

THE UNIVERSITY *of* York

OUTDOOR SOCIETY



Handbook

2016 - 2017



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Welcome to the University of York Outdoor Society!

We are one of the largest and most active societies at the University of York. We organise walks and trips every Sunday to various beautiful locations throughout Yorkshire catering for both for those who prefer a shorter walk at a gentle pace and those who favour a longer more energetic route.

The walks are generally quite casual, and open to everybody whether or not you have purchased membership, through there is a price difference in tickets. We take a coach to our chosen venue, and from there split into two groups, one group takes a medium-length walk whilst the second group take on a larger route. Both walks are pre-planned and led by our trained walk leaders.

Medium Walks:

Medium walks are generally between 6 and 8 miles (10-13 km) long, and tend to be at a reasonably gentle pace and always include a stop for a pub lunch. However you should bring drinks and snacks to keep you going and cash for the pub lunch (most pubs have a minimum card payment).

Occasionally pre-orders are needed for the pub. If this is the case you will be contacted by the walk coordinator.

Long Walks:

Long walks are slightly more challenging and are between 10 and 12 miles (16-19 km) long and don't include a pub lunch but instead stop for a packed lunch along the way at a convenient point.

The pace on the long walk is generally faster since we need to cover more ground and still be back to rendezvous with the medium walkers in time for the return coach. The walk will often include a climb. It is recommended that if you have little or no walking experience that you try a medium walk first before attempting the long walk.

Timings:

We meet near the benches outside the Roger Kirk Centre in James College at 8.45 am for a 9:00 am departure.

At 4.00pm all the groups meet back at the coach and return back to the University, arriving no later than 6.00pm. The exact arrival time back to campus varies depending on where we are walking but we're normally back between 5-6pm.

Contacting Us:

Mailing List:

We have a mailing list which you can join on our website. We send out weekly emails to let you know where we are going each week and when the tickets go on sale. We will also notify you about any socials and any other relevant information.

Contact Us:

Email: outdoorsoc@yusu.org

Website: <http://www.outdoorsoc.co.uk/>

Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/outdoorsoc/>

Twitter: @outdoorsoc

Instagram: uoyoutdoorsoc

Costs:

Tickets:

Outdoor Society walks are open to everyone. To book a place on the trip, you must purchase a ticket from the YUSU website (<https://www.yusu.org/>). Tickets can also be brought on the day provided we have space on the coach, however we cannot guarantee you a place in these circumstances.

Tickets for the medium route go on sale from Monday - Wednesday of the given timetable week, and the long route tickets are available until Saturday evening. Everyone purchases the same ticket, which costs £7 plus a 50p booking fee, and if you're not a member, we'll ask for an extra £2 on the day. If you are unable to pursue a ticket via the YUSU website please contact us and we can sort things out for you.

If you wish to join the medium group but didn't purchase a ticket before Wednesday, you can purchase a long route ticket, we can't guarantee that there will be space in the pub. If you wish to do this please let your walk coordinator know on the day. You can also bring a pack lunch on the medium walk, in this case please buy a long walk ticket.

Membership:

Membership costs £12 for the entire year. This option earns you a £2 discount on all Sunday Walks. If you are not sure at the moment, you can always come on a few Sunday walks as a non-member to see if it's for you!

Membership can be purchased in person at the Fresher's Fair or on the Sunday Walks, or online via the YUSU website (<https://www.yusu.org/>).

Membership also allows you to borrow equipment from the society, with payment of a deposit. The equipment that can be borrowed is sleeping mats and bags. Unfortunately we cannot normally lend out maps, compasses or first aid kits (basically anything that is regularly used by our walk leaders). Please email or message our Facebook page for more information.

Duties of People:

Walk Leaders:

The walk leaders will lead the pre-planned walks. All walk leaders have either the National Silver Navigation Award or a lot of walking experience. The walk leader for a particular walk has overall responsibility for the group.

Walk Coordinator:

The walk coordinator is the walk leader that for a particular week will plan the routes of the walks, book the pub and generally lead the medium walk. They will also normally be the person ticking you on or off the coach to ensure that no one is left behind.

Backmarker:

The backmarker stays at the back of the group and make sure that all gates are closed after us and that we don't lose anyone. Although we try to provide backmarkers for all walks, sometimes due to walk leader availability this will not always be possible. If you find yourself at the back, please remember to close the gates!

Walkers:

As a walker you have responsibility for your own equipment and personal safety. We will do our best to keep you safe and provide warnings when needed, but we rely on walkers listening to and following the advice of the walk leader. Please DO NOT leave the group for any reason without your walk leaders permission and knowledge.

Walk Leader Training:

We train roughly six new walk leaders each year. Applications for walk leader training open towards the end of the Autumn Term and the training itself takes place over a weekend in mid-spring term. Please speak to one of our walk leaders or send us an email if you would like more information.

Committee:

The Outdoor Society Committee is elected each year by the society at our elections and AGM, which is normally towards the end of the Spring Term. The committee organise and run the walks. Positions on the committee are open to all paid members and are as follows:

- Chairperson (Signatory)
- Secretary (Signatory)
- Treasurer (Signatory)
- Social Secretary
- Transport Officer
- Equipment Officer
- Safety and Training Officer
- Webmaster
- Press and Publicity/ Merchandise Officer

All walk leaders are automatically on the committee.

Equipment:

Footwear:

It is important to have suitable footwear especially for the long walk. Walks, particularly in the winter months, can be wet and muddy and therefore soles that grip well on potentially slippery or rough ground are needed. We therefore recommend WALKING BOOT and SHOES. Sturdy trainers, and hiking boots are also acceptable. Please make sure your footwear fits to avoid blisters. We understand that some international students might struggle with bringing heavy walking boots due to baggage allowances and make allowances for this on the walks.

We do not advise:

- Plimsolls
- Converse
- Sandals
- Normal shoes/boots
- Wellies are only acceptable on the medium walk

This is for YOUR comfort and safety. If you do not wear suitable footwear you are putting yourself and others at risk. Walk leaders will decide on the day whether your equipment is to be suitable for the conditions likely to be encountered. If you are wearing footwear which your walk leader does not believe is suitable for the walk you will be either asked to join the medium walk or not allowed on the coach. (This has occurred when some members turned up in trainers for a walk in lying snow.) The walk leader is responsible for your safety and his or her decision is final.

Shop assistants can normally give advice on fitting boots and boot care. Good walking boots are expensive, but with good care will last several years.

Essential Equipment:

The following equipment is essential for walking in all weathers.

- Bring a WATERPROOF, even if the weather is fine in the morning. In the hills weather can be changeable.
- Make sure you have sufficient water for the day, particularly when it is hot.
- Make sure that you have a waterproof bag to carry your belongings in.
- Wear suitable layers for the weather. Gloves, hats and scarves are always useful in the winter time. You are able to leave layers on the coach if needed.

- If you are doing the medium walk please bring money for the pub. If you are doing the long walk please bring a pack lunch. Please bring snacks to get you through the day.
- Please DO NOT wear jeans as they can be very unpleasant to wear when wet. Walking trousers, leggings or shorts are much better!

Useful Equipment:

The following equipment is not essential, however some people find it useful, particularly on the long walk.

- Waterproof trousers
- Waterproof gloves
- Gaiters
- Walking stick/poles
- Sunhat
- Sun-cream
- Sunglasses
- Thermos Flask
- Insect Repellent

Outdoor Shops in York:

- GO Outdoors, Foss Bank
- Trespass, St Sampsons Square
- Millets, Market Street
- Nevisport, St Sampsons Square
- Blacks, St Helen's Square
- Yeomans Outdoors Leisure, Blake Street
- Jack Wolfskin, Lendel
- The North Face, Low Petergate and York Designer Outlet
- Mountain Warehouse, York Designer Outlet
- Craghoppers, York Designer Outlet

Sports direct also sell a lot of walking equipment, at a much lower price than most of these shops.

The Ordnance Survey is the best source of outdoor maps: <https://www.ordnancesurvey.co.uk/>

First Aid:

Your walk leader will have an outdoor first aid kit with them. Some walk leaders also have first aid qualifications.

If you suffer from a medical condition please make sure you have appropriate medication (first aiders are not allowed to give medication) and if need be inform your walk leader in confidence so they can take it into account in the walk.

Mountain Rescue can be called for all off road accidents in the UK by calling 999 and asking for the police and then the mountain rescue.

More information about first aid can be found at the following websites:

<http://www.redcross.org.uk/What-we-do/First-aid/Everyday-First-Aid>

<http://www.nhs.uk/Conditions/Accidents-and-first-aid/Pages/Introduction.aspx>

<http://www.sja.org.uk/sja/first-aid-advice.aspx>

Outdoor Society History:

The University of York Outdoor Society was founded on 19th October 1964, making it one of the longest running societies at York. It all started when a group of friends in the Kings Manor JCR came up with the idea to create a rambling society to take advantage of the wonderful countryside surrounding York and to take a break from the day to day life in York!

On 29th October the first meeting was held in Kings Manor and after some discussion, "Outdoor Society" emerged as the favoured choice for the name of the new society. By the end of the first week 50 members had signed up, each paying 4 shillings (4/-) for the privilege.

The first walk was to Rievaulx Abbey and Helmsley, which took place on Sunday 15th November. Later trips included Richmond, Fountains Abbey and Whitby.

Walkers' Codes:

The Country Code, The Countryside Code and The Scottish Outdoor Access Code are sets of rules for visitors to rural areas of the UK in order to protect the countryside.

The Country Code:

The Country Code was developed by several organisations in the 1930s. The most widely accepted version of The Country Code was published in 1981 by The Countryside Commission.

- Enjoy the countryside and respect its life and work
- Guard against all risk of fire
- Leave all gates as you found them
- Keep your pets under close control
- Keep to public paths across farmland
- Use gates and stiles to cross fences, hedges and walls
- Leave livestock, crops and machinery alone
- Take your litter home
- Help to keep all water clean
- Protect wildlife, plants and trees
- Take special care on country roads
- Make no unnecessary noise

Countryside Code:

The Country Code was updated in 2004 and became the Countryside Code to take account of the introduction of new open access legalisation.

- Be safe - plan ahead and follow any signs
- Leave gates and property as you find them
- Protect plants and animals, and take your litter home
- Keep dogs under close control
- Consider other people

Scotland has a different code called the Scottish Outdoor Access Code. We, as a society, do not plan walks in Scotland, but you will need to be aware of it if you ever walk there.

More information can be found at:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/the-countryside-code>

On the Walk:

Road Walking:

We try to avoid road walking as much as possible, however it is not always avoidable. If we are required to road walk and there is no pavement please walk in single file on the CORRECT side of the road and obey general traffic safety. When road walking this is opposite to the side that the cars travelling in the same direction as you are (cars in the UK drive on the left and therefore walkers walk on the RIGHT of the road). This enables you to see approaching cars and move out of the way if needed. Your walk leader and backmarker will attempt to warn you of on-coming cars, however please be aware that there might be very little warning.

Steep Slopes:

When ascending or descending a steep slope, particularly if it is wet, muddy or icy, please leave a gap between you and the person in front of you so that if someone does slip no one else is knocked over. Your walk leader will often alert you when this is particularly important.

Public Rights of Way:

A *public footpath* in England and Wales is a path on which the public have a legally protected right to pass and repass along. We have a very extensive network of such public footpaths, some of which are hundreds of years old, dating from before the enclosure of agricultural land into fields.

A *public bridleway* is a path along which the public have the right to walk and ride or lead a horse. The law allows cycles to be also used on bridleways, but the landowner is not required to facilitate the use of cycles and cyclists are obliged to give way to other users.

A *byway open to all traffic (BOAT)* is a route along which the public is also allowed to use vehicles, but is used mainly by the public as a footpath and a bridleway.

A *restrictive byway* is a path along which the public have the right to walk, ride or use non-mechanically propelled vehicles (bicycles, horse-drawn carriages ect).

A *permissive path, permitted path or concessionary path* is a path whose use is allowed by the landowner. A permissive path will often not be open all year round depending on the needs of the landowner and may not be marked on maps.

The Right to Roam allows the public to walk on *access land*. Access land may be closed for up to 28 days per year, while rights of way must be open all year round unless special permission is given by the local authority.

Access land is land which by law the public has the right to conditional access, normally uncultured land such as moorland and coast land.

More information can be found at:

<http://www.ramblers.org.uk/advice/rights-of-way-law-in-england-and-wales/basics-of-rights-of-way-law.aspx>

<https://www.gov.uk/right-of-way-open-access-land/overview>

<http://www.ramblers.org.uk/advice/paths-and-access/england/what-is-the-right-to-roam.aspx>