



Information for New Members and Guests

Welcome to St Edwards Fellwalkers.

We are an all-weather, all-year round walking club, with walks taking place every alternate Saturday in areas such as the Lake District, Northumberland, Yorkshire Moors, Yorkshire Dales and Scottish Borders. You will get the opportunity to visit some of the most picturesque and scenic countryside, towns and villages some of which you have probably never even heard of!!

We have an active social calendar which includes activities such as Barn and Youth Hostel Weekends, camping weekends, theatre nights and fundraising discos. There is also the chance to take part in training activities such as map reading and first aid and the occasional challenge/long distance walk such as the Lyke Wake Walk or Three Peaks of Yorkshire.

1) Coach pick-up points

The coach follows the same route each week and collects people at the designated points. The first pick-up point is at Sainsbury's on the Broadway in Tynemouth. The coach then heads through Whitley Bay and Monkseaton and along the Old Coast Road to South Gosforth (see map for all coach pick-up points). Some of our members bring their cars to park at their nearest pick-up point. The coach company we currently use is Rowells of Prudhoe.

2) Which walk?

To join the club you have to be fit enough to walk a minimum of 8 miles comfortably.

For your safety, and that of others, members and guests should familiarise themselves with the club Guidelines and the Generic Risk Assessment, which are included on the Home & Downloads pages of our website. If you do not have access to a computer, please contact us for a hard copy.

On the day there is usually a choice of four walks, which vary in distance and height to cater for the varying levels of fitness of members and these will often depend on local conditions but are typically: -

1. A 15-16 mile walk, which will tend to reach the higher hills and is intended for the stronger faster walker. Examples often include Helvellyn, Sharp Edge, and the Cheviots. (Average speed about 6/7 km per hour).
2. A 12-13 mile walk that will still tend to go fairly high but over a shorter distance. (Average speed about 5/6 km per hour).
3. A 9-11 mile walk, which is similar to the 2nd walk with perhaps, less height gained. (Average speed about 4/5 km per hour).
4. A 6-9 mile walk that is essentially low level with minimal hill walking. (Average speed about 3/4km per hour).

Choose a walk which you consider you can finish on the day, in the time allowed,(usually between 5 and 6 hours) taking into consideration the weather, the expected conditions underfoot and your own level of fitness. Don't learn the hard way about the need to make a suitable choice of walk before starting out. Maps will be circulated on the day which will show the distance, height and terrain of each walk and information is always posted on the club website in the weeks prior to the walk.

3) What shall I bring with me?

We believe in all members and guests enjoying their walk in safety and comfort. That said, if you are inadequately prepared for a given walk you may become a danger to others, as well as a danger to yourself. The best thing you can do for your own safety is to be properly prepared and equipped.

3a) Essential equipment - should include rucksack, walking boots, waterproof Jacket, packed lunch, hot or cold drink, (1 litre water minimum - although more will be required in summer months). Waterproof trousers, hat, gloves and warm clothing will be required for winter months. Remember that synthetic fibres have much better breathing and drying qualities. Cotton clothing should be avoided and **jeans should never been worn on a walk**. You should also bring a first aid kit, bivvy (survival) bag, whistle and spare clothing. A torch should also be carried during the winter months.

3b) For additional safety - you may wish to bring a map and compass (if you can use them).

3c) A change of clothes - as we walk in all weathers we can often end up quite wet and muddy so we will change into dry, comfortable, clothing for the evening stop at the pub. You can leave your spare clothes in a separate bag on the coach.

4) A typical day out

You should plan to be at the bus stop at the designated time, look out for other members and of course the coach operated by Rowells. Rucksacks and bags containing your change of clothing should be placed in the side lockers/boot of the coach. We usually turn up dressed in our walking gear.

Once on the coach the Club Chairman (or deputy) will announce the format of the day, the walking routes for the day will be circulated and you will get the opportunity to put your name down for your chosen walk. A good rule of thumb if you are not sure which one to do, is to start with the shortest and work your way up. About half way to our destination we will stop somewhere for toilets, coffee or breakfast, although some people prefer to stay on the bus and bring their own refreshments.

After you have chosen which walk to do find out who the walk leader is (there will be one for each walk). This person will lead the group for the day's walk. **Please note that you undertake walks at your own risk and your safety is up to you.**

The Club Chairman (or deputy) will announce when it is time for your walk to get off the coach, there will be time to get your rucksack out of the side lockers/boot and put on any waterproofs etc. Each walk will have a stop for lunch, the duration and time of the stops vary depending on the weather and walk distance. The walks may be linear or circular but you will always meet the coach at the end of the walk. Don't worry, your fellow club members will keep you right, so don't be afraid to ask.

Once back at the coach you can, if you wish, change out of your walking gear (most of us do). We usually all meet up in a local pub/hotel where the walk has finished giving you the chance to socialise and get an evening meal if you so wish (some do, some don't). The coach usually leaves at around 6.30 pm and arrives back in Tynemouth between 8.30 and 9 o'clock.

5) Membership

The cost of joining the club is £15, which is renewable (£13) every January. Please complete the application form (available on the website) and return it to the membership secretary. Prior to joining, you might want to try a walk as a **guest** (see 5b below).

5a) Bookings

- The cost of each walk is £8 for the day regardless of the destination
- Bookings are taken for up to three walks (six weeks) in advance.
- Bookings are normally made at 7.00pm prior to the committee meetings which are held at Cullercoats Social Club on the Wednesday prior to every walk (we meet in the upstairs room).
- Bookings can also be made by contacting Pat or Sandra at bookings@stedwardsfellwalkers.co.uk or tel. 0191 259 0173.
- For safety reasons, bookings & payments taken on the coach on a Saturday's walk are kept to a minimum.

5b) Coming out as a guest

- Before committing to full membership you can join our walks as a **guest**. The cost for the walk remains the same at £8.
- To book onto a walk you should contact either the membership or booking secretaries, as described above.
- Please note that for walks in high demand, priority for bookings is given to members.
- Normally, we allow guests to come on a maximum of 3 walks, after which we would ask that they become a full member.

5c) Cancellations & credits

- A credit can be given for walks that are cancelled no later than the Sunday prior to the walk.

5d) Additional benefits

- Your membership will also entitle you to a discount at a number of local outdoor gear shops, including Great Outdoors at Shiremoor and Walk Outdoors in Whitley Bay. Please remember to take your membership card with you.

6) Walk programme

The walk programme is arranged annually in advance and a copy is available on the club website to download.

7) What next?

If you need any further information or have any questions, do not hesitate to contact me.

Ray Salkeld

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email : membership@stedwardsfellwalkers.co.uk