

# Newton Stewart Walking Festival 2023 Participant Information Pack

Please read through this information pack as it contains helpful information designed to ensure your safety and enjoyment during our festival, which runs from Friday 12<sup>th</sup> to Thursday 18<sup>th</sup> May.

## Before the event

### Bookings

Advance booking is usually required to guarantee a place on our walks and is required for our welcome dinner on Friday 12<sup>th</sup> May. 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](http://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 11<sup>th</sup> May 2023. 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](mailto: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](mailto: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 7<sup>th</sup> May 2023. 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](http://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: 12<sup>th</sup> March 2023



# 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 *
<b>Friday 12th May 2023</b>				
1-1 Cruggleton Heughs	McMillan Hall	08:00	08:30	15:45
1-2 The Black Gutter	McMillan Hall	08:30	09:00	17:45
1-3 Walk the Line to Threave Estate	McMillan Hall	10:45	11:15	17:15
Welcome Dinner	Served at 19:30 in Belted Galloway Visitor Centre			
<b>Saturday 13th May 2023</b>				
2-1 WalkFest Challenge: Devil's Granite Gateway	McMillan Hall	07:00	07:30	18:00
2-2 Corserine	McMillan Hall	07:00	07:30	16:15
2-3 Kirkmabreck Trio	McMillan Hall	08:00	08:30	15:15
2-4 An Ancient Landscape	McMillan Hall	09:00	09:30	17:00
2-5 SUW: West from Bruce's Stone	McMillan Hall	09:00	09:30	15:15
2-6 Glenkens Forest Trails	McMillan Hall	09:45	10:15	17:00
2-7 The Byways of Newton Stewart	McMillan Hall	10:00	10:30	13:30
Evening Talk: Discovering the Biosphere's Natural Gems	Talk starts 19:30 in Belted Galloway Visitor Centre			
<b>Sunday 14th May 2023</b>				
3-1 Awful Hand	McMillan Hall	07:00	07:30	17:15
3-2 Haggis Hill	McMillan Hall	08:00	08:30	16:30
3-3 The Two Monuments	McMillan Hall	08:30	09:00	15:00
3-4 Walk and Wild Swim Loch Trool	McMillan Hall	09:30	10:00	15:30
3-5 Fleet Valley: A Scenic Delight	McMillan Hall	09:30	10:00	15:45
3-6 Stairhaven Cliffs	McMillan Hall	11:00	11:30	16:30
<b>Monday 15th May 2023</b>				
4-1 A Day in the Minnigaff Hills	McMillan Hall	08:00	08:30	16:15
4-2 Carrick and Cally	McMillan Hall	08:30	09:00	14:45
4-3 The Papa Ha Trail	McMillan Hall	10:30	11:00	15:30
<b>Tuesday 16th May 2023</b>				
5-1 Cairnsmore of Fleet: A Wild Place	McMillan Hall	07:30	08:00	17:00
5-2 SUW: East from Bruce's Stone	McMillan Hall	08:30	09:00	18:00
5-3 Whithorn's Pilgrim's Way	McMillan Hall	08:45	09:15	16:00
Evening Talk: The Story of the Galloway Hydro Scheme	Talk starts 19:30 in Belted Galloway Visitor Centre			
<b>Wednesday 17th May 2023</b>				
6-1 Curleywee	McMillan Hall	08:00	08:30	17:00
6-2 Glenkens Villages	McMillan Hall	09:30	10:00	16:30
6-3 A woodland route to Newton Stewart	McMillan Hall	11:30	12:00	17:15
<b>Thursday 18th May 2023</b>				
7-1 5@Dalry	McMillan Hall	07:00	07:30	18:00
7-2 North Rhins Coastal Path	McMillan Hall	08:30	09:00	16:30
7-3 Rocks and Mines	McMillan Hall	09:00	09:30	16:30

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

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