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# The Braintree & District Outdoor Pursuits Club

The Braintree and District Outdoor Pursuits Club is now over 30 years old.

The Aim of the Club is to promote outdoor pursuits of all kinds. This tends to be mainly walking and cycling, but we do try to include other events.

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Every month we hold a local activity, a weekend away and a social evening, plus the occasional B.B.Q. and dance.

Our local events are usually walking in Essex. The weekend away takes us farther afield and departs Friday evening, returning late Sunday. To keep costs to a minimum we try to organise a car share and use campsites in the warmer months and Youth Hostels or Bunk Barns in the colder weather.

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The venue for the Club is at the Braintree Leisure Centre, Tabor School, Panfield Lane on the last Wednesday of the month where we discuss these events, often presenting a slide show with a guest speaker. The meetings are very informal. The room is upstairs, adjacent to the Centre's main bar.

New faces are always welcome to join any of our activities and are not required to be a member to attend local events (but are asked to become a temporary member if attending a weekend away).

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If you have any queries, please feel free to telephone or e-mail us or just turn up at our next monthly meeting and you will be made very welcome.

This leaflet will help to explain what to expect on our weekends away.

You can also find information on our website [www.bdopc.supanet.com](http://www.bdopc.supanet.com)

Thank you again for your interest in our club.

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## Guidance Notes for a "typical" Bunk Barn or Rent a Hostel weekend.

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Depart: Friday pm

Return: Sunday evening.

A Bunk Barn is usually a converted farm building. Rent a Hostel is a YHA hired for our exclusive use.

### Bring:

Walking / wet weather gear, flask/water bottle, Toiletries, towel, evening clothes, torch, camera.

Youth Hostels provide a sleeping sheet & duvet. **Bunk Barns: bring a sleeping bag** (pillow optional).

Food: Bring sandwich fillings, nibbles etc. plus wine, beer, soft drinks etc for the Saturday evening meal & socialising.

### Supplied:

Breakfast cereal, bread for toast/sandwiches, milk, tea, coffee & Saturday evening meal.

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**Evening meal:** Usually

Soup. Pasta, chicken breast in a sauce, peas/carrots. Fruit pie & custard.

Inform the organiser if you are Vegetarian well before the event - this can be catered for (or Vegetarians may prefer to bring their own food).

**Accommodation:** Bunk Barns are privately owned, Rent a Hostel is a YHA hired for the weekend.

Expect to find - simple accommodation consisting of:

Bunk beds in dormitories of between 4 & 10 people. First come, first served.

A kitchen and a heated meal/lounge area.

Hot showers & toilets.

**Note: Bedrooms are mixed sex.**

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**Typical itinerary:**

### Friday:

A car share means that liaison with driver to confirm departure details on the Friday.

Meals on Friday depend on time of arrival. A pub meal is common if it is anticipated that arrival is not too late (say before 8.00pm), others eat before departure or on route.

### Saturday:

Breakfast at about 8:00 am - cereal, maybe porridge, toast, tea, coffee, orange juice.

Prepare your own sandwiches for lunch.

Depart for walk 9:00 - 9:15am. Either direct from the barn or there may be a short drive to the start.

Depending on group size & wishes, walk will be 10 -12 miles. Led by the organiser or another volunteer. Leader will have a map - for your interest, you may wish to bring your own.

Larger parties sometimes form 2 groups, with a slightly shorter route being available.

Return 5.00 pm / dusk.

If there is a queue for showers, please give priority to those on kitchen duty.

Evening meal & socialising.

### Sunday:

As Saturday, but walk will be shorter.

Prepare sandwiches, Pack & tidy up before walk.

Usually return to Bunk Barn after the walk, to freshen up & clear up etc. Be aware that whatever walk options are planned, you must liaise with the driver & others in your car share.

Return home late evening - about 8.00pm. Eat at home.

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### Cost:

Varies depending on actual cost of Bunk Barn & number of members attending. Say £13.00 per night, (often less) plus food of say £8.00. Please pay by cheque (to "B.D.O.P.C.") as this makes it much simpler for the organiser.

Pay the driver separately in cash. This simply covers petrol costs and obviously is dependant on distance travelled & number of passengers.

No one makes any money on the weekends and all charges are "at Cost".

Everyone just mucks-in to help with any small chores that are needed - kitchen duties, tidying up etc.

## Guidance Notes for a "typical" Youth Hostel weekend.

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Depart: Friday pm – Note: Most Hostels do not accept new arrivals before 5.00 pm. Last arrival about 10:00pm.  
Return: Sunday evening.

### Bring:

Walking / wet weather gear, flask/water bottle, Toiletries, towel, evening clothes, torch, camera.

Youth Hostels provide a sleeping sheet & duvet and discourage use of your own sleeping bags.

Food: Bring sandwich fillings, nibbles etc. plus wine, beer, soft drinks etc for the Saturday evening meal & socialising.

### Club Supplies:

Breakfast cereal, jam, marmalade, bread for toast/sandwiches, milk, tea and coffee. (You may prefer to buy the cooked YHA breakfast, but you must book this on arrival)

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**Saturday Evening meal:** Either buy a YHA meal or visit the local pub.

**YHA:** Meals are normally basic and portions often small. A 3-course meal with a choice for each course.

Cost about £8.50

**Local pub:** Choice/cost/quality not known unless someone has had a chance to investigate.

**Accommodation:** Expect to find – simple accommodation consisting of:

Bunk beds in dormitories of between 4 & 10 people. First come, first served.

A kitchen and a heated meal/lounge area shared with other guests in the Hostel. Hot showers & toilets.

**Note: The Club normally books dormitories for their exclusive use and will be mixed sex.**

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### Typical itinerary:

#### Friday:

A car share means that liaison with driver to confirm departure details on the Friday.

Meals on Friday depend on time of arrival. A pub meal is common if it is anticipated that arrival is not too late (say before 8.00pm), others may eat at YHA (book before 5:30pm) or before departure/ on route.

#### Saturday:

Breakfast at about 8:00 am – cereal, maybe porridge, toast, tea, coffee, orange juice or book a YHA breakfast on check-in.

Prepare your own sandwiches for lunch.

Depart for walk 9:00 – 9:15am. Either direct from the Hostel or there may be a short drive to the start.

Depending on group size & wishes, walk will be 10 -12 miles. Led by the organiser or another volunteer. Leader will have a map – for your interest, you may wish to bring your own.

Larger parties sometimes form 2 groups, with a slightly shorter route being available.

Return 5.00 pm / dusk. Many Hostels do not open until 5.00pm

Evening meal & socialising. Discrete consumption of alcohol is usually permitted in unlicensed Hostels.

Doors normally locked at 10:30/11.00pm

#### Sunday:

As Saturday, but walk will be shorter.

Prepare sandwiches, Pack gear in cars & check out before walk.

It is **not** normally possible to return to the Hostel to freshen up after the walk.

Be aware that whatever walk options are planned, you must liaise with the driver & others in your car share.

Return home late evening – about 8.00pm. Eat at home.

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### Cost:

Varies depending on actual cost and standard of the Hostel. Say £13.50 per night, plus a small contribution towards the Club's breakfast food kitty (say £3.00).

You may be asked to pay the Hostel direct or the organiser may collect all monies owed.

Paying by cheque makes it much simpler for the organiser.

Pay the driver separately in cash. This simply covers petrol costs and obviously is dependant on distance travelled & number of passengers.

No one makes any money on the weekends and all charges are "at Cost".

Everyone just mucks-in to help with any small chores that are needed – kitchen duties, tidying up etc.



## A short guide for those who are camping for the first time

Some people can be a little apprehensive about camping for the first time, but with the right equipment it can be enjoyable and comfortable.

In addition to the itinerary and equipment suggested for "Hard Top" weekends, the minimum requirement is as follows-

Tent - a basic "Two-man" tent may be cheaply hired from the club if attending a club weekend

Chair - folding "Garden" type.

Sleeping Bag / Pillow.

Airbed and/or foam sleeping mat.

Stove and kettle or saucepan to make a cuppa!

Plates & Cutlery.

Torch - to see your way round in the dark!



No catering facilities are supplied by the Club on our camping weekends, so if you want Tea /Coffee/Milk etc you'll need to bring this yourself.

On the Friday evening some members find a local pub for a meal. On the Saturday evening we usually have a communal barbeque, so bring food for this (sausages/steak/fish/salad etc).

Please also bring provisions for a packed lunch (sometimes a shop or pub can be found en-route during the day but this is not guaranteed).



As with hard top weekends, to reduce costs we try to arrange a car share. This is normally restricted to only two people to a car due to the camping equipment that needs to be taken.

Camping site fees vary from £7 - £10 per person per night. Additionally, a small charge for use of the shower is common.

All the sites we use have showers and a toilet block and some may have a shop to buy the odd supplies.

