

foxford walking festival

3rd & 4th June 2017

**Health and Safety Plan
Statement & Strategy**

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Outline of Events

The Foxford Walking Festival is an annual event, being run this year during the first weekend in June. It is scheduled for Saturday & Sunday, 3rd and 4th of June in 2017. All walking events will commence and finish at the Foxford Sport and Leisure Centre, Green Rd, Foxford, Co. Mayo. The car park is on the right hand side of the road opposite the entrance to Foxford Woollen Mills.

The event consists of 6 guided walks over two days. Walks range from easy to moderate and hard. There are two walks graded as hard and one takes place on Saturday 3 June, with the other the following day. Easy and moderate walks take place on both days of the festival. A brief summary of the individual walks is provided hereunder.

Saturday 3 June 2017

Saturday - Walk 1: Ox Mountains

Start Time: Bus departs at 9.30am

Grade: Hard

Distance: 15km approx.

Time: Allow 5.5/6hrs

Total Ascent: 525m approx

Walk Start Point: Foxford Sports and Leisure Centre with bus to Bonniconlon

Walk Finish Point: Foxford Sports and Leisure Centre with bus from Boyhollagh.

Saturday - Walk 2: Tavnaghmore

Walk Start Time: 10.00am

Grade: Moderate

Distance: 14kms approx.

Time: Allow 3.5 to 4hrs

Total Ascent: 80m

Walk Start & Finish Point: Foxford Sports and Leisure Centre.

Saturday - Walk 3: Rinanny Loop

Walk Start Time: 11am

Grade: Easy/Family Friendly

Distance: 4.5kms approx.

Time: Allow 1.5 to 2hrs

Total Ascent: Insignificant

Walk Start & Finish Point: Foxford Sports and Leisure Centre

Sunday 4 June 2017

Saturday - Walk 1: Nephin Mountain

Start Time: Bus departs at 9.30am

Grade: Hard

Distance: 8km approx.

Time: Allow 5.5 to 6hrs

Total Ascent: Approx. 800m

Walk Start Point: Foxford Sports & Leisure Centre with bus to Lahardaun

Walk Finish Point: Foxford Sports & Leisure Centre with bus from Prughish.

Sunday - Walk 2: Larganmore

Start Time: Bus departs at 10.00am

Grade: Moderate with rough terrain

Distance: 10km.

Time: Allow 4.5hrs

Total Ascent: 200m approx.

Walk Start Point: Foxford Sports and Leisure Centre with bus to Glandaduff

Walk Finish Point Foxford Sports and Leisure Centre with bus from Glandaduff

Sunday - Walk 3: Drummin Wood

Start Time: Bus departs at 11.00am

Grade: Easy/Family Friendly

Distance: 4/5km.

Time: Allow 1.5 to 2hrs

Total Ascent: 10m approx.

Walk Start Point: Foxford Sports and Leisure Centre with bus to Drummin Wood

Walk Finish Point: Foxford Sports and Leisure Centre with bus from Drummin Wood

Marshalls will be available for traffic management in the vicinity of Foxford Sports and Leisure Centre as required. Stewards on walks will also provide traffic management services on other routes as necessary. All marshals and stewards will wear High Vis clothing. Uniformed civil defence officers will be present with an official vehicle at Foxford Sports and Leisure Centre.

Appropriate road signs will be in place before the event so that local motorists will be aware of the upcoming walks. Local Radio, media announcements and advertising will also increase awareness.

Walking Terrain

The terrain for the event is public road, forest track, farmland, riverside trails, bog roads and open mountain. Obstacles to be negotiated on the route may include stiles, bridges, stone steps, electric fences and barbed wire fencing, uneven/rough terrain including dykes and ditches. As a participant, please be aware of these obstacles and respectful of other walkers taking part in the event.

Private Property

Please be conscious that we will be travelling over other people's property including active farmland and commonage. Participants are requested to comply with any relevant instructions and to avoid interference with livestock or other farm activities. The Festival Committee acknowledges the generous support of landowners that continue to facilitate such access.

Environment

Some routes used during the walking festival cross or come close to Special Areas of Conservation (SAC) or Special Protection Areas (SPA) or National Heritage Areas (NHA). These areas are so designated because of their importance in preserving and maintaining our many fragile species and the flora and fauna of our unique habitats. Walkers are asked to maintain a healthy respect for the land they traverse and to minimise any impact on the environment, wildlife and built heritage. In this way, we can continue a sustainable interaction with our wild areas.

Leave No Trace

Please do not litter route, as even biodegradable items such as banana skins, orange peel and teabags take years to disappear. Bins are provided in Foxford, but are generally not available along walking routes. Please bring your litter home. For further information on how to care for the countryside: www.leavenotraceireland.org

Outline & Statement of Health and Safety Responsibilities

The Foxford Walking Festival Committee acknowledges their responsibilities in seeking to ensure the safety of all participants. It will take every reasonably practicable action necessary in ensuring the safety, health and welfare of all walkers and those involved in the event, including members of the public. Walkers are also reminded they are participating in outdoor activities with inherent dangers. All participants are requested to apply due care and attention while on the walks and to be cognisant of the safety of other walkers and the general public also.

Health and Safety Procedures

The festival organisers have identified a number of potential serious incidents that may occur throughout the course of the event. The following procedures have been devised in responding to such occurrences. It is anticipated that these procedures will mitigate any potential outcomes.

First Aid/ Medical Arrangements

The organisers have contracted the services of the Civil Defence, who will be available over both days of the walking festival. Participants must inform event organisers of any medical condition, injury or medication needed, be sure to bring any medication required on the day. Walk leaders may determine a particular walk is

unsuitable for a participant, due to medical concerns, or because of inappropriate attire or equipment. It is incumbent on all participants to ensure they possess the required level of fitness in order to safely participate in their chosen walk. Walkers with any doubts or concerns regarding their fitness for a particular walk should discuss these at registration with the festival organisers. Walkers are reminded that routes can cover rough terrain with inherent risk of trips, slips and falls.

Actions on Serious Incidents

Broken or dislocated limb:

- The injured party will summon help and notify the closest steward.
- The steward will contact base who will take control and phone for assistance, as appropriate.
- If ambulance access cannot be achieved, transport such as a jeep or car will be used.
- Civil Defence on standby at walk centre
- A follow-up report will be prepared and reviewed by the event organisers/walk leader, as soon as all facts have been gathered.

Cardiac Arrest / Heart Attack:

- Any person nearby will assist and raise the alarm and notify the closest steward.
- First aid will be dispatched to the area.
- Civil Defence on standby at walk centre
- Defibrillator available at walk centre with trained operator
- Ambulance will be contacted and dispatched to the area from where the casualty will be transported to the nearest hospital.
- A follow-up report will be prepared by the event organisers, as soon as all facts have been gathered.

General Information

Event Registration: Registration for each walk is in the Foxford Sports and Leisure Centre on the morning of the event. All participants are obliged to register and sign in on morning of event and sign out when finished their walk. In the event of not completing the full route it is still essential that participants sign out at Foxford Sports and Leisure Centre, to ensure all walkers are accounted for.

Event facilitators/stewards: are there to support and guide participants and to seek to ensure everyone's safety at all times. All will be wearing orange or yellow High-Viz jackets or bibs. There will be stewards operating in support of the walk leader on all walks. Please adhere to their instructions.

Parking: Adequate car parking is available at Foxford Sports and Leisure Centre.

Event Times

Saturday 3 June

Registration from 8.30am at the Foxford Sports and Leisure Centre. Details of individual walks are provided under the Outline of Events on page 3 and are available at www.foxfordwalkingfestival.com/

Sunday 4 June

Registration from 8.30am at the Foxford Sports and Leisure Centre. Details of individual walks are provided under the Outline of Events on page 3 and are available at www.foxfordwalkingfestival.com/

Refreshments

Tea, Coffee, Water and refreshments are provided at Foxford Sports and Leisure Centre before and after each walk. Walkers are advised to bring suitable snack and a hot drink on the moderate and hard walks.

Waste disposal

All participants involved are reminded to utilise bins provided in the town and where available along any route. Please do not litter the route, ensuring the festival committee's commitment to the "Leave No Trace Programme" and help to preserve the environment for future generations.

Traffic Control

Garda Notification

- Notified of date and times of event
- Presented with safety statement for event.
- Numbers of participants anticipated at approx. 200 to 250 over two days.
- Garda traffic control unnecessary for Nephin Mountain or Ox Mountains, as these routes are off-road. Minimal requirement on other routes which can be managed by stewards.

Support vehicles

Uniformed Civil Defence officers will be present, with an official Support Vehicle, at Foxford Sport & Leisure Centre.

Additional vehicles (2) will be available to cope with minor issues/injuries.

Busses are also utilised to transfers walkers on some routes.

Stewards

Festival Stewards (including RSS volunteers) in High-Viz clothing deployed.

Safety and Base Manager present at Foxford Sports and Leisure Centre (base) all day.

Signage

Where the trails constitute waymarked walking routes they will be clearly marked by colour coded directional arrows, or the yellow walking man symbol, as appropriate.

Some trails cross open countryside and are not waymarked. Where public road is used or crossed appropriate road warning signs are strategically placed. Festival stewards will also be deployed in these areas as required.

Emergency numbers

Safety and Base Manager: (094) 925 7684 or 087 6215557

Civil Defence: via Base Manager: (094) 925 7684

Mountain Rescue: 112 or 999

Safety Advice for Participants

Ultimately, walk leaders will determine if a walk is to proceed, be modified or ended, depending on inclement weather conditions. There are risks associated with participating in walking events and participants need to be aware of these risks and take sensible precautions.

Weather changes can occur quickly the higher you go on the hills. The temperature drops 1 degree for each 100 metres of ascent. The wind is stronger, often up to two or three times the wind speed of more sheltered areas. Also there is more risk of mist and cloud on top which can lead to poor visibility. Weather conditions can change in minutes and therefore walkers need to be prepared and equipped to cope with changing conditions. It is advisable to be aware of pending weather conditions in advance.

In cold and wet weather the greatest danger is hypothermia or exposure. This occurs where the body temperature is chilled to a life threatening level and could be aggravated by wind chill factor. To avoid this make sure you have enough warm clothing, extra food and plenty of water.

In warm weather the principle hazards are sunburn, windburn and dehydration. Sun hats, sun cream and water can prevent serious sunburn and heatstroke. Remember to bring an adequate supply of drinking water. Doctors recommend up to 2 litres of water a day, for an ordinary active lifestyle. If you are walking strenuously over long distances or weather is hot you will need substantially more water. Do not drink unboiled and unpurified water from streams. Don't wait until you're thirsty to drink. Still mineral water or tap water is adequate

Terrain

Participants are advised to be very careful about foot placement on off-road or rough sections of trail, as there is always the risk of concealed holes, rocks, undergrowth, slippery ground and soft bog. Even relatively moderate tracks can have concealed ruts and snags to trip the unwary.

Be particularly careful when descending steep ground and when crossing streams and rivers. Streams in flood are deceptively dangerous. If you require assistance to traverse any obstacle or difficult section of trail please request assistance from one of the stewards, who are there to assist and make your day an enjoyable one.

Most accidents will happen on the way down, after a long hike when people are tired, rushing or no longer paying attention. Participants are advised to walk at a pace that

is comfortable to them to avoid falls and accidents. If you want to admire the view, stop walking first! Walkers are advised to inform a steward or the walk leader immediately if they feel uncomfortable or need assistance of any kind.

Remember you are also responsible for your own safety.

Personal Gear

Walking boots with good ankle support are essential. Always wear suitable clothes for outdoors and carry spare warm clothes for all walks. Jeans and Cotton should not be worn, if they get wet they will not dry causing loss of body heat and energy and possibly contributing to the onset of hypothermia. They are also quite uncomfortable when wet.

A waterproof jacket, over trousers, warm hat and gloves are advised, irrespective of the weather starting out.

Rucksack requirements

- Water
- Food and hot drink.
- Some high energy snacks such as chocolate, glucose sweets or energy bars.
- Spare clothes/socks (in plastic bag in rucksack)
- First aid kit
- Whistle and phone

Blisters

Blisters are caused by friction or rubbing. They can make a walk a painful and very uncomfortable experience. In order to prevent blisters certain simple steps should be followed.

- Wear suitable walking socks of the correct size,
- Wear comfortable good fitting and worn in walking boots
- Swiftly remove any foreign bodies, such as pebbles or pieces of vegetation from your socks or footwear.
- Keep your toenails trimmed and feet in good condition.
- Act immediately if you feel any friction or discomfort as blisters can form very quickly (blister plasters essential). Notify a steward if any assistance is required.

Risk Assessment Foxford Walking Festival 2017

Route description: Public roads, forest tracks, farmland, riverside trails, bog roads and open mountainside.

Event date: 3rd and 4th June 2017

Walk type: As chosen from 6 routes

Locations: Foxford Sports & Leisure Centre
Saturday - Walk 1: Ox Mountains
Saturday - Walk 2: Tavnaghmore
Saturday - Walk 3: Rinanny Loop

Sunday - Walk 1: Nephin Mountain
Sunday - Walk 2: Larganmore
Sunday - Walk 3: Drummin Wood

Assessed by: Event organisers

Risk assessment type: Event Specific

Communicate to: All participants

Associated Hazards

1. Traffic and public roads
2. Uneven rocky/rough tracks and undergrowth including slippery surfaces and hidden holes
3. Bridges /stiles/stone steps.
4. General minor medical requirements and emergencies

Controls

1. All participants to adhere to safety and welfare instructions given by event organisers and stewards
2. All participants must have appropriate footwear and clothing and exercise caution
3. Electrical fencing/barbed wire or other fencing – to be avoided where possible, otherwise be aware and exercise caution. Assistance provided by stewards.
4. Animals/Livestock - Be aware and avoid.
5. Experienced walk leaders and stewards, familiar with all the routes, will be providing ongoing advice, assistance and support to walkers for the full duration of all walks
6. Civil Defence on standby

Radio Announcements/Press advertisements.

Foxford Walking Festival Committee is holding the annual Foxford Walking Festival on 3rd and 4th June 2017.

Signage

We are asking motorists to be careful on the section of road in the vicinity of the Foxford Sports and Leisure Centre and surrounding roads. Warning signs will be in place and marshals wearing High Vis jackets will be on duty on these sections of road, while a walk is in progress.

Foxford Walking Festival Committee
25 April 2017