ensure that the organiser has all the appropriate information for planning, communication and safety (next of kin).

Accommodation

On trips away, where the Club books accommodation, it will generally do so on the basis of members sharing, ideally in twin rooms. Any other arrangement, e.g. single rooms must be agreed with the Committee/Outdoor Secretary.

Before agreeing to proceed with such a trip the Committee will need to evaluate the level of financial risk should the accommodation need to be cancelled, either by the Club or the accommodation provider. Therefore, please ascertain the level of refund the Club can expect should it need to cancel and how this varies dependent on how close to the departure time the cancellation is made; ascertain also the provider's refund policy and guarantees should it be unable to honour the booking.



Often people want to do the trip but stay with relatives or friends in the area, or find their own accommodation, but in these cases, they should still complete a booking form.

Travel to trip destinations:

Often car sharing is determined by those participating, please be prepared to assist with this. If trains are being used e.g. to an airport or ferry terminal it is usual for the individuals to book their own tickets..

Once you know who has booked on the trip, work with participants to refine your plans:

Where activities are not going to be led by a third party, do you expect to lead all the activities yourself, or will you welcome input from experienced walk leaders (say) to plan and lead walks. Remember that for trips far from Ealing it is unlikely that it will be feasible to recce routes for walks or rides.

Information to be Provided

Elements to be included in the booking form if relevant to the particular trip:

1. The type of trip (walking, cycling etc.), destination(s) and the relevant periods and dates.
2. The anticipated level of difficulty of the proposed activities.
3. The itinerary, including any visits, excursions or other services which are included in the price of the trip.
4. The transport arrangements to and from the trip start and finish location(s), and, for multi-centred trips, the travel arrangements between centres.
5. Where the trip includes accommodation, its type, location(s) and main features, and the number of places available.
6. Any meals which are included in the trip.
7. The price of the trip, and any additional costs that participants might expect to incur.
8. The payment schedule (where full payment is not required at the time of booking) and method of payment.
9. General information about passport and visa requirements and any health formalities which apply for a foreign trip, including approximate periods for obtaining the necessary documentation. This may simply be a link to the appropriate government website(s). Notwithstanding the provision of this information the booking form must state that it is the responsibility of participants to ensure that they obtain and take with them all documentation required for entry to and exit from the country/countries to be visited.

Information to be provided to trip participants prior to departure:

1. Contact details for the EOC trip leader.
2. Where the Club has booked accommodation, contact details for the accommodation provider.
3. Arrangements for meals which are not included in the price of the trip and any which participants need to organise for themselves e.g. packed lunches.



Types of trips:

1. Camping Trips

On these trips, it is usual for members to book their own pitch at the campsite.

It is recommended, if the campsite is fairly close to London and it is feasible, that a stay or at least a visit to the selected campsite is taken prior to its recommendation to the Club.

Establish the full costs, amenities, cancellation policy, contact details.

Check if there are any local hotels or pubs providing accommodation in the area and obtain costs, contact details (some members prefer not to sleep under canvas).

Check if there are any local restaurants and pubs as possible places to eat, obtaining their contact details, website address, times they offer meals, menus (if available, though these can usually be found on their website) and cancellation policies.

Check that the eatery can provide vegetarian/vegan options and/or cater for any other dietary requirements.

2. Trips using Hotels, Pubs with Accommodation

If you are proposing a trip where hotels and/or pubs are to be used, ensure you have several in the vicinity at varying costs, as participants usually book their own accommodation. However, if a better rate can be negotiated for a set number of rooms, and provided the cancellation terms are acceptable (seek the advice of the Treasurer) the booking can be done via the Club.

Check if there are any local restaurants and pubs as possible places to eat, obtaining their contact details, times they offer meals, menus (if available, though these can usually be found on their website), website address.

Check that the eatery can provide vegetarian/vegan options and/or cater for any other dietary requirements.

3. Trips Abroad

If travelling abroad and using a third party agent, you will need to:

1. Obtain a price for the likely number of participants and how the cost will differ if numbers increase or decline.
2. Ascertain the minimum number of participants the third party agent will accept for the trip to go ahead at the price per head they have quoted.
3. Establish whether the contract with the third party will allow for any price revision and if so the circumstances under which such revision may legitimately be applied.



4. Obtain, where applicable an indication of any dues, taxes or fees chargeable for certain services (landing, embarkation or disembarkation fees at ports and airports and tourist taxes) where such costs are not included in the price quoted on the booking form.
5. Establish how payments should be paid and when (both for deposit and balance) e.g. a payment schedule.
6. Ascertain the level of refund the Club can expect should it need to cancel the trip and how this will vary dependent on how close to departure time the cancellation is made. Ascertain also the agent's refund policy and financial guarantees should it be unable to honour the booking. In determining whether to proceed with the trip and the price at which it will be offered to members, the Committee will take a view on the information listed above. The organiser will need to consult with the Committee on the price determination.
7. Establish, where the activities on the trip will be led by a third party guide, the number of walkers the guide is not just comfortable with, but trained and insured to lead.
8. Ensure the guide(s) speak English.
9. Ensure, for a linear walk/ride, that the agent is prepared to transfer baggage between overnight locations.
10. Ensure that menus cater for vegetarians/vegans and other dietary requirements, should they be requested.
11. Check that where packed lunches will be provided, all dietary requirements will be met.
12. Provide, prior to departure, the full name, address, telephone no. and email address of any third party agent used. It should be noted, however, that, in the first instance, contact with the third party agent should be at the discretion of, and by, the EOC trip leader.
13. Remind participants of the need for adequate travel insurance.

4. Trips using Hostels

YHA:

1. You should consider booking 12 places* in a variety of smaller rooms/dorms. You may find that during the winter season, the YHA booking system shows reduced availability or exclusive hire only for some of its hostels. Exclusive hire is generally not suitable for a club booking, as the numbers required are likely to be too high to make it viable.
2. Bookings should be made directly, with the YHA, and by a YHA member so as to obtain a 10% discount on the room booking and any pre-ordered meals. Bookings can be made online at www.yha.org.uk
3. Check for deals on meals, e.g. breakfast, or dinner bed and breakfast.



4. Establish what facilities the hostel offers, e.g. drying room, use of the kitchen.

*The YHA does not allow bookings to be changed – they can only be cancelled and then rebooked to accommodate changed circumstances. For greatest flexibility it is best therefore, to make multiple, separate bookings e.g. one booking for 6, one for 4 and one for 2 – but be sure to obtain the YHA member discount on each booking.

Independent Hostels:

1. A guide including over 340 hostels, bunkhouses and camping barns, the Independent Hostel Guide is also a great introduction to this huge resource of self-catering, hostel-style accommodation.
2. Accommodation on their website is categorised under areas of the country.
3. Their website is: www.independenthostels.co.uk

Booking Form templates

A small selection of Booking Form templates are available to assist members with the production of a booking form for the trip they are organising. A booking form is required for everyone attending the trip to ensure that the organiser has all the appropriate information for planning, communication and safety (next of kin details), whether they are staying with the group, or with friends, or in independent hotels/pubs.

