



Contributor's Guide

Please read these instructions carefully before booking to submit a walk. There is a significant amount of work involved in submitting a route to the site and it's important for all of us that each route is described well. For the first walk submission we recommend that you do a short and easy-to-follow route to make learning the process as easy as possible. Please book ONE walk at a time to start with.

What you will need:

1. A Walkingworld account. To submit your walk and help us to administrate it, you need to be a member of Walkingworld. Your membership details provide us with your email and home address so we can send you things, including your royalty cheques!
2. A digital camera. Walkingworld walks come in their own special format, so have a look at some of the walks in the database to get a feel for what is needed. You will see that the format relies heavily on photographs, with a picture for every 'waymark' on your route. This makes the walk much easier to follow - a picture is worth a thousand words! It also makes the task of writing instructions much simpler.
3. A digital mapping application and/or a GPS. Every walk is accompanied by a map, which we make up from your instructions. The map shows numbered 'waymarks' which correspond to the pictures and instructions you send in. You will need to tell us where those waymarks are, either by plotting them on a mapping application or exporting them from your GPS.

Step 1 Reserve your walk

We need to be sure that we haven't got two members doing the same walk or indeed that we don't already have the walk in the database. Therefore we ask that you reserve your walk using the Contribute a Walk form which you will find in the 'My Walks' section of the website.

For the title please put the main places visited on the walk (e.g. Linlithgow – Beecraigs Country Park – Union Canal Avon Aquaduct - Linlithgow). This helps us to see whether a similar walk has already been booked. After the title specify where the walk is (using the drop down choices on the form) and give a short appealing description of the walk and the walk length. If you are not sure about any of these choices just make your best guess at this stage.

You will see that our walks are graded from Gentle Stroll to Mountain Challenge. We are keen to have walks in the database that suit every type of walker. Guidance on these grades can be found in the

'Additional Information' at the end of this document, but again if you are not sure how to grade your walk just make a best guess and we will help to pick the right grade later.

It is important that we do not duplicate any routes already in existence so please search the database of walks thoroughly before filling in the walk booking form or ask for help in checking. We are always happy to assist so contact us at any time. Booking your walk will create a unique ID number and you now have eight weeks to complete the walk and submit it.

Step 2 Prepare for the walk

All you need to take on the walk is a map, your camera and, if you have one, your GPS. Many people find it useful to carry a small notebook and pencil - others are known to use a dictaphone to record details as they go round.

Please note down any useful information about getting to the walk start, such as availability of trains and buses and the location of car parks. There's also space on the walk information for details of local attractions, such as museums. So record any information you think users of your walk will find interesting, intriguing or useful.

Step 3 Do the walk



At the walk start take a photograph showing the direction to be taken to begin the walk. It might be a picture of the first stile or gate or the footpath going off into the woods. This is Waymark 1. The one on the left is a typical example. In the walk instructions it will be accompanied by your text telling the walker how to get from Waymark 1 to Waymark 2.



From now on, at every point where a significant decision has to be made (e.g. turn left onto a new path, take the right fork, pass behind the farmhouse), take another picture. Try to show what the approaching walker will actually see, so that with your written instructions it will be absolutely clear where they should go next.

Make sure you know where you are on the map! This may sound obvious, but you will need to give an accurate grid reference for each waymark and show us exactly where each position is. Mark the position on your GPS if you have one.

Continue on your walk, taking a photo for each waymark and noting where it is on the map or marking the position on your GPS. Jot down any details which may be useful for your instructions, such as the names of roads, houses and pubs.

Please note that all the photographs for the walks are in landscape format and in the ratio 4:3. You can take a portrait photo or a wider ratio photo but we will have to crop it. Also if possible take a beautiful view along the way to use as a general view to promote your walk on the walk summary page.

Step 4 Choose your pictures

Back home, download the photographs from your digital camera to your computer. The pictures should be at 640x480 pixels size or larger and saved as a jpeg file or similar.

Pick the photographs you intend to use as waymarks, put them into a new folder and number them consecutively. Name them 01.jpg, 02.jpg and so on (N.B. it is essential that you prefix single figures with a zero as we have done here). Please do not add any other words, extra numbers or letters to the file names. This will mean that Waymark 8, for instance, is always accompanied by the picture called 08.jpg.

Please also include the attractive general view, which is not necessarily a waymark, and call it general.jpg.

Step 5 Plot the waymarks on a map

It's very important that we can make up the map for your walk accurately. A six-figure Ordnance Survey grid reference is not accurate enough.

By far the quickest and easiest method of recording the waymarks for the route is to use an application like Memory Map, Quo, Anquet, Basecamp or Ordnance Survey's Get-a-Map service. It is important that only the numbered waypoints for the single route are shown; there should be exactly the same number as your pictures. If you are using Memory-Map or Quo you can download a separate instruction sheet to help with the task.

If you have recorded your waymark positions on a GPS you can import them into the digital mapping application so that you have accurate locations as your starting point for plotting the route. You may need to delete ones that you decide not to use in your guide. In most cases you will need to join the imported waypoints into a route.

When you have finished organising your route in the mapping application export the resulting overlay as a GPX file (Memory-Map, Quo and Anquet formats are also acceptable).

Step 6 Write up your walk

Login and click on My Walks/Contributed walks and enter the ID number into the search field for your new walk. Click Go to reach the Edit page of your walk.

Using the link on the page please email your GPX file to us. We need this before you can see your waymark fields. In the meantime you can add or edit any of the general text fields, add the Features and also upload or send us the pictures.

General text

Fill in the remaining general information on the walk. All but the 'Additional information' fields are required before you can finally submit your walk.

The general fields are:

1. Walk Title - this should be a series of place names separated by a dash.
2. Short Description - this is a sentence or two about the walk which people can read from the results from when they search for a walk. Sell the pleasures of the walk!
3. Long Description - this is the longer walk description explaining the delights of the walk. You can wax lyrical here but don't give a step by step account of the walk
4. Walk length - length of the walk in kilometres (N.B. not in miles!)
5. Height gain – total amount of climbing on the walk, in metres.
6. Access information – how to get to the walk start by car and by public transport
7. Additional information – any other useful info about the walk or what is encountered on it.
8. Walk type - Gentle stroll, Easy Walk, Moderate, Strenuous, Mountain Challenge. See below for full details or ask for assistance if unsure.
9. Walk Locations – should be already filled in.
10. OS Map Title - please provide Explorer or Explorer OL map number here.

Features

Click to 'Edit features' on the right hand side, select the features appropriate for your walk and click save at the bottom.

Pictures

There are three ways you can send the pictures to us:

1. You can email us the pictures, for instance by attaching them when you email the GPX file. Beware of sending very large image files which may not get through. A useful tip for Windows users is to select the images you want to send and right-click. This brings up an option to 'Sent to / Mail recipient'. On selecting this you are asked if you want to make the pictures smaller. Click 'Show more options' and select Large. This sends the images at a suitably large size for us to deal with but not so large that they won't email at all. Email to: chris@walkingworld.com
2. You can upload the pictures via the website. Go to the walk in My Walks and click the option in the right hand menu to 'Add/Edit Walk Images'. Note that there is a size limit of 1MB on each picture so you may need to scale them down first.
 - a. Ensure your jpg files are the right format (landscape 4:3), named as specified above (01.jpg, 02.jpg etc.) and none are more than 1Mb each.
 - b. Click Select Images.
 - c. Browse your computer for the images and select them.
 - d. Click open and the pictures will upload. It takes a few seconds (you can do more than one at a time).
 - e. If the pictures showing look OK, click Save and they will appear on your walk page in the fields by each waymark. You may have to wait for those fields to be available to view if you have only just sent your GPX file, otherwise only the general will show at this stage
3. You can post us the image files on CDrom or even on a memory stick (which we will post back to you). Please protect CDroms with card and ask the post not to bend it! Post to:

Walkingworld, Tufton Lodge, Barras, Kirkby Stephen, Cumbria CA17 4JD

Waymarks

Please wait for administrators to upload the waymark location data in the GPX file. This is required for the waymarks to become available to view. You will be contacted as soon as they are ready, usually after a day or two of sending us your file.

Each waymark must have some instructions telling the walker how to get from this waymark photo to the next. Please write no more than 120 words for each caption. A good tip is to refer to something in the picture for each waymark (e.g. 'Going through this gate, bear left into the field....'). There are two methods for providing us with these instructions:

1. On the website:

Once we have uploaded the location data for the walk you will be able to go back to the walk and insert your waymark instructions.

2. Digital mapping application:

If you are using a digital mapping application like Memory-Map or Quo to submit your waymark positions you can also enter the waymark instructions while preparing the route. The instructions simply go in the 'Comments' or 'Note' field for each waymark. If you do this the instructions will be included in the GPX export and you will find that they are already inserted into the waymarks when you go back to edit the walk.

Step 7 Submit the walk

Finally when you have entered all the walk information and are happy that it is all correct, click the Submit button at the very bottom of the page.

Step 8 Approve your walk

Once we get your information it may take us a few weeks to process your walk and create the Ordnance Survey map. We'll do it as quickly as we can - we're keen to see your walk in the database as you are! When we have completed this work we'll set the walk for your approval. Only you will be able to see it. To check the walk and the maps:

Go to the home page and enter your walk ID number into the ID search.

View 'Full walk details' and click on Maps or Walk Guide.

Check the 1:25 000 scale map, probably best by printing it out.

Check the 1:50 000 scale map by returning to the print out options page. By UNTICKING the 1:25 000 scale option, the 1:50 000 scale map will show instead.

When you are satisfied that the walk is correct, please return to My Walks, find the walk and click the Approved button at the bottom of the page. Your walk will go live shortly after.

You can contact us at any time about your walk, for instance if you need to make changes to the route for some reason. Simply find the walk in your My Walks listing and click the 'contact' option to email us about that walk.

Step 9 Send us your profile

Once you have submitted your walk you may want to think about your profile page. Every contributor has a profile page linked from each of their walks detailing a list of their walks. It's nice for your fans and followers to have a photo of you and a short walking biography. Don't forget to send that in too!

Step 10

There is no Step 10. That's it!

Remember if you have any problems at any stage, or simply want some advice, just contact us. If you want us to, we'll try to come out on your first walk and help you through it. Once you have submitted your first walk you will have access to the Contributors section of the website, where we post useful information for our contributors.

Just call 017683 42029 and ask for Chris Stewart. Or email her on chris@walkingworld.com

Additional Information

Walk Guidelines

We are keen to have walks in the database that suit every type of walker. Generally speaking walks should be capable of being undertaken in one day. The majority are circular, but they don't have to be. We like to encourage the use of public transport, so walks which start at one train station and end at another, for instance, are very welcome.

As a Walkingworld contributor you have a responsibility to deliver a walk that is legal and safe, as well as enjoyable and rewarding. It's not an especially difficult task - and whether you have aspirations to be the next Wainwright or not you'll soon find that it's a very satisfying and creative process! But before you get cracking here are some guidelines to help make sure your planning and route description is as good as the walk itself.

1. Grading your walk

Use the Walkingworld grading system to give an indication of the difficulty of the walk and the conditions the walker is likely to meet, highlighting any potential hazards in the instructions. Remember that people may walk the route at any time of the year, in any weather, and that everyone's capabilities are different. Pick the grade that is closest to your assessment of the walk, but use the walk description to elaborate if necessary.

(i) Gentle Stroll: the walk is likely to be under 3 miles and there are no obstacles, such as difficult stiles, awkward footbridges, steep slopes, etc. The route is well-surfaced, and could be done in almost any type of footwear.

(ii) Easy: the walk is likely to be under 7 miles. Paths and tracks are easily walked in any weather, there are no significant navigational difficulties, and stiles and gates are in good repair. In favourable weather the route could probably be walked in trainers or other lightweight shoes.

(iii) Moderate: the walk is likely to be more than 7 miles. There may be some more awkward obstacles, like badly maintained gates, and places where navigation involves more thought and skill. The walk should be done in boots or walking shoes.

(iv) Strenuous: the walk goes into regions where exposure to weather and difficult terrain means that walkers should always be equipped with proper footwear, spare clothing and food and drink. Map and compass skills are necessary, though they may not have to be used. The route may require some mild scrambling - the use of hands as well as feet - but the dangers are limited. Walking the route in winter should be carefully assessed.

(v) Mountain Challenge: the walk reaches higher altitudes (e.g. over 2,500ft) where weather conditions can change rapidly. The group should always have an experienced leader. There may be sections where the path is exposed or difficult and a fall could be serious. Participants must be fit, familiar with this type of terrain, and equipped for every eventuality. Walking the route in winter would require specialist skills.

2. Planning the route

All Walkingworld routes should be on public rights of way, permissive paths (where the landowner has granted permission), routes where there is a long tradition of public access, or sites where access has been formally agreed. In England and Wales rights of way are shown on Ordnance Survey maps: Outdoor Leisure and Explorer (1:25 000 scale) give the best detail. If in any doubt always check with the local authority's rights of way department; or if, for example, your route traverses National Trust or Forestry Commission land check with their regional office. In Scotland there is no rights of way network but a broader right of access to open land, so you will have to research the route and use your judgement where necessary.

Don't forget that unlike conventional printed guidebooks Walkingworld can reflect overnight changes on the ground - like a landowner suddenly withdrawing permission for a particular path, or a footbridge being washed away in a storm.

ON THE MAP: Measure your route on the map (outdoor shops sell inexpensive 'map measurer' devices). If the ground is especially undulating - a ridge track or cliff path - count off the contours along your route to provide an idea of the sort of climbing involved and the severity of the slopes. Check that the entire route is along rights of way or across access land, and mark any potential hazards, such as stepping stones across streams that could be awkward if the river was in spate, or grassy slopes that could be slippery if wet. Also consult the map for pubs or nearby villages (perhaps with shops or tea rooms), picnic sites and public toilets.

ON THE GROUND: Planning on the map is only half the story: now go out and actually walk and describe the route. Which is the best way round (in terms of nicest views, hazardous slopes, easiest ending, etc)? And what in particular did you find interesting and attractive about this walk? Share your enthusiasm! A lovely stand of oak, a waterside scene, a curious tumulus or folly, surprise views, a badger sett, a Norman church, and so on. Bear in mind that a view described when all the foliage is out in July will look totally different in mid January; and if you are in a popular outdoor area and reconnoitre the walk on a quiet midweek morning it may all be very different on a busy Sunday afternoon. Keep route description tight and accurate, and try to avoid generalisations ("a little further on...").

Finally, once you've written up the walk in draft give a copy to your partner or a friend and invite them to walk the route using your instructions. Then amend where necessary!

3. Caring for the environment

All walking guidebook authors and contributors have a responsibility to the environment that they describe, and this means that you should try and avoid featuring paths and tracks that are subject to over-use and erosion. Walkingworld has the great advantage of allowing you to enter a number of routes in the same area, and so spread the overall impact on the local environment.

We would like as many routes as possible to be accessible by public transport, and once you look it's surprising how many good walks can start near rural railway stations or from bus stops (but check

services are still running!). Where access is only possible by car you must make sure that there is safe and suitable off-road parking at the start/finish point - avoid church or pub car parks if possible.

4. Safety

Walkers must ultimately be responsible for their own safety and for judging whether they or their group are capable of a route. However, there are a few ways you can help reduce potential risks:

keep road-walking to a minimum: avoid narrow lanes with blind corners, busy road crossings, etc (use bridges and pedestrian crossings wherever possible) for longer walks consider 'escape routes': short-cuts, side valleys, etc consider the nearest farms, pubs, etc, if the weather forces walkers to find shelter on or off-route

Commission

Walkingworld will give you ONE YEAR's subscription in return for each newly submitted walk. Please email Chris to ensure your subscription is updated. Unfortunately there is no automated system for adding the year's subscription so a reminder is always gratefully received.

Your walk will enter our commission scheme. Under this scheme you receive a share of subscriptions made by members to download walks. A standard annual subscription is £15 + VAT, although there may be special offers from time to time (for instance for resubscribing) and in some cases we pay commission to a partner for selling the subscription. As well as the VAT we have to cover the credit card transaction costs. The remaining amount we take to be our revenue from the subscription.

25% of this revenue is paid into the contributors fund. Your payment from the fund is based on the number of times your walk or walks have been downloaded, so the more popular walks will gain higher payments. The share-out is done annually, based on the subscriptions for each calendar year. You will normally receive your share in late January when we have completed the calculations.

Walks can also be bought individually for £1.95. We may vary the purchase price from time to time. The cost of sale and administration is much higher than subscriptions, so in this case 10% of the revenue earned by Walkingworld for each sale is added to the contributors fund. It is worth pointing out that the proportion of revenue from individual walk sales is much smaller than the subscription revenue.