

COSTA BLANCA MOUNTAIN WALKERS CONVENTIONS INCORPORATING ALL AMENDMENTS AND UPDATES AS AT MARCH 2015. (changes highlighted)

Secretariat Responsibilities

1. The Secretariat or support group will be nominated by the walk leaders. Whilst there are no formal mechanics of change the need to replace people from time to time is recognised. A review will take place at a leaders' meeting every two years.
2. The Secretariat will prepare the Autumn & Spring Programmes and deal with other matters that may need attention between leaders' meetings. The final recommended draft of each programme will be circulated to the leaders for approval prior to finalisation.
3. The Secretariat must ensure that the final recommended draft is checked by an experienced leader prior to publication.
4. The Summer Programme is prepared by the Social Secretary or by a volunteer approved by the Secretariat.

Walk Leaders Responsibilities

1. The walk leader should arrive at the walk meeting point at least 30 minutes before the scheduled start of the walk. The leader's decisions are final and he/she can terminate the walk if necessary or ask for assistance from other leaders present. In extreme bad weather it is at the discretion of the leader whether to turn up or not at the meeting point.
2. The walk leader will appoint a sweeper (if considered necessary) who will carry the log book of participants and keep track of the walkers. The sweeper should know the walk thoroughly in case the need arises to replace or assist the leader.
3. Before the start of the walk the leader should make the following points:-
 - a. Briefly describe the walk and remind walkers of safety precautions and any other considerations such as the hunting season, no smoking because of fire hazards, animals, stone walls and respect for farmer's crops.
 - b. Emphasise that dogs, if allowed, must be on leads. Introduce the sweeper (if appointed)
 - c. Announce that each walker should have read the CBMW conventions and walk details in the Programme and sign their name in the leader's book thus accepting that they walk at their own risk.
 - d. Announce that walkers must stay behind the leader and in front of the sweeper if one is appointed.
 - e. Walkers must remove their names from the Leaders' book if they leave the walk or the route (see individual responsibilities-13).
 - f. Point out that everyone is expected to make an annual contribution towards the cost of our websites.
4. The leader should set a safe pace that is practical for the size and abilities of the group. Unless a walk has been listed as VS or X or the term 'brisk pace' has been used in the programme, slower walkers must be accommodated.
5. The leader must remain in touch with the sweeper and ensure that no part of the group loses contact with the leader and/or sweeper e.g. at a fork so becoming

- uncertain of the route.
6. If anyone proves unfit for the walk as described in the programme they should be required to sign out and turn back. This needs to be done early in the walk and an escort should be provided if possible. If no escort is available then the whole group should return with the affected party.
 7. Rest breaks are at the discretion of the leader who should be alert to the conditions prevailing and the needs of the group. These breaks should be long enough for walkers to change into or out of warm clothing or to take a drink. Where a large group of walkers are involved the leader should be aware of the time difference between the last of the group and sweeper to arrive at the break point. By pacing the walk to prevent large gaps appearing in the line the leader can spare the front walkers having a prolonged wait or the walkers at the back having no break at all.
 8. The leaders should carry a fully charged mobile telephone and have available the telephone numbers of the emergency services.

Individual Responsibilities

1. Arrive at the meeting place in good time. Walks depart promptly at 10:00 unless otherwise noted.
2. Do not leave valuables in your car.
3. Always wear strong soled shoes or boots suitable for mountain walking.
4. Take a packed lunch and/or other energy snacks and plenty of water, especially in hot weather.
5. Always carry your own first aid kit and a whistle.
6. Carry adequate clothing and always waterproofs as the weather in the mountains can change quickly.
7. Stay in contact with the people ahead of you and behind you particularly at junctions and if too large a gap opens up signal to the leader for a stop so that the gap can be closed.
8. Take all rubbish home with you including orange and banana skins.
9. Do not pick fruit.
10. Walking poles when not in use should be carried with the points facing forwards and down.
11. If a dog is brought along the owner should ensure that the walk is one where dogs are allowed and at all times keep the dog on a lead.
12. In times of bad weather walkers should phone the leader if in doubt about whether the walk will go ahead.
13. If individuals intend to leave the group during a walk they should inform the leader and ensure that their names are removed from the leader's book.
14. Everyone who walks with us is expected to make an annual contribution towards the cost of our websites.

Route Grades Information

The mountains in the Costa Blanca region are rugged and the paths are often rough with numerous hazards to cause tripping, loose stones and thick undergrowth. Care is needed at all times. Walkers should assess their ability to complete the walks

taking into account the following walk gradings:-

E - Easy: A walk of up to 4½ hours on good surfaced tracks and less than 200metres ascent.

M - Moderate: up to 12km, less than 400 metres ascent and less than 50% rough going.

MS - Moderately Strenuous: Up to 600 metres ascent and/or no more than 15 km with some rough going taken at a reasonable pace.

S - Strenuous: More than 600 metres and/or more than 15km with steep, loose or heavily vegetated sections.

VS - Very Strenuous: More than 800 metres and/or more than 20km with steep, loose or heavily vegetated sections.

Scr - Scrambling: This implies the need for handholds to ascend steep rock pitches with a sense of exposure to vertigo and where a slip could lead to a serious accident.

X - Experienced walkers routes: Routes which require considerable stamina and/or significant scrambling skills on rough, steep or exposed sections.

A - All good tracks

B -Less than half the route on rough ground

C - More than half the route on rough ground

Examples:- Programme grades could be expressed as M/B – meaning a moderate walk with less than half the walk on rough ground,

or VS/C/Scr/X – indicating a very strenuous walk with more than half the route on rough