

**Eltham & Environs Walking Group – Walks Program Terms of Reference**

The Walks Program is made up of Weekday walks, Saturday walks and Trips Further Afield.

**Weekday walks** are scheduled for Monday, Wednesday and Friday morning, all year except Christmas Day. They are made up of Easy, Moderate, Combined, Exploratory, Long and Extended walks.

* Easy (E) walks are not that hilly and have a surface rating of 1 to 3 and steepness rating of 1 to 2.
* Moderate (M) walks are predominately hilly and have a surface rating from 1 to 5 and a steepness rating of usually 3 to 5.
* Combined (C) walks are held 12 times per semester and allow all members to walk together. These walks are drawn from the Easy walk program.
* Exploratory (EXP) walks are walks that need to be trialled to see if they should be part of the walking program. Once they have been trialled and approved they are allocated a number. The number of Exploratory walks for both the Easy and Moderate varies depending on how many exploratory walks are available at the time of planning the following semester’s program.
* Long (L) walks usually take more than 2 hours and members sometimes take their lunch. They are in the local area.
* Extended walks (EXT) are opportunities for members to participate in a walk that is further from home, (not part of the walk list, and does not have a number) during the week.

**Saturday walks**

Each month, usually the third Saturday, members have an opportunity to walk at the weekend. This allows those members who work during the week to attend a walk.

These walks are not part of the Weekly walking program and usually take up about three quarters of the day and include a picnic or bought lunch.

The walk could be easy, moderate or provide options for both levels.

These walks are coordinated by the Saturday Walks and Trips Facilitator. A member or the facilitator prepares and leads the walk.

Members are notified via the Secretary and are required to book for these walks so that transport can be optimised, and cafes booked if necessary.

**Trips Further Afield**

Trips Further Afield can include Victorian regional areas, interstate or overseas locations.

They could be a base camp style or travelling between locations to undertake different walks.

The Saturday and Trips Facilitator oversees these trips but does not necessarily organise or attend them all.

Any member can put forward a trip and they take on the responsibility of bringing the interested members together. The idea is that the members who attend, all take on different roles to help to organise the trip.

**Weekly Walks Program**

There are four key documents that are integral to the walks program and drive the process involved in maintaining the details about our weekly walks.

* Walk Details Master – managed by Manager, Walk Details
* Walk Database Master – managed by Manager, weekday walks database and schedule
* Walk Schedule – managed by Manager, weekday walks database and schedule
* Published Walk Details – managed by Walks publisher weekday walks details

The Walk Schedule and the Published Walk Details are published on the EEWG website for members.

**The four documents**

1. Walk Details Master

The document in walk number order includes, for all walks, the

* Walk number
* Title
* Melway reference for the meeting point
* Description of how to get to the starting point
* Detailed description of the directions to be undertaken to do the walk
* It may include the distance, surface rating and steepness rating
* Includes walks that have been withdrawn (or deleted).

1. Walk Database Master

In walk number order it includes

* The walk number
* Title
* Suburb/Area the walk is held in
* Car pool location
* If the walk has a fire danger risk
* Any walks that the walk relates to
* If members need to take lunch
* If the walk goes onto private property
* The melway reference
* Distance
* Surface rating
* Steepness rating
* Particulars that help with scheduling the walk, for example is it suitable for school holidays, exposed location etc.

The walk number is unique to that walk. It does not contain any additional information. This number is the link between the Walk Details Master and the Walk Database Master. Because of this link a number cannot be reused.

Details like the fire risk, surface rating and steepness rating are subjective and should be allocated after discussion with members who attend the exploratory walk and the Planning group. A review by a small team is also an excellent way of addressing subjective attributes.Changes to the Master can occur at anytime. They can occur when a new walk is added, or an

existing walk is modified or changed or deleted.

Changes usually follow a planning group meeting or at the end of creating a new walk. The details about creating a new walk are in a separate document (Developing and Publishing an Exploratory Walk).

1. Weekday walks schedule

From the database a schedule is created that outlines the walks members will do during the semester. The schedule is developed at a planning meeting as a draft and approved at the Special General meeting.

The schedule includes in date order:

* The day (Mon, Wed, Fri, Sat)
* The date
* Walk number
* Type – Moderate, Easy, Extended, Combined, Exploratory (M, E, EXT, C, EXP)
* Distance
* Surface rating
* Steepness rating
* Walk Title
* Car pooling location
* Car pool time
* Walk start time
* Fire risk
* Melway reference for the meeting point

1. Published walk details

This is the document/s that is published on the website.

There are three documents:

* Details about all walks, in walk number order
* Details about walks in the Easy walking schedule, in date order
* Details about walks in the Moderate walking schedule, in date order

For each walk the following is included

* Walk number
* Type
* Title
* Distance\Time to undertake the walk
* Melway reference
* The developer of the walk and date
* Surface rating
* Steepness rating
* Carpooling location
* Start of walk location and if necessary details about how to get there
* Detailed directions
* Coffee location

**Walk details changes coming from members**

Throughout the semester members may have additional information that will help with locating the start of a walk, a different rating or distance for a walk or even a change to the directions.

Members are encouraged to submit these to planning group members for consideration.

These changes and any other changes that come up in discussion should not be included in any of the Master documents until after the planning group meeting. Once discussed and agreed by the group, changes to the Master documents should then be done. This should help to avoid mistakes in the Master documents.

Some changes suggested by members may require additional investigation and discussions before they can be implemented. They also may require approval at the Special General meeting.

**Creating the Schedule and Published walk details**

There are three documents that arise from the scheduling process and are published on the website for members.

* Semester schedule. This schedule usually covers:
  + the walks for the Moderate Walking group,
  + the walks for the Easy Walking group, and
  + reminders for significant dates,

all in date order

* Moderate Walk Details – details for the moderate walks for the semester in date order
* Easy Walk Details – details for the easy walks for the semester in date order

1. **Creating the Schedule**

The Schedule is derived from the Walk Database Master.

At the Planning meeting, the group involved with this task goes through a process of allocating walks to dates. The process is articulated on page 5 of this document, Walks Selection Process.

At present the allocation of the Easy walks is done at a later time by the Easy Walk Coordination team. The process is articulated on page 6 of this document, Easy Walks Scheduling.

The Manager, Weekly Walks database, sends out a draft of the Schedule to members of the Planning Group to check before it is presented at an AGM or Special General meeting for approval by members. Once any required changes have been completed the Schedule is sent to the Walks publisher.

The schedule is uploaded as a PDF file onto the website with the Moderate and Easy Walk Details two weeks prior to the start of the new semester.

If required the Schedule could be loaded onto the website earlier with approval of the manager, weekly walk database and the President.

1. **Creating the Moderate Walk Details and Easy Walk Details**

Using the Schedule as a guide, the Walks Publisher creates two documents, the Moderate Walk Details and the Easy Walk Details.

Each of these two documents is extracted from the ‘Walks – complete list with directions’ document.

The publisher will send the two documents to a member of the Walks Planning Group for a final check.

The two documents in PDF format are then uploaded to the website with the schedule two weeks prior to the start of the semester.

In each of these documents there is an identical information section at the beginning. The information in this introduction needs to be reviewed at each Walks Planning Group meeting.

1. **Creating the Published Walk Details**

This document is the Master walks document and contains descriptions of all walks.

The document should be updated when:

* A new walk is added. The procedure for this is a separate document (Developing and Publishing an Exploratory Walk).
* A walk is modified or deleted
* Additional information is made available, for example the distance of a walk, or
* Errors are discovered in the document

Changes usually follow a Walks Planning Group meeting or the Special General meeting.

An annual check of its contents against the Database Master is recommended.

This document is only loaded onto the website twice a year when the new schedule, Moderate Walk Details and Easy Walk Details documents.

**Walks Selection Process**

**Prework – Generate a Skeleton Schedule**

1. List all dates for walks in the semester.
2. Mark nominal dates for meetings, Sat walks, public holidays and school holidays, “0” birthday and any other events.
3. Decide, in accordance with current policy, which dates will have extended and exploratory walks.
4. Decide, in accordance with current policy, which dates will have combined walks. These will be E walks, but will be denoted C in the schedule.
5. For other dates add designations (M, E, L) for all walk dates in accordance with current policy.
6. Format the schedule.
7. Circulate this formatted skeleton to planning group members for comment.
8. Incorporate comments as appropriate.

**History – time since last walked**

1. Add the walk dates for the *current* semester into the database, and delete the data for the oldest semester.
2. Sort this list firstly by E / M, then by date walked current semester and date walked previous semester.

**The Scheduling Meeting - Allocation of walks to dates**

1. Generally allocate walks according to the length of time since they were last walked (referring to the list generated in 9, above). Be careful to avoid successive walks in close geographic proximity, or inadvertent repetition of walks.

However initially

* 1. allocate walks to dates when meetings and event dates need to be scheduled to minimise travel issues (these may be combined walks), and then
  2. allocate walks to dates to account for specific locations that are walked only in School holidays, or only at certain times of the year (e.g. flowers, butterflies, known muddy locations), and then
  3. allocate walks to remaining dates, with
     1. combined walks decided first, then
     2. long walks, then
     3. medium and easy walks

**Review and Issue**

1. The result is reviewed by the planning group, then
2. Issued for final review and approval at a Special General Meeting, and then
3. Issued for use.

**Notes:**

1. When allocating walks it is useful to have someone cross off each walk as it is scheduled. This is an aid to avoiding inadvertent repetitions.
2. The E walk is selected to provide a viable alternative to that day’s M walk. For example if the M walk is in Kinglake (129M), the E walk could be at Westerfolds Park (285E) or the M walk 180 which is north of the Yarra, then the E could be 237 which is south of the Yarra.

**Walks Program Planning Group**

The key group which is responsible for the Weekly walking program is the Walks Program Planning Group. Details of the roles within this group are listed in this document.

There is no elected term of office for planning group members. At any stage a member can nominate to stand down from the planning group and their role.

The planning group may meet twice a year in March/April and September/October prior to the Planning Meeting. If there are minimal or no agenda issues to warrant a meeting the group may simply share updates/information via email.

Most planning group members attend the Planning meeting where a draft of the schedule is developed.

The **Walks Program Planning Group**

Manager, weekday walks database and schedule/Planning Group Convenor

Manager, weekday walks details master

Walks publisher

Moderate walks facilitator

Easy walks facilitator

Saturday Walks/Trips Further Afield

Plus perhaps up to two seconded/additional members

**Planning Group roles**

1. Manager, Weekday Walks Database/Planning Group Convenor

* Identify any scheduling requirements that require discussion and agreement at

the Planning Group meeting

* provide the Planning meeting with the dates when each walk has been done in the 3 previous semesters
* allocate dates, taking into account current policy on combined walks, (12 per semester), exploratory, extended monthly walks
* Working with the Moderate Walks and Easy Walks Facilitators update details about new walk, including allocating the number
* add new walk details - number, title, steepness, surface, length, fire rating, private property, lunch, Melways ref, carpooling site into the database
* maintain accurate records
* Manage the production of the schedules, including overseeing the scheduling process at the Planning meeting and Special General Meeting.

1. Manager, Weekday Walks Details Master

* maintain a clear and accurate document of all our permanent weekday walks and a list of withdrawn walks
* provides details to the Manager, Weekday Walks Database as necessary

1. Walks Publisher

* prepare the walks document into a publishable standard
* prepare detailed walks documents by date for easy and moderate walks
* provide updates for the website twice a year.

1. Moderate Walks Facilitator

* provide a point of contact for moderate walkers
* prior to the Planning meeting, plan exploratory or extended moderate walks
* contact person for members to talk to about ideas for new walks
* working with the new walk initiator develop an exploratory walk. If the walk is suitable for inclusion on the permanent list, continue working with the initiator to develop the detailed description.
* review and finalise the new walk details and provide details to the Manager, Weekly Walks Database
* provide reports to the Planning Group meetings about the proposed exploratory walks and the moderate walks program.

1. Easy Walks Facilitator

* provide a point of contact for easy walkers
* prior to the Planning meeting, plan the proposed exploratory walks
* evaluate and if a worthwhile walk, support development of detailed description.
* review and finalise the new walk details and provide details to the Manager, Weekday Walks Database
* allocation of the easy walks to the draft schedule
* provide reports to the planning group meeting about the proposed exploratory walks and the easy walks program

1. Saturday Walks and Trips Facilitator

* co-ordinate and ask for walks for monthly Saturday walk program
* liaise with the Saturday leader in preparation of the walk and communication with members (via the Secretary)
* seek idea from members for Further Afield trips
* liaise with proposers of Further Afield trips in preparation of the trip and communication with members (via the Secretary)
* provide details for the website of Weekend walks and Further Afield Trips.
* report to the Planning Group, Special General and Annual General meetings.

**Walks Program Planning Group meetings**

The meetings may take 1.5 to 2 hours, may include eating lunch and may be held in the Parks Vic meeting room in Westerfolds Park or elsewhere. If there are no issues to be discussed, then there will be no need to meet. Meetings may sometimes be via email.

The agenda may cover some but not necessarily all:

* Reports from the Moderate and Easy walking groups, Saturday walks and trips
* Reviews or comments or changes related to walks
* Changes that members have suggested
* Safety issues
* Past and future exploratory walks
* Scheduling requirements, these include
* Frequency of exploratory walks
* Days for the combined walks
* Weekend for the Saturday walk
* Any events or meetings to be considered
* Published documents – any changes to the content
* Potential changes to the EEWG Walking Protocols document
* Any potential reviews of walks (for example the steepness and surface ratings)

In general terms, this meeting goes over any aspects to be considered for the Planning meeting.

The group also considers potential new rules, for example whether dogs should be allowed on walks, and improvements to our guidelines. In any such cases a recommendation will go to the Committee. The Committee may take it to the membership for discussion through the Special General meeting.