

RAMBLING IN SAFETY

On Our Rambles

We advise all members, whether on loan scooters or on their own vehicles to:

- **Always take with you:**
 - Adequate clothing for if the weather gets bad. What starts out as a fine day all too often turns cold and wet.
 - A First Aid Kit - and know how to use it.
 - Spare high-energy snack bars and drink.
 - A space blanket to keep you warm if you have to wait in the open

- **Leave a good distance between your own scooter and the one in front** – so that if someone stops suddenly you will have time to stop your own scooter safely.

- **Always turn off the scooter if you stop** (even for a short time). It is all too easy for you or someone near you to accidentally lean on the controls and send the scooter shooting forward – or backwards – at a speed which could seriously injure a bystander. This is even more important when tricky slopes or cambers could cause the scooter to turn over.

- **On slopes**
 - Turn your speed down to the “Tortoise” setting (4mph)
 - Leave more space than usual between yourself and the preceding scooter – both to guard against collision and to ensure you can maintain steady speed. If the person in front is blocking your advance up a steep slope you may have to stop and it is then more difficult to regain momentum.
 - When going up a steep hill make sure your weight is as far forward as possible in the seat. This will keep you stable and help the wheels to grip.

- **Negotiating roads** – as far as possible we arrange rambles well away from roads but there are sometimes occasions where we are forced to cross or follow roads. In these cases:
 - Follow the directions of the marshals, who will be trying to get scooters to safety while interfering as little as possible with the passage of traffic.
 - When you have crossed a road move well away from the crossing point so that the scooters following you will be able to get off the road safely.

Rambling on You Own

Any problems on our rambles are usually resolved by the ramble leader or other attendees. But what if you go off on your own? Here are some thoughts on how you can help to keep yourself safe.

- **Take someone else with you** - preferably three of you - especially in remote areas.
- **Always make sure someone knows where you are going and what time you will be back.**
 - Leave them with a map with your route drawn in.
 - Make sure you let them know you are back to save a false call out endangering the rescuers!
- **In case there are problems with your scooter:**
 - Know how to put your vehicle into free-wheel so that it can be pushed if necessary.
 - Make sure you take tools and the means to repair a puncture. Even if you can't use them yourself a passer-by will usually help. This has happened several times to our members.
- **Always take with you:**
 - Adequate clothing for if the weather gets bad. What starts out as a fine day all too often turns cold and wet.
 - A First Aid Kit - and know how to use it.
 - Spare high-energy snack bars and drink.
- **Know how to summon help and how to stay safe until someone arrives:**
 - Take a mobile phone with a fully charged battery. If you can't get through on speech, try a text. If you dial 999 then your call will be carried by any service provider, not just your own. (If you're outside the UK dial 112 which will contact the emergency services anywhere in the world)
 - Download (and practice using) [What3Words](#). This app pinpoints your location to within a 3 metre square anywhere in the world by means of a unique combination of three words.
 - Register your phone on [Emergency SMS](#) . Do this NOW! Then, should you need to, you can send a text to 999. Give details of where you are and what the problem is. Just text 'register' to 999
 - Take a whistle and (head) torch. The International Rescue Code is six blasts on a whistle or flashes with a light repeated every minute. The answer call from a rescuer is three blasts/flashes.
 - Take a Space Blanket, bivi-bag or, especially if you can't get off your scooter, a Group Shelter. A Group Shelter is usually carried by the leader of a group going into the mountains. It is like a tent with no bottom or poles. Everyone sits in a circle on their rucksacks, pulls the Shelter over them all and tucks the bottom under their sacks. It soon gets nice and warm in there! For your use a Group Shelter goes completely over you and your scooter. They are available from Cotswold Outdoors. Don't forget to ask for your 15% discount as a member of the Disabled Ramblers. [Group Shelter](#)

- **Giving your location to rescue services**
 - Know where you are. Take a map and compass and know how to use them – even if you have a GPS.
 - If you have a Smart Phone - know how to use the built-in GPS to give your location as a map reference.
 - Download (and practice using) [What3Words](#). This app pinpoints your location to within a 3 metre square anywhere in the world by means of a unique combination of three words.

- **Useful technology:**
 - Install the ViewRanger app on your smartphone. This is free and comes with basic maps or you can install the OS maps. This can record your route and show you exactly where you are.
 - Use Buddy Beacon on ViewRanger. Once set up another person can watch where you are on their phone or computer in real time.
 - Going really wild? Take a PLB – Personal Locating Beacon. This sends a signal to a satellite and so doesn't need a phone signal to work. [McMurdo FastFind PLB](#)
 - Or get a SPOT for satellite and GPS functions. [Find Me Spot](#)

Here's hoping you never need to use any of the above precautions but if you do get into trouble and haven't prepared then good luck – you just might need it!