

Factsheet 5

Ring the Changes



Why do we need to change?



- ✘ New ideas help you keep your walks fresh and interesting
- ✘ To involve people with different levels of ability
- ✘ To increase the challenge - distance, intensity, grade
- ✘ Develop people's skills - walk leaders required.

Consider:

- ✘ Introduce change gradually – familiarity breeds security
- ✘ Introduce change before people get bored – familiarity breeds contempt!
- ✘ Involving participants in decisions about the walks will encourage their readiness to progress to something different or more challenging
- ✘ Offer a range of options to appeal to the widest possible audience, but remember that you can't please all of the people, all of the time!
- ✘ Recruiting more walk leaders to increase the range of options on offer
- ✘ Don't forget to keep the easy walks for new people who might need to start with something simple.



Keeping your walks fresh and interesting, have you thought about:

Themed walks

- ✘ Local history – for example, previous use of the country park as a coal mine, gravel pit, industrial area
- ✘ Public footpaths and bridleways – how they came into being – the walk to work for mineworkers, agricultural workers, maids in service
- ✘ Flora and fauna – led by someone who knows the names of all those flowers and trees that are passed on your walks!
- ✘ Waterside walks – seaside, lakes, rivers or canals
- ✘ Nature trails – existing walks with written or recorded commentary
- ✘ Sensory walks through specially designed areas of parks and gardens
- ✘ Special access walks for the less able members of your group. Many country parks have pathways suitable for wheelchairs and walking aids.
- ✘ Picnic walks
- ✘ Introduce a friend



Walk Leaders – recruiting new and developing existing

Progressive walks

– for those with fitness as their goal

- ↘ Taster walks to help walkers build confidence to move on
- ↘ Increasing the distance walked
- ↘ Increasing the length of the 'brisk walk' phase
- ↘ Introducing inclines
- ↘ Introducing new routes
- ↘ Encouraging more frequent walks – two or three times a week

New walks:

Where to find out about new walks:

- ↘ Local authority countryside and recreation department
- ↘ Local tourist information office
- ↘ Special Ordnance Survey maps for public rights of way, footpaths, bridleways
- ↘ Your local walking development officer
- ↘ Local authority website – look for countryside parks
- ↘ Other walking groups – join forces! Let them lead your group, then invite them to join you on one of your favourite walks
- ↘ Go exploring – but remember to do so safely
- ↘ Google it! It's surprising what you'll learn on the internet.

Increasing the range of walks that your group offers will allow your walkers to visit new places and visit great scenery. It's surprising what you can find on your own doorstep that you didn't know about.

There may be confident, experienced members of your group who would enjoy the challenge of leading walks for others. Encourage them to 'shadow' your walk leaders to gain some experience. Make sure your leaders know what is expected of them once they have been trained – conducting risk assessments, completing paperwork, commitment to leading a certain number of walks per season/year.

There are different levels of walk leader training available depending on the types of walks you wish to offer your group. Make sure that your walk leaders are trained to the most appropriate level. The more confident your walk leaders are, the smoother the walks will run.

Look at the pathway diagram below to find out more about the range of walk leader qualifications that are available. Further details of each of the organisations can be found on the back cover of this pack.

Types of Walk Leader Training courses available

Level of training	Description of course	Approx. cost
Health Walk Leader (HWL)	Aimed at volunteers who want to lead 'health walks' to the general public in their communities or surrounding areas. Health walks are ½ to 2 mile walks on flat gradients with terrain suitable for wheelchairs/pushchairs.	Free
National Navigation Award Scheme (NNAS)	These courses do not cover leadership skills, they are to assess personal competence in navigation and planning. Bronze award Silver award Gold award	£30-£100 £120 – £150 £120 - £165 (Gold assessment fee in addition)
Day Walk Leader Award (DWL)	Natural progression for health walk leaders, teachers, youth workers and other community members who want to lead more challenging walks: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✘ Lead groups in lowland areas ✘ Have responsibility for the care of others. 	£42 registration + Provider cost (varies)
Basic Expedition Leader Award	A nationally recognised qualification that trains and qualifies teachers, youth workers and other members of the community to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✘ Lead groups in lowland areas ✘ Have responsibility for the care of others when outdoors including day journeys ✘ Organise base and mobile camps. 	£51.50 registration + provider costs (varies)
Walking Group Leader Award (WGLA)	This award is for leaders of walking groups in summer conditions in non-mountainous hilly terrain, known variously as upland, moor, bog, hill, fell or down. In order to attend a training course you must have logged a least 20 days hill walking.	£195 £217 (residential)
Summer Mountain Leader Award	ML is designed to help responsible leaders who wish to operate in mountainous terrain in summer conditions. ML courses develop your group management skills, the ability to navigate in all conditions, the ability to deal with mountain hazards (including steep ground) and increase your awareness of environmental issues.	£390 £445 (residential)



Providers	Training & Assessment	More information
LWC Walk Leader Tutors	1 day course, no assessment	www.lets-walk-cymru.org.uk
Various providers across Wales (see website for course providers in Wales)	<p>The duration for training and assessment: Minimum of 12 hours</p> <p>Minimum of 12 hours</p> <p>In addition to an oral or written examination, the candidate will be assessed on a practical exercise in which the candidate follows a route in terrain with complex contour features.</p>	www.nnas.org.uk
Various (BELA providers)	79 hours includes: 60 hours of training and assessment, a first aid certificate of a minimum of 4 hours, and 15 hours leadership experience.	www.bst.org.uk
Various	Each qualification requires a minimum of 90 hours of instruction and practical work followed by 30 hours of voluntary leadership experience.	www.bst.org.uk
Storey Arms Plas-y-Brenin Others	3 day training, 3 day assessment plus min of 40 hill walking days plus possession of a valid first aid qualification.	www.mltw.org
Storey Arms Plas-y-Brenin Others	5 day training, 5 day assessment plus min of 40 mountain days plus possession of a valid first aid qualification.	www.mltw.org

Notes and Links

For further information, contact:
Ringing the changes – organisations that may be able to provide information on access and different types of walks:

National Park Authorities

- ↘ *Brecon*
www.breconbeacons.org.uk
- ↘ *Snowdonia*
www.eryri-npa.org.uk
- ↘ *Pembrokeshire*
www.pcnpa.org.uk
- ↘ *Ramblers Cymru*
www.ramblers.org.uk/wales
- ↘ *British Waterways Board*
www.britishwaterwaysboard.co.uk/wales
- ↘ *Forestry Commission*
www.forestry.gov.uk/wales
- ↘ *National Trust*
www.nationaltrust.org
- ↘ *North Wales Outdoor Partnership*
www.partneriaeth-awyr-agoed.co.uk
- ↘ *Countryside Council of Wales*
www.nature-reserves.wales.info
www.countryside.wales.info
- ↘ *Local Authority Rights of Way officers*
Contact your local council

Walk leader training:

- ↘ *Lets Walk Cymru*
www.lets-walk-cymru.org.uk
- ↘ *Sports Leaders UK*
www.bst.org.uk
- ↘ *Mountain Leader Training Wales*
www.mltw.org
- ↘ *Nordic Walking*
www.britishnordicwalking.co.uk
www.nordicwalkinguk.co.uk
- ↘ *Navigation Awards*
www.nnas.org.uk

