

In Case of Emergency – Mobile Phones

While emergencies very rarely happen on walks, leaders should at least know how to manage the situation and how to summon assistance if necessary. Ramblers have a very good information page on what to do in such an emergency:

<https://www.ramblers.org.uk/go-walking/group-finder/areas/devon/groups/north-devon/care-on-the-hill.aspx>

When an injury or other incident is too serious for the group to manage, then the emergency services should be called using 999 or 112. (112 works in many countries including the UK; 999 is specific to the UK.)

Calling 999 or 112 from a mobile phone

If there is a clear signal, call 999 or 112, and ask for the service you require. If in doubt, simply ask for the Police. You will need to be ready with all the essential information, including the nature of the problem and exactly where you are (e.g. grid reference or physical landmark).

Even if you do not have a signal showing, still make the call. All mobile phones are programmed to search all networks when 999 or 112 is called. If you still have difficulty making contact, try the techniques described in this video:

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=XPZv_8dABfU

Remember that mobile phones operate on 'line-of-sight' to a mast, so trying different orientations might be helpful.

Texting 999 or 112 from a mobile phone

If all attempts to make a call fail, it may still be possible to send text message. However, you can only do this if you have pre-registered your phone with the emergency services. Again, follow the advice in the above video. Texts require much less bandwidth than voice calls, and texts sent to 999 or 112 are prioritised over all other texts by the networks.

Here is how to pre-register your phone:

999 or 112 using a text: emergencySMS You MUST REGISTER YOUR PHONE before you can use it. See how to set up emergencySMS.		
1. Register your mobile Text the word 'register' to 999 or 112. You'll need to register again if you change your phone number.	2. Read the message You'll get an automatic text reply. Please read it all.	3. Reply to the message Read the message and then reply by texting 'yes'.
4. Get a 'success' text You'll then get a text telling you that your mobile is now registered - or if there's been a problem...	5. Check it Text 'register' to 999 or 112 and you'll get a message telling you if it's registered or not. Don't text anything else - there's no need to make a test call. You're now set up.	Can't register? If you try to register but don't get the 'success' text, check with your mobile provider to make sure they support the emergencySMS service.

If you have a smartphone

Two free apps that are likely to be useful for finding your exact location are:

OS Location: see <https://shop.ordnancesurvey.co.uk/apps/os-locate/>

What 3 Words: see <https://what3words.com/news/emergency/three-words-for-a-faster-emergency-response/>