

Newton Stewart Walking Festival 2024 Participant Information Pack

Please read through this information pack which contains helpful information designed to ensure your safety and enjoyment during our festival, which takes from 10 May 2024 to 16 May 2024.

Before the event

Bookings

Advance booking is usually required to guarantee a place on our walks and is required for our welcome dinner on 10 May 2024. Our preferred method is that you book and pay online (using your credit or debit card, or Paypal account) via our website www.walkfestnewtonstewart.com For our two evening talks you can either pay in advance or tickets will be available on the night.

Online booking will close on 9 May 2024. After this date, new bookings, or amendments to existing bookings, can only be made in person at the registration point or by emailing info@walkfestnewtonstewart.com.

Cancellation or amendment to your booking

If you wish to cancel or amend a booking, please e-mail us on info@walkfestnewtonstewart.com with your request so that we can amend your booking and process a refund if applicable. We will issue a full refund for cancellations made up to 3 May 2024. After that date we will not normally issue refunds, but you are free to transfer the full value of your payment to other walks and events during the festival if there are spaces available.

Changes to the festival programme

The organisers retain the right to alter walk routes and/or withdraw routes from the programme without notice. Wherever possible, changes will be advised to you and via our website, Facebook page or via our newsletter.

Dogs

Please note that dogs are **not** allowed on any WalkFest walks.

Walkers aged under 16

Walkers under 16 years of age must be accompanied by an adult.

Preparing for your walk

Weather

Our walks will proceed in both rain and shine, unless it is unsafe to do so. For a detailed weather forecast for the uplands, visit the Mountain Weather Information Service at www.mwis.org.uk and select the Southern Uplands weather forecast.

Clothing, footwear and other equipment

On the hill walks you must wear proper walking boots and clothing and carry your own waterproofs and sufficient food for the duration of the walk. On other walks you are advised to wear walking boots and be prepared for all kinds of weather. All walks will include a lunch stop and/or other breaks so please bring a supply of food and drink with you. We also recommend you consider packing treatments for common issues such as blisters (Compeed is good) and cramp (Crampfix is effective).

Walk leader discretion

In the interests of safety, walk leaders reserve the right to decline to take walkers whom they consider to be inadequately equipped or who they have reason to believe may not be able to complete the route. Walkers' safety is our priority at all times. If you are unsure about your suitability for a particular walk, do not hesitate to contact us and one of our experienced guides will contact you to discuss.

On the day

Registration

You must register before joining your walk. Registration for all walks will take place at McMillan Hall, Dashwood Square, Newton Stewart, DG8 6EQ. The table at the end of this pack shows the registration times for each walk and evening event.

Registration for each walk opens around 30 minutes before the walk is due to depart. Please ensure you arrive in good time to complete the registration process. A copy of the form you will be asked to complete can be viewed [here](#), but it is not necessary to complete this in advance – there will be a plentiful supply at the registration point. Please also bring along a copy of your booking in case of any queries.

Unable to attend on the day

If you are unexpectedly unable to participate in your booked walk, such as due to illness or injury on the day, please try to let us know so that we know not to expect you at registration. You can call or text the registration mobile phone on 07421 312 056.

Coach transfers

When required, walks include coach or minibus transfer from Dashwood Square, outside McMillan Hall, to the walk start point. All walkers will be returned to Newton Stewart after completing their walk. Our registration staff will guide you to the correct bus.

Buses will leave promptly, and for the enjoyment of others we can't wait for those arriving late. To ensure the smooth running of the festival, we cannot normally accommodate requests by walkers to join the walk at the starting point of the route.

Walk leaders

All walks will be led by experienced leaders. On the more demanding walks, the walk leaders will be members of the Galloway Mountain Rescue Team. On some of the shorter walks the guides may include local historians, wildlife rangers or enthusiasts who will discuss the history, wildlife etc of the area as you walk.

Walking responsibly

We operate a “leave no trace” policy, so please do not drop litter and always leave the countryside as you found it. When walking, please observe the Country Code and respect the life and work of the countryside.

Liability

Whilst Newton Stewart Walking Festival has public liability insurance it will not be responsible for any injury, illness, death or claim of any description whatsoever which results from any of the following:

1. The act(s) and/or omission(s) of any walker
2. The act(s) and/or omission(s) of a third party not connected with Newton Stewart Walking Festival and which were unforeseeable or unavoidable

All walkers are strongly advised to obtain adequate medical insurance to cover them in the event of an accident or illness.

Version dated: 05 March 2024



Walk registration and evening event times

The following table provides times for our walks and other events. Please note that there may have been some changes to timings to those originally advised on our website and/or at the time of your booking. The times shown below should be treated as the up to date times.

Registration for all walks is at McMillan Hall, Dashwood Square, Newton Stewart, DG8 6EQ

Evening events at The Belted Galloway Visitor Centre, Riverside View, Newton Stewart, DG8 6NQ

Name of walk / event	Registration point	Registration open from	Bus departs at	Return time *
Friday 10 May 2024				
1-1 Ring of Fire: Day 1 Minnigaff Hills	McMillan Hall	07:30	08:00	18:30
1-2 Southern Upland Way: Day 1	McMillan Hall	08:00	08:30	16:45
1-3 Shenanton to Kirkcowan	McMillan Hall	09:45	10:15	15:30
Welcome Dinner	Served at 19:30 in Belted Galloway Visitor Centre			
Saturday 11 May 2024				
2-1 Ring of Fire: Day 1 Rhinns of Kells	McMillan Hall	07:00	07:30	19:30
2-2 Merrick Mullwarcher Merry Go Round	McMillan Hall	07:30	08:00	17:00
2-3 The Eye of the Black Loch	McMillan Hall	08:30	09:00	15:30
2-4 Southern Upland Way: Day 2	McMillan Hall	08:30	09:30	16:15
2-5 Raiding the Dornells	McMillan Hall	09:00	09:30	15:30
2-6 Balloch Wood: Creetown Delights	McMillan Hall	09:45	10:15	14:30
Evening Talk: 40 years of the Southern Upland Way	Talk starts 19:30 in Belted Galloway Visitor Centre			
Sunday 12 May 2024				
3-1 Ring of Fire: Day 3 The Awful Hand	McMillan Hall	07:00	07:30	19:00
3-2 Curleywee: Galloway Grandeur	McMillan Hall	08:00	08:30	16:00
3-3 Southern Upland Way: Day 3	McMillan Hall	08:00	08:30	16:45
3-4 Monreith and Barhullion	McMillan Hall	08:30	09:00	15:00
3-5 Almorness	McMillan Hall	09:30	10:00	17:30
3-6 Barclye to Minnigaff:Peep at the past	McMillan Hall	09:30	10:00	16:30
Monday 13 May 2024				
4-1 Cairnsmore of Fleet via Millburn Path	McMillan Hall	08:00	08:30	16:00
4-2 Southern Upland Way: Day 4	McMillan Hall	08:00	08:30	16:45
4-3 Innerwell to Garlieston	McMillan Hall	09:00	09:30	15:30
Tuesday 14 May 2024				
5-1 Rig of the Jarkness	McMillan Hall	07:30	08:00	17:15
5-2 Skyreburn: the head of the glen	McMillan Hall	08:00	08:30	17:30
5-3 Glasserton to Isle of Whithorn	McMillan Hall	09:15	09:45	16:15
Evening Talk: Galloway Place Names	Talk starts 19:30 in Belted Galloway Visitor Centre			
Wednesday 15 May 2024				
6-1 The Lost Road	McMillan Hall	09:00	09:30	16:45
6-2 Wild Swimming: Loch Trool	McMillan Hall	09:30	10:00	15:30
6-3 Supper Walk: New Luce (Moderate)	McMillan Hall	13:30	14:00	20:30
6-4 Supper Walk: New Luce (Easy)	McMillan Hall	13:30	14:00	20:30
6-5 Sunset on Cairnsmore of Fleet	McMillan Hall	18:30	19:00	00:30
Thursday 16 May 2024				
7-1 The Larg Hill	McMillan Hall	08:00	08:30	17:00
7-2 St Helena's Isle	McMillan Hall	08:30	09:00	14:30
7-3 Knockdolan: The False Craig	McMillan Hall	09:30	10:00	17:30

* Return time shown is meant as a guide only and may vary depending on conditions on the day and the group

Version dated: 05 March 2024