

# **COSTA BLANCA MOUNTAIN** **WALKERS CONVENTIONS**

## **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.

## **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 should assess the conditions and decide on whether; the walk should proceed, proceed with amended route or be cancelled. The leader's decision is final. In extreme weather it is at the discretion of the leader whether to turn up or not at the meeting point if prior notification has been sent on Stop Press and Facebook.
2. The walk leader may appoint a sweeper (someone at the rear of the group) who will carry the log book of participants and keep track of the walkers. The sweeper must be an experienced walker for the level of walk being conducted.
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 and walk where requested by the Leader.
  - C. Introduce the sweeper (if appointed)
  - D. Announce that each walker should have read the CBMW conventions and walk details in the Programme and print and initial their name in the leader's book thus accepting that they walk at their own risk.
  - E. Announce that walkers must stay behind the leader and avoid gaps appearing in the group. If a sweeper is appointed, they must stay in front of the sweeper.
  - F. All walkers should be in possession of a whistle which should be used to call the leaders attention should they lose sight of the main body of the group, have an accident or be unsure of the route.
  - G. Walkers must remove their names from the Leaders' book if they leave the walk or the route (see individual responsibilities-14).
  - H. Point out that everyone is expected to display a 'fob' on the outside of their rucksack and 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. Weak or

slow walkers should be encouraged to be at the front end of the group and determine the pace.

5. The leader is responsible for keeping control of the group by maintaining visual contact with the last walker in the group. The group should re-group at each junction if clear sight is not possible.

6. If anyone proves unfit or unwell for the walk they should be required to sign out and turn back. At least two people should return with the affected person. This needs to be done early in the walk (if the person is unfit). If no escorts are available then the whole group should return with the affected person.

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.

9. The Leader's log book of participants should contain the standard disclaimer clause (sticky label). The leader should ensure all walkers have printed and initialled their name clearly (additional information about the walk is optional)

### **Individual Responsibilities**

1. Ensure that you choose a walk from the programme that matches your current fitness and ability for distance, ascent and terrain.

2. Arrive at the meeting place in good time. Walks depart promptly at 10:00 unless otherwise noted.

3. Do not leave valuables in your car.

4. Always wear strong soled shoes or boots suitable for mountain walking.

5. Take a packed lunch and/or other energy snacks and plenty of water, especially in hot weather.

6. Always carry your own first aid kit and a whistle.

7. Carry adequate clothing and always waterproofs as the weather in the mountains can change quickly. Remember that there is always the possibility of having to remain on the mountain during the night in an emergency.

8. Stay in contact with the people ahead of you and behind you particularly at junctions and if too large a gap opens up signal (use your whistle) to the leader for a stop so that the gap can be closed.

9. Take all rubbish home with you including orange and banana skins.

10. Do not pick fruit.

11. Walking poles when not in use should be carried with the points facing forwards and down.

12. 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 and walk where requested by the leader.

13. In times of bad weather walkers should phone the leader if in doubt about whether the walk will go ahead. Check Stop Press on the CBMW website before leaving home for any late changes.

14. 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.

15. Everyone who walks with us is expected to make an annual contribution towards the cost of our websites and display the current year's "fob" on their rucksack. One fob only, please. Ideally, ID should always be carried together with a contact name In Case of Emergency (ICE).

### **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 ground, some scrambling and suitability only for experienced mountaineers.