

New to National Trips? Here's what you need to know

Red Rope **National Trips** are a great opportunity to meet and make friends with Red Rope members from around the country and enjoy wonderful holidays together.

National Trips are mostly week-long so give time to develop fitness, skills and confidence without the pressure of trying to fit too much into a weekend.

We stay in mountain huts, cottages, hostels or campsites. The huts are owned by other clubs and most are in wonderful locations with good facilities, enough showers, toilets, space to relax and dorms with bunk beds (with beds not allocated to people until everyone arrives). We have a hut share agreement at the comfortable Cae Ysgubor in Beddgelert, Snowdonia, and The Loft in Langdale, Lake District. For travel there are options of car-sharing or using public transport.

A pre-trip Zoom meeting will be arranged for two weeks before the trip to introduce everyone to each other and share out jobs. Activities are planned day by day, depending on what people suggest and the weather.

What to expect

Each evening, time is spent discussing options for the following day. Expect several different walks for groups of 3 to 5 to take place each day with a range of walk lengths and terrain. Activities other than walking include cycling, scrambling and climbing and rest days at the hut/house or sightseeing are often planned too. Training such as navigation, scrambling, winter skills, first aid is offered on at least one trip each year and informal skill sharing is offered on all trips.

Members are encouraged to share in leading walks but there will always be someone who is happy to lead on route planning and navigation. Filling out a route card together enables group decisions to be made on start times, gear that may be needed such as emergency shelters, expected km per hour and number of rest stops. All this should be done collectively so that the group can be certain that their route can be completed safely in daylight hours if that is what is wanted. If it cannot then there will be time to find an alternative. There is a clothing and personal gear checklist on the route card to be checked just before you start walking - it should help to avoid forgetting your sandwiches!

Food and transport on trips

All food including breakfast, lunch and dinner is provided as part of the trip with the cost included in the nightly charge, paid in advance. There will be extra costs if you are using cars to get to the start of walks as drivers keep a record of mileage so that costs can be calculated on a banded basis. The booking form asks for information on special dietary requirements/allergies and if you bring anything for yourself you can label it for personal use. The food may be stored as 'meals' so that ingredients aren't used in error.

Breakfast: muesli, porridge, toast, eggs and beans on offer, so help yourself.

Lunch: bread, sandwich fillings, fruit and bars, so bring a lunchbox and water container/flask.

Evening meals: two or three people will prepare and cook the meal. Meals will have been agreed in advance and all ingredients either brought by the cooks or added to a shopping list. Receipts for food bought during the week should be given to the trip treasurer for reimbursement at the end of the week. Meals are usually vegetarian.

Evenings are mostly spent at the hut/cottage relaxing, planning routes and packing rucksacks. Pub visits are more likely after walks than after the meal but if the pub is nearby people might go.

And Finally... The end of the trip will involve some cleaning up, sorting out any leftover food and packing. Hopefully someone will be happy to write a short trip report for the Bulletin and everyone will want to come on another trip.