



Food and Water

Peter Harper Revised September 2015

**Ten Tors Policy Committee and Team
Manager**

FOOD

Food is the fuel for successful completion of the Ten Tors Challenge. Your walkers need to understand the importance of the food and drink that they will require to support their strenuous activities in arduous conditions.

Education

Prior to our first training, one of our indoor lessons for the walkers and, if possible, for the parents (who will probably buy the food), we cover the following points;

- Keeping meals and cooking simple to ease effort and reduce preparation time.
 - The value of a carbohydrate meal the night before the walk, a substantial and nourishing breakfast and the well-deserved hot meal at the end of a long walking day for rapid recovery.
 - The needs of those on selective diets.
 - The importance of a good breakfast on day training walks, and during multiple day walks, cannot be underestimated; an energy bar and coffee are not enough for a hard days walking.
 - What constitutes the diet needed to support vigorous exercise; the value of carbohydrates, fat, protein vitamins and fibre, and the required balance.
 - The advantages and disadvantages of dehydrated, boil in the bag, tinned food and fresh food.
- Suggestions for meals:
 - **Breakfast.** Cook in the bag porridge with a mixture of oats, milk powder, sugar and sultanas in a sealed freezer bag – add hot water to bag, eat out of the bag – quick, nourishing and no washing up.
 - **Lunch.** Tuna sachets, hard boiled egg (in shell), rolls/sandwich/pitta bread filled with cheese, marmite, tomato paste/cheese or peanut butter.
 - **Supper.** Boil in the bag or dehydrated stews, casseroles, and/or pasta, cous cous or Smash potato with sauce.
 - **Snack.** Nuts, seeds, sultanas, fresh fruit (if eaten early before being squashed or bruised), dried fruit (banana & apricots prevent cramp), cereal bars, flap jacks, malt or banana loaf, fruit or ginger cake, biscuits (fig rolls, shortbread, jaffa cakes, choc chip), oat cakes, dried meat (biltong), tubed cheese or condensed milk.
 - Meat, Scotch eggs, pasties, sausage, pate and cooked rice need refrigeration or eating within 3 - 4 hours at cool temperatures. Care should therefore be taken in making up any packed lunches as perishable foods will not be fit to eat.
 - Pot noodles are not nutritious enough for a main meal. Crisps or chocolate make you thirsty.

Advantages and Disadvantages of Different Types of Food			
Dehydrated	Boil in the Bag	Tinned	Fresh
Lightest	1/3 heavier than dry	Heaviest	Heavy
Simple	Simplest		
Tasty	Tastier	Tastier	Tastiest
Requires water	Can eat cold	Can eat cold	Needs cooking
Long life	Long life	Long life	Some needs refrigeration
Just add hot water. Left over makes drink	Different varieties heated in same water		Long time to cook
Eat from bag, no washing up	Eat from bag, no washing up	Pan needs washing up	Needs plates and washing up
Litter light & easily carried	Litter light & easily carried	Jagged heavy litter	Litter light & easily carried

- Encourage walkers to consider menu planning for each of the expeditions during the training phase. Teams that have only trained carrying packed lunches and snacks will be poorly prepared for the Challenge.
- Wholesome snacks to graze little and often are good for morale, keep up energy levels, and reduce the need for long stops.
- Emergency rations should include high energy food and some comfort snacks eg cereal bars, sachets of drinking chocolate and dehydrated soup, nuts and raisins. A thick clear plastic bag makes a suitable container that should be clearly labelled and sealed.
- Hygiene to minimise the risk of infection. Use of a bactericidal hand wash, washing of cooking utensils and cutlery.
- Discarding unnecessary packaging before leaving home to save having to carry it.
- Separating meals and labelling them for easy identification during the walk and at camp site. Use freezer bags not plastic boxes that are bulky and heavy when empty.
- Inexperienced walkers often think that sweets, chocolate and fizzy drinks will sustain them during a hard days walking. The importance of understanding the short term nature of sweet things, the diuretic effects of caffeine and the effects of stomach filling gas.
- No need for energy or fizzy drinks or additional salt. A high concentration can draw water from the body. An energy drink will bring instant stimulation for the brain, but masks the bodies need for calorific intake, so storing up problems a few hours further on in training, exhaustion, hypothermia and hypoglycaemia (lack of blood sugar).

Training.

Having discussed the theory, we then practice on all of our training sessions.

The Challenge

Meals must be separated and clearly labelled for easy identification. Teams using 24 hour ration packs must separate out and label their meals having broken open the boxes and a separate emergency reserve food pack for each team member.

WATER

Water is essential to everyone's health. Our brains are 85% water; a 2% water loss results in 30% loss of performance + cramp + fatigue + confusion, headaches and dizziness. Medical authorities calculate that water loss is normally 2.5 litres a day, increasing by as much as three times with strenuous exertion, or hot or muggy conditions.

Education

As part of our preparations, we make sure all walkers are aware of the importance of water and their consumption requirement. To help them look after each other, we ensure that they know the signs and symptoms; dark coloured urine, cramp, headaches and dizziness are sure signs of the need to drink more.

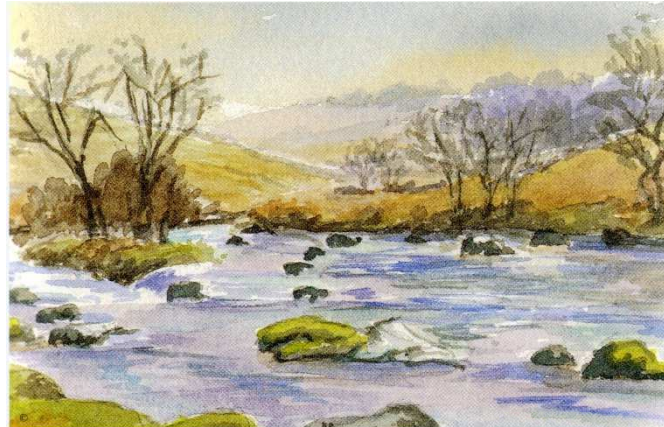
Water replenishment is a key part of the team's plan. We teach the following drills:

- Resupply from small fast flowing water streams – not ponds or still water.

- Include water re-supply in route planning.
- Purify and manage with a hard bottle/platypus type combination. If a platypus is used, purify water in a container, top up the platypus and then replenish the bottle at the earliest opportunity before repeating the cycle.
- Purify with in-date Chlorine Dioxide tablets, which are considered to be the best these days. Wait for the required length of time before adding to the platypus or drinking the water. With fresh flowing water, there is normally no need for filtration on Dartmoor.
- Replenish water containers before arriving at the night stop, especially if the camp site is to be on high ground.

Training

Ensure that safe water replenishment drills are practised during training.



11. River Dart

Elizabeth Kitson