

## THE EPPING FOREST HF GROUP

# Rules and Safety Guidelines

### **On the two most crucial issues of all, clothes and food and water-**

**Clothes** Adequate clothing and footwear are vital, to cope with adverse weather and muddy conditions. It is recommended that you wear walking boots or Wellingtons and carry a rucksack containing wet gear and other items which you may need (e.g. compass and map). For the countryside, stout boots, warm and windproof clothing and waterproofs are essential. In winter, you need a warm hat and woollen gloves and some spare warm dry clothing. For town and urban walking in dry weather, lighter footwear may be more comfortable.

**Food and drink** Packed lunches and hot or cold drinks should be carried. There will be breaks for coffee, lunch and tea on most walks. Please do not consume your own food and drink on pub premises and do not rely on getting food at a lunchtime pub stop. In addition to packed lunches, it is advisable to carry 'emergency rations' in the form of glucose or chocolate - and in very hot weather a cold drink supply is essential, to avoid the possibility of dehydration.

**Other provisions** A compass and a map may be helpful, in case you are inadvertently separated from the main party - and also a piercing whistle, to make contact with them again. In the summer, it is advisable to bring sun cream to serve as protection for head and neck. A small supply of sticking plasters, ointment and bandages should also be carried, in case of any accidents.

*Note* Leaders may change or cancel walks because of bad weather or other good reasons, and have the right to prevent people from joining the walk because of lack of fitness, inadequate clothing or footwear, or on any other safety grounds.

### **And some basic rules of behaviour -**

Do not walk in front of the leader but keep within a reasonable distance of him or her.

Never leave a walk or go ahead without the leader's consent. If you wish to make an unscheduled "comfort stop", or to pause for a little while to take a photograph, please make sure that either the leader or the "back-marker" - the leader's representative, walking at the rear of the group is aware of this.

Do not walk beyond your capabilities.

Behave with consideration for all members of the party and assist each other when necessary or under the direction of the leader.

If using a walking stick, always point it downwards and to the front when not in use, do not swing it carelessly and place it over a stile before mounting.

Please do NOT bring a dog on a walk, unless it is a working guide dog in harness.

***Disclaimer. Walkers join walks at their own risk and the Group cannot be held responsible for any accidents or losses that may occur during a walk. But leaders and other members of a party will, of course, provide all the assistance they possibly can.***