

A Guide to Attending Trips Away with the IOG

ORGANISER'S ROLE

The organiser is just volunteering to do this and they are not getting paid, so it's good to offer them your assistance if you can help to smooth out the organisation of the trip. The organiser certainly won't be doing everything for you.

WHAT TO BRING

If the trip is to a YHA, then sheets, a duvet and a pillow will be provided (laid out on the bed or collected from reception). When you leave, strip the bed and put the linen in the pre-determined place (often in linen baskets near reception).

Take a look at the *IOG Walking Kit Guidelines* for detailed advice on clothing and walking kit. Waterproofs (including waterproof trousers), walking boots (ideally already broken in), some gloves and a hat are essential even in summer, because it can still get very cold in places like the Lakes and Wales.

You can bring your own alcohol to some YHAs, but most of them are now licensed and you cannot drink your own. If you do sneak stuff in and are found out, it can get us into trouble. Often though, we go for a drink in a local pub.

FOOD

Some meals may be included in the trip booking and the organiser will let you know about this.

If meals aren't included, most hostels will do breakfast and dinner (and sometimes packed lunches). If you want food from the hostel, then let them know when you book in.

Most hostels have an area to do self-catering. However, they seem less keen on this nowadays, and the kitchen is often small and out of the way.

The organiser will let you know if they are bringing a breakfast box. This is a box of basic essentials: milk, bread, butter, tea and coffee. There may also be some cereals, spreads and other bits and pieces. It's best to bring any special things that you want. The cost of the breakfast box is covered either by contribution for those that want it or is included in the cost of the trip.

GETTING THERE

It is your responsibility to get there. You can ask about lifts at a Monday social evening, offer a lift and share fuel costs, or send out an email to the group asking for a lift.

If this doesn't work, then ask the organiser for help, as they may know someone who has a car space. However, it is not the responsibility of the organiser to sort this out. Most places can also be reached by train, but you may need a lift for last bit of the journey.

If you do get a lift, then fuel costs are usually equally shared amongst all those in the vehicle. If you're going to be late, then call the organiser to let them know. In some of the more remote places, there is no mobile reception, so it's best to call the hostel and they can pass the message on.

ON ARRIVAL

Check in at reception and they will let you know what room you are in. If you want food that evening or breakfast, then let them know. Let the organiser know you have arrived as soon as you can. It's best to make up your bed early with the linen provided and sort out any kit before the lights go out for bed later that evening.

SLEEPING

It's nearly always single-sex rooms or dorms. If you come in late (after 11.00 pm), don't turn on all the lights and crash around. Usually, lights are out by 11pm, and some people may be going on or have been on long walks and are fairly tired so please be considerate.

WALKING

Some people should have volunteered to lead walks. These are usually organised the night before or sometimes in the morning. It's up to you to see what's happening and ask to go along.

The walk leader will say how difficult it's going to be. Walks will have to be completed within a certain time (so the group doesn't end up walking in the dark or can be back in time for the pub). Be honest with yourself about how fit you are. If you cannot keep up, then it won't be enjoyable and you could be putting everyone else in a difficult position.

There is usually an easy walk, so you can always do that if you are unsure about your abilities. Alternatively, you can arrange your own walk with like-minded people. If you do this, then let the leader know what you're doing and fill out the *IOG Route Plan*, *IOG Event Attendance Register* and *IOG Risk Assessment Template* as required.

If you spot someone has been left behind during a walk, then let the leader know. Also, look out for each other, especially in difficult weather conditions.

GENERAL

If someone does not seem to know anyone, then say hello and introduce them to others. We aim to be a friendly group and get everyone involved.

In a nutshell:

- Be considerate of others.
- Don't expect the organiser or the walk leaders to sort everything out.
- Look out for each other and try to help anyone in distress.
- Try to leave a good impression at the YHA – we may want to visit again.