



Covid-19 Guidelines for Walkers

Introduction

Welcome back to Rail Rambles! We run a programme of free public guided walks from railway stations in Mid-Wales and the Marches, with no membership of any organisation required. Our programme is organised by volunteer members of the Rail Rambles Association and produced with the support of Transport for Wales.

During the Covid-19 pandemic, the walks are still free and open to the public, but we are having to run things a bit differently in order that we can all keep each other safe.

With that in mind, we have written these guidelines to comply with both the English and Welsh government's Covid-19 regulations and to ensure that all our walks are undertaken in a Covid-19 secure manner. They are intended to be read in conjunction with our standard walker information, which you can find at <https://www.railrambles.org/important-advice/>.

Although Rail Rambles are outdoor activities, there are still Covid-19 risks from touching surfaces and the risk of transmission from person to person. These guidelines will help keep these risks to a minimum and control the spread of the virus between people walking with Rail Rambles, other members of the public, landowners and farm staff, etc.

The following web sites provide further guidance and advice for walkers.

English and Welsh governments:

<https://www.gov.uk/coronavirus>

<https://gov.wales/coronavirus>

[NHS Covid-19 app](#)

The Ramblers:

<https://www.ramblers.org.uk/coronavirus>

Rail operators:

<https://tfwrail.wales/covid-19>

<https://www.westmidlandsrailway.co.uk/coronavirus-travel-advice>

What's different?

If you're a regular Rail Rambler, you'll notice a few differences during the Covid-19 pandemic.

Walk booking: Because we have to limit numbers on walks and have to collect contact details for NHS Test and Trace, we have had to put a walk booking system in place for now. You will need to book via our web site and give contact information.

To book any walk, please click [book here](#) and this will take you to the Eventbrite calendar. You then need to select the date for the walk, plus you will be asked to register. The next step is to enter the number of 'tickets' (which for our purposes means spaces on the walk) you require and you will be asked firstly for your contact information and then to give details for those attending. Once you have booked, you will see a confirmation message on the screen. An email will also be sent to the address provided by the person who made the booking. When a ramble is fully subscribed, there will be a 'wait list' so that if anyone should



change their mind and cancel the next person will be given the chance to take up the place. If for any reason you choose not to attend, please let us know as soon as your circumstances change.

Your contact details will be held securely for 21 days and then deleted; they will not be used for any purpose other than Test and Trace. We're very sorry, but during the pandemic you will not be able to just turn up without booking as you normally can; if you do, you will not be allowed to walk with us.

Other Differences : As you know, one of the aims of Rail Rambles is to encourage the use of rail for access to walks, and all our walks will continue to be from railway stations and timed to use available trains. However, we're very aware that many of you won't feel comfortable travelling by train at the moment, and that's absolutely fine with us. To help you if you're driving, we will be offering mostly circular walks from stations where there is enough parking either at the station or nearby, and we will give you the walk start time as well as the train times.

Guidelines for the walks

Before the walk

- Please ensure that you are aware of current guidelines on travel and on how to walk outdoors in a responsible manner during the pandemic (refer to the sources of advice listed above if you are unsure).
- As explained above, please ensure you have a confirmed booking for the walk. Reading and agreeing to abide by these Covid-19 walker guidelines is a condition of booking, so please familiarise yourself with them.
- If you are booked on a walk, please look out for messages from us. We may need to cancel at short notice if the lockdown situation changes, or if our leaders become unavailable.
- Please help us by only coming out if:
 - You live in an area free of local lockdown conditions;
 - You (and all those you live with) are free from Covid-19 symptoms and have not been required by NHS Test and Trace to self-isolate.
- If you do have to pull out, please let us know as soon as possible by contacting info@railrambles.org as there may be a waiting list for your walk.
- Please ensure that you have enough personal protective equipment (PPE – e.g., face covering/s, gloves, hand sanitiser) for the whole day, based on what is currently advised/required by government (and the rail companies if travelling by train).
- If driving to the walk starting point please remember parking at the station may be limited, so please allow plenty of time to find alternative parking and then get to the starting point of the walk.

At the start of the walk

- Please let the leaders know if you have hearing difficulties. We know that social distancing may be making things harder for you and our leaders will want to help as much as they can.
- There will be a pre-walk introduction as usual but to allow social distancing this may have to take place away from the walk starting point. Please try to maintain social distance during the talk and please advise the leaders if you cannot hear them or if there's anything you don't understand.



- Please ensure the leaders have ticked your name off the Test and Trace list before the walk commences.
- If you're coming by train, you might like to know that we won't be collecting your ticket (or asking for details of your e-ticket) at this point, as we've suspended this during the Covid-19 pandemic.

During the walk

Please do everything you normally would to keep yourself and the party safe from normal walking hazards and to protect the countryside. In addition:

- Please remember to maintain the appropriate social distance from other walkers at all times.
- Please also be mindful of the risks attached to sharing food and drink or any other personal items beyond your immediate household, and remember to sanitise your hands before coffee / drinks and lunch stops.
- If you need assistance during the walk – or notice that a fellow walker needs assistance – please advise one of the leaders, who will help you.
- Please avoid touching path furniture (i.e., gates, stiles, etc.) wherever possible and/or use gloves/hand sanitiser as appropriate when you do have to touch it (which of course you will at some point). We have asked our leaders to open and close gates wherever possible, so please let them do so unless they ask for help.
- Leaders will warn you when the walk will be passing through farm yards and other private areas and will allow time for you to sanitise and (should you wish to do so) put a face mask on.

After the walk

- For NHS Test and Trace requirements, please contact us via info@railrambles.org if you have any Covid-19 related issues.

Finally

- We would like you to enjoy your day walking with Rail Rambles but please observe the above guidelines to ensure everyone else also has a safe and enjoyable day.
- Rail Rambles would encourage all walkers to download and use the NHS Covid-19 app. More information and download instructions can be found [here](#).