



Community Engagement Toolkit

Monmouthshire County Council

Guidance on how to plan, develop, maintain
and promote walking and riding routes.

1 Introduction

What and Who This Toolkit is For?

This toolkit provides advice and information for community groups that want to help maintain walking and other access routes in their local area. These might be Community Councils, Walkers are Welcome groups, local walking groups or other organisations. It contains guidance on how to plan, develop, maintain and promote walking and riding routes and where to find more information and help when you need it.

Why Get Involved?

Walking is popular as a means of recreation, for keeping fit and as a mode of transport for short journeys. Promoted walking and riding routes can attract visitors to your area to help support local businesses. Maintaining a good quality network of local walking and riding routes can bring a number of benefits, for example:

- Providing convenient, easy to use routes for local people for short strolls, longer walks, dog walking, walking and running for health
- Providing convenient routes between places people live and school, shops, the pub and other facilities, to reduce car journeys
- Make your town or village more attractive to existing and new visitors
- Strengthen your community by encouraging people to explore it and learn more about it, providing opportunities to volunteer and to bring people together

And, of course, those of us who do walk or ride know all about the intangible benefits of spending an hour or so in the outdoors, re-connecting with nature and breathing in fresh, Monmouthshire air!

The Bigger Picture

Walking is the most popular outdoor activity pursued by Monmouthshire's 91,000 residents and the 2

million people who visit each year for day trips and holidays.

Legal responsibility for footpaths and other forms of rights of way lies with the highways authority. In Monmouthshire this is the County Council. However, with over 1,600 kilometres of rights of way in the County, the Council doesn't have the resources to maintain them all. In addition, local people know best what kinds of routes they want!

This toolkit is one of a series of actions to empower local communities to manage their local access routes. It is backed up by technical advice from expert Council Officers and others. The overall plan for walking in Monmouthshire is set out in the Monmouthshire Walking Product Development Strategy, which you can download from <http://wp.me/PtV4mX-g3>.

Getting Started

At first glance, this toolkit might look a bit daunting. Don't panic. There's more information in here than you're likely to need as we've tried to cover all eventualities in the toolkit. For example, we've included information on surveying your route network and recruiting volunteers but you might have done these things already. We've already included information on how to create new access, but if your route follows existing rights of way, you won't need to do this.

Use the summary boxes at the start and end of each section to decide which parts of the Toolkit you'll need to read. You can also lighten the load by sharing the work amongst your team – ask colleagues to read about and deal with different aspects of the work.

Follow this 5-step plan and don't forget, you can get help at any stage from Monmouthshire County Council by calling 01633 644850 or e-mailing countryside@monmouthshire.gov.uk. Or you can write to us at PO Box 106, Caldicot, Monmouthshire, NP26 9AN.

- Decide why you want to manage your network
- Gather information: Survey the route or route network
- Review the position: Consider what improvements might be necessary to meet target users' needs
- Improving or developing a route: Planning and doing the work
- Promote and manage your route

Use the table below to see which sections of the Toolkit are relevant to each step.

STEP	QUESTIONS	FIND GUIDANCE IN THESE SECTIONS
1. Why do you want to manage your network?	What do we get out of this?	Why Get Involved?
2. Gather information	How do we survey the route?	Surveying a Route
	Who owns the land?	Working With Landowners
	What else will people be interested in?	Points of Interest
3. Review the position	Who is your walk for?	
	Will we have legal obligations?	Developing the Route
	Are there wider aspects we should think about?	Developing the Route
	How to we make the route accessible for all?	Developing the Route
	What about route finding?	Route Information
	How do we deal with structures?	Developing the Route Working With Landowners
	What will it cost? How do we pay for it?	Fundraising

STEP	QUESTIONS	FIND GUIDANCE IN THESE SECTIONS
4. Developing your route	Do we need permission to do any work?	Working With Landowners
	How do we get the work done?	Developing The Route Working With Volunteers
	How do we tell people about points of interest on the route?	Points of Interest
	How do we get the bigger jobs done?	Developing the Route
5. Promoting and managing your	How do we encourage people to use the route?	Promotion
	How do we take care of the route once it's there?	Maintaining Your Route Monitoring and Evaluation
6. Management Considerations	Is there any other advice?	Working with Volunteers
6. Management considerations	Is there any other advice?	Working with volunteers
		Keeping records
		Insurance
		Training

In each section, you'll find:

- An introduction – that summarises what's in the section
- The detail – information, checklists, etc.
- Key points – a list of the key things you should remember
- Further information – links to places you can find more detailed information

You can download the whole toolkit, or just the section(s) you are interested in; they are listed here:

2. Why Get Involved?
3. Surveying a Route
4. Working With Landowners
5. Developing The Route
6. Points of Interest
7. Promotion
8. Route Information

9. Maintaining Your Route
10. Monitoring and Evaluation
11. Fundraising
12. Working With Volunteers
13. Appendix

This Toolkit has been produced for Monmouthshire County Council by Bowles Green Limited (www.bowlesgreen.co.uk) and Geri Coop, with graphic design by Slug & Bull (www.slugandbull.com).

The Toolkit is also available in Welsh.

2 Why Get Involved?

It's important that you work with a walk that gives benefits to your community. That way your work will be worthwhile and it will be easier to gain support for the project. It will also help you to decide what kind of walk to develop from the list of walk types in section 5.

THIS SECTION INCLUDES:

- Reasons for managing and promoting walks
- Things to consider before starting a project
- Help available from Monmouthshire County Council

The Detail

REASONS TO WORK ON WALKS

There are lots of reasons for managing and promoting walks. What your community wants or needs will dictate the kind of walks you develop. You might choose one or a combination of the following:

- To improve off road links between where people live and where they want to go (school, shops, pub, playground, etc.).
- To improve off road links between visitor parking and other places
- To provide for residents recreational needs, for example for dog walking, walking or running for health
- To attract visitors, or encourage them to stay for longer (to support the local economy)
- To make paths easier to use for people with mobility or sensory difficulties or people with pushchairs
- To encourage people to appreciate nature or local heritage features

If you are considering walks to attract visitors, you might like to consider the following:

- Serious walkers generally use maps to plan long walks – they are unlikely to be interested in a short, promoted walk

- Most visitors are looking for short walks (2-3 miles) that are easy to use
- Most visitors come to Monmouthshire for general sightseeing, for culture and heritage and for food and drink



Walking for health near Abergavenny.

THINGS YOU SHOULD CONSIDER

Work on your walk will need resources – people to do the management, and any planning and development work and money to pay for materials and, possibly, contractors. Be aware that developing a walk is only part of the job. Once it's there, it needs to be managed in the future, otherwise your good work will be wasted, for example by:

- Cutting back vegetation in the summer
- Checking for problems and arranging to sort them out (for example fallen trees, broken stiles/gates, lost waymarks, etc.)
- Promoting the route (for example making sure leaflets are available, keeping leaflets and websites up to date, etc.)

All of this will need some kind of long term

commitment, so ideally there will be support for your walk from the Community Council, local businesses, the school, local groups/ organisations, local residents.

You should also consider how your walk fits with Council and other policies on walking, access, health, etc. If it fits well, it is more likely to receive support. The Council's strategy for walking is summarised in the Monmouthshire Rights of Way Improvement Plan, the Monmouthshire Walking Product Development Strategy, and the Least Restrictive Access Policy - all of which can be downloaded from <http://wp.me/P1V4mX-g3>

HOW CAN MONMOUTHSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL HELP?

Working on the walk(s) will be your project. The County Council can help, but does not have the resources to take a lead. The Council can help with:

- Advice on where there might be an alignment issue (see Section 8)
- Mapping showing rights of way is available from the Council's interactive mapping website <http://access.monmouthshire.gov.uk>
- Training
- Information on standards for route furniture, maintenance, etc. is available to download from <http://wp.me/P1V4mX-g3>
- Insurance
- Networking – providing contacts with other groups
- Enforcement, if a route is illegally blocked

Key Points

- First, consider your existing routes; could they be improved, or adapted and promoted to particular audiences?
- If you need to develop a new route, decide why at the very outset
- Think about the kinds of people who will use it and how you will monitor the benefits
- Be sure that you can find the resources and support to develop and manage your walk (including caring for it in the future) before you start)
- Monmouthshire County Council can help you get started

Further Information

RESOURCES AVAILABLE FROM THE COUNCIL

- Monmouthshire Rights of Way Improvement Plan <http://wp.me/P1V4mX-g3>
- Monmouthshire Walking Product Development Strategy <http://wp.me/P1V4mX-g3>
- Monmouthshire Countryside Access Design Guide <http://wp.me/P1V4mX-g3>
- Monmouthshire Public Rights of Way Biodiversity Action Plan <http://wp.me/P1V4mX-g3>

3 Surveying a Route

Carrying out a survey of the route or routes you are considering is an important early task – it's important to understand the scope of the project and to collect detailed information that can be used to plan and cost your work. This section describes a standardised method for route surveying used across the County and provides a standard survey form to record the information.

The Detail

Once you have decided on your proposed route, the first step is to carry out a detailed survey of the route. This will record the current condition of the route and identify work that needs to be done to bring it up to a standard that you are happy to promote.

BEFORE YOU GO

First, check your route against that marked on the Ordnance Survey maps. The best way to do this is to use the Council's on-line mapping (<http://access.monmouthshire.gov.uk>). This will enable you to view the map at different scales. If the line of the route on the ground is different to that shown on the maps, contact the Council for advice on what to do next. In some cases, the line of the route is different on the maps because paths have been legally changed but that the change is not yet shown on the O/S map.

You might also like to research the natural or cultural heritage of the route. Information on designated landscapes and sites is available on-line from Natural Resources Wales at <http://goo.gl/TEPx8o>.

One person can survey a route, but it can be helpful to have more than one person to discuss things you're not sure about and to record information on a map and on the survey sheet. If you don't feel confident about this, you can get help, for example from:

- Other access groups, especially the Ramblers, will be happy for you to join them when they are surveying routes
- MCC run training events for volunteers in surveying and other aspects of access management
- If time permits, MCC might be able to send a Rights of Way Officer along to help you get started

Remember that the path will look different at different times of the year and during wet and dry weather. You'll need to take account of this in your survey. If you don't have knowledge of the route at other times of year, try to find people who do. Better still, survey the route in summer and in winter. The season can affect the route in several ways, including:

- Vegetation that dies back in winter can obstruct a path in the summer
- Areas around gates and stiles, and low-lying sections can become very muddy in the winter/ after heavy rain
- Routes might be lost or obstructed during ploughing or the growth of crops (though landowners have a legal duty to re-instate them – see 'Working with Landowners' section)
- Routes might be 'poached' by stock and vehicles or, on bridleways or byways, by mountain bikes or horses, as well as walkers
- Cattle might be indoors in the winter months, but might be present in other seasons

Nature visible will change through the year – flowers and breeding birds in the spring, fungi in the autumn and winter migrant birds – and so might the views

CONDUCTING A SURVEY

You should use the map and survey sheet to record the following – make sure you number your notes and mark the location clearly on the map; it's easy to confuse exact locations after the event if you don't get it right when you're on site:

- Signs and waymarks
- Stiles and gates
- Steps, bridges, etc.
- Blockages
- Gradients – steepness, cambers and side slopes (these are important for less able walkers)
- Surface condition – for example where there is damage or where increased use is likely to cause problems, such as peaty ground
- Any barriers to access that might be a problem for less able walkers

ITEM	WHAT TO RECORD
Signs and waymarks	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Location • Type • Condition – noting any damaged or obscured signage that needs attention
Wayfinding enhancements	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Places where new signs or waymarks would help • Places where new waymark posts are required
Boundary crossings	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Type (step stile, squeeze stile, ladder stile, field gate, kissing gate, dog gate etc.) • Condition – noting any work that might be required • Improvement opportunities (e.g. stiles to field gates, too high steps, places a post might help, etc.) – see 'Least Restrictive Access' section
Other furniture (steps, bridges, etc.)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Type • Condition – noting any work that might be required • Improvement opportunities
Utilities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Any obvious cables, pipes, etc. especially close to where you might want to do improvement work
Obstructions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Encroaching vegetation, including overhanging branches (especially if the route is a bridleway!) • Fallen trees • Material deposited by flooding • Any deliberate blockages (e.g. locked gates, barbed wire, etc.) – see 'Working with Landowners' section
Alignment issues	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Places where the line of the route on the ground is different to that shown on the maps
Drainage	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Poorly drained areas • Locations that are susceptible to flooding

ITEM	WHAT TO RECORD
Surfaces	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Poached ground • Loose stone, ruts or other awkward terrain that people might have to deviate around
Points of interest	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Built heritage or archaeological remains • Nature interest • Places associated with local stories or famous people
Enhancement opportunities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Locations where a bench or seat would be appreciated • Locations where interpretation, such as a panel, would be helpful
Monitoring opportunities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Businesses or other places where it might be possible to collect information on users • Good places to locate an electronic counter, or to count people
Other useful information	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Links to other routes • Links to facilities – shop, café, pub, accommodation, etc. • Transport – bus stops, car parking

Be sure to number all of your notes and mark the location clearly and accurately on the map. It's easy to confuse exact locations after the event if you don't get it right when you're on site. A GPS device or GPS enabled camera can be helpful, but remember that they are less accurate in woodland.

Make a photographic record of your survey – this can help with planning what development work will be needed and how much it might cost.

Think about when you do your survey. Good weather always helps, but surveying after heavy rain will give you a better idea of the drainage.

You could also use an 'app' such as 'Walk4Life' or 'Runkeeper' to record your route. This would give you an actual distance and would record the route for uploading to the relevant website (see 'Promoting Your Route' section).

Copies of survey forms are included in the appendix.



Surveying with two people or more can help with remembering issues and discussing how to deal with them afterwards.

Key Points

- Research the line of the route and other aspects like heritage before you go
- Think about your intended audience and how they will be using the route
- Use standard survey sheets
- Mark locations of comments on a map
- Make a photographic record
- Consider the effects of the season

Further Information

- BTCV Footpaths Handbook
www.handbooks.btcv.org.uk
- Paths for All – Factsheet 5.2 Path Survey and Construction *www.pathsforall.org.uk*
- Information on important natural sites
<http://goo.gl/4t40qk>

4 Working With Landowners

The cooperation of landowners is important. Whilst people have a right of access, the land they cross belongs to the landowner, as does much route furniture (gates, stiles, etc.), and landowners have a duty of care to people crossing their land. This section gives information on the landowner's perspective and guidance on working with landowners.

The Detail

CONTEXT

Landowners' attitudes towards access vary widely. Some are strongly opposed to access whilst others – for example those who have diversified into farm tourism – are strong supporters of access.

Landowners are rightly concerned about the negative aspects of access, which include the following:

- Damage to crops or boundaries by inconsiderate use, especially dog walkers trying to get their dogs through
- Trespass – roaming away from the defined path
- Reduced security and theft
- Risk to people from stock
- Worrying of stock, disturbance of game by dogs and dog fouling
- Disturbance of stock in open areas or during driving

Anything you can do in designing your route or route information that alleviates these concerns will help your relationship with the landowner(s). Because of this, you should always consult landowners about anything you plan to do that will increase the number of people crossing their land. The first response from many will be negative, unless you can make provision to reduce the problems that they experience. Good awareness of those problems and an empathetic approach will help you to achieve cooperation.

IDENTIFYING LANDOWNERS

To communicate with landowners, you first have to know who they are! There is no standard way to do this, and the Council does not have a record of landowners. The best way is to use local knowledge. People who have lived in your community for a long time are likely to know who owns what and most landowners know their neighbours. In some areas, countryside officers know some of the landowners, so check with the County Council or other countryside organisations (AONB, National Park, National Trust, etc.) if you can't find the landowners yourself. You could also consult the Land Registry, but much rural property is not registered and a small fee is involved.

If a public path is an old road or defined track between boundaries, then quite often there is no registered owner and adjacent owners will not consider it to be theirs. In this case, it is as well to talk to the adjacent owners so that they are aware of your project.

LANDOWNERS' RESPONSIBILITIES

Many landowners realise that most of their concerns about access can be minimised by ensuring that people can progress along rights of way across their land quickly and easily, and so it is in their interests to maintain open routes that have clear waymarking and easy boundary crossings. Whilst some landowners are happy to do this, many rely on others to waymark routes for them.

Where paths have surfaces that become awkward to use, whether through mud, loose stone or rutting, increased use will exacerbate the problem and is likely to result in more people deviating round the difficult length to the detriment of relations with the landowner. While maintenance of a surface is the responsibility of the highway authority, with maintenance budgets much reduced, its intervention is increasingly unlikely. The authority only need make provision for the “normal traffic of the neighbourhood” which, arguably, is not the case with a promoted route, so route selection should always take into account the capacity of the path to bear the additional use, unless there is funding available for surface improvements, which could improve acceptance with the landowner.

The landowner has a legal obligation to ensure that Public Rights of Way across his/her land are accessible. If they are deliberately blocked, the Highway Authority (in this instance Monmouthshire County Council) can take legal action to force the landowner to make the route accessible. However, the legal process takes time; it is also expensive, so it's always best to try to reason with the landowner first. Peer pressure (from local residents and neighbouring landowners) can be effective, so try this before resorting to more serious methods.

GETTING LANDOWNER AGREEMENT

You will need to obtain permission from the landowner for any work you propose to do on his/her land – for example replacing furniture – and you will need to do this in advance. The landowner will also become the owner of most new furniture that is installed (as he/she was of whatever you might remove), so it is important that they are prepared to take ownership of it (note that bridges that are used solely for public rights of way are usually the property of the Highways Authority). Since the landowner has a duty of care towards people on his/her land, it is important that you obtain landowner approval for your design proposals. Meet on site with the landowner to agree what you are going to do.

It is important that you let the Council know what you are doing. This way, they will have a record of any new structures, they will be aware of any work that is to take place on a Public Right of Way and they will have a copy of any agreement with the landowner.

Who owns what and who is responsible for what is complicated! Use the table box in ‘Developing your Route’ as a starting point.

LANDOWNER	OTHERS
Owns the land and structures – including fences, buildings, etc.	Owns signposts from the metalled road
Owns stiles and gates	Responsible for the surface of the path
Owns things you are likely to want to fix waymarks to	Responsible for vegetation growing up from the path
Responsible for overhanging vegetation, crops and vegetation growing onto the path	Responsible for some most bridges

You should also consult landowners about waymarking, since in most cases you will be attaching waymarks to objects that belong to the landowner – for example gates, fences or other structures.



A newly installed kissing gate.

In some areas, countryside officers will have existing contact with landowners, so check with the County Council or other relevant countryside organisations (AONB, National Trust, etc.) if you can't find the landowners yourself.

Once a new piece of furniture is installed, some form of maintenance agreement with the landowner will be required. The agreement will depend on a variety of factors including where the funding came from. Consult with the Countryside Service who will be able to advise the best approach.

Key Points

- It's important to identify and gain the approval of landowners for any work you plan to do and anything you might do to increase the number of people crossing their land
- Try to build in things that address landowners' concerns about access (in some parts of Monmouthshire, dogs create many problems for landowners so it is important that you make provision for any increase in use by people with dogs, such as reminding dog owners of their responsibilities)
- If you are planning development work, meet the landowner on site to agree the detail
- Ensure that the landowner agrees in writing to any new or amended structure and recognises that this will be his/her responsibility to maintain in the future
- Stress that the occupiers' liability is unlikely to be affected by any changes
- Remember, a gap is preferable to a gate and a gate is preferable to a stile

Further Information

- Monmouthshire Countryside Access Design Guide <http://wp.me/P1V4mX-g3>
- Government guidance for landowners on their rights and responsibilities in relation to Public Rights of Way <http://goo.gl/rsqN8c>

5 Developing the Route

This section of the toolkit covers all aspects of development that you might need to undertake to create your promoted route. Remember, it should be one of those described in the 'Promoted Route Types' in this section.

THIS SECTION COVERS:

- Promoted route types
- Legal issues
- Signage
- Route furniture
- Working with contractors

It also looks at some wider considerations like access to the route and facilities for users.

- Heritage walk
- Local produce walk
- Nature walk
- Dog friendly walk
- Family walk

The Detail

MONMOUTHSHIRE PROMOTED ROUTES

The Monmouthshire Walking Development Strategy (2013) <http://wp.me/P1V4mX-g3> specified 8 types of promoted route to be developed to meet the needs of residents and visitors who want to walk. Your walk should be one or more of these:

- Health walk/short walk from home
- Functional route
- Link or loop to a long distance route



These walks are summarised in the table below. You might find that the same walk could be promoted as more than one type, for example by interpreting different aspects of the natural and cultural heritage along the way. However, it should fit clearly into one of these eight types.

WALK TYPE	LOCATION	LENGTH	KEY ELEMENTS	FACILITIES
Health walk	Where people live	30 – 90 mins	Level, stile free	Shelter, places to find food and drink
Functional route	Where people live	As required	Links to places people want to go	Easy access
Long distance route loop or link	Link LD routes to facilities and places of interest	As required for links Half day for loops	Visitor facilities Places of interest	Accommodation, places to eat and drink

WALK TYPE	LOCATION	LENGTH	KEY ELEMENTS	FACILITIES
Heritage walk	Where people visit	20-60 mins	Cultural heritage interpretation	Cultural heritage features
Local produce walk	Where people visit	20-60 mins	Local produce interpretation	Local producers or outlets
Nature walk	Where people visit	20-60 mins	Nature interpretation	Nature features
Dog-friendly walk	Where people live and visit	No limit	No stiles Places dog can run off lead	Dog bins/stick and flick notices as appropriate
Family walk	Where people live and visit	20-60 mins	Activities for family members	Shelter Place to find food and drink

LEGAL ISSUES

The legal definition of a route (or access area) defines who can use it. Users rights are summarised here:

- **Footpath:** Legal right of access for walkers
- **Bridleway:** Legal access for walkers, horse-riders and bicycles
- **Restricted Byway:** Legal access for all non-motorised users (walkers, horse riders, pedal-cyclists and carriage drivers)
- **Byway Open to All Traffic:** Legal access for all traffic, including motorised vehicles
- **Permissive Route:** A route on which there is no legal right of access, but access is provided by the landowner. There is normally a notice explaining this and the route might occasionally be closed (by the landowner)
- **Open Access:** Access to mountain, moor, heath, down and registered common land, created by the Countryside and Rights of Way (CROW) Act of 2000. Legal access on foot anywhere within the designated area. Closures might apply (for shooting, land management, etc.)

In addition, most forestry land owned by Natural Resources Wales (formerly owned by Forestry Commission Wales) is open access for walkers; other users can also visit some of these areas by arrangement (for example where there are mountain biking circuits or by buying horse riding permits).

Other organisations also provide open access, for example the Gwent Wildlife Trust on many of its nature reserves and the County council, for example at Castle Meadows in Abergavenny.

Your promoted route should only follow legal access; with permissive access, the landowner can withdraw permission to use the route in which case your effort to develop, maintain and promote the route would be lost.

There might be other rights over the land across which your route passes, for example:

- On commons, commoners have a right to graze cattle
- There might be shooting or other hunting rights
- Access might be restricted for tree felling or other works

If there are key 'gaps' in the current access, you might be able to negotiate new access with the landowner, especially if this provides a benefit to the local community or solves a problem for the landowner. For example, Llanbadoc Community Council has recently successfully negotiated a new, short access route that links together new permissive access with an existing footpath to create a circular walk. If you identify such an opportunity, Monmouthshire Countryside Service can give you advice on how to proceed.

WHO'S RESPONSIBLE FOR WHAT?

The Highway Authority (Monmouthshire County Council)

Most rights of way are 'maintainable at public expense'. The local Highway Authority is responsible for them, in this case, Monmouthshire County Council. In reality, the County Council is only responsible for:

- The path surface (legally the top two spade depths)
- Any obstructive natural vegetation growing from the surface (but not crops or planted trees)

The Highway Authority can also create a new route where there is a need, extinguish a route that is no longer needed (though this is rare, not least because it is so difficult to do), or change the line of a route temporarily or permanently, but only if the changed line is just as convenient as the old one. However, these things require a lengthy legal process and so you should use existing access for your route wherever possible.

The Highway Authority also maintains the 'Definitive Map', which is the legal record of access in the county. A working copy is available on-line at <http://access.monmouthshire.gov.uk>. It is also responsible for managing the access network, which it does through the Monmouthshire Rights of Way Improvement Plan and other policy documents (see Reference Section).

In the part of the County that lies within the Brecon Beacons National Park, the National Park Authority is responsible for all of these access functions except maintaining the Definitive Map and bridges over 8 metres long.

The Landowner

The landowner is responsible for:

- Maintaining stiles and gates
- Cutting back overhanging vegetation (including branches, brambles, etc.)
- Restoring the path after ploughing and keeping it free of growing crops

Landowners also have a duty of care to PROW users and there are laws about spraying near rights of way and what kinds of cattle can be kept in fields that have rights of way running through them (see <https://www.gov.uk/public-rights-of-way-rights-and-responsibilities#organisations-that-can-help>).

Most landowners see these responsibilities as a cost and are reluctant to invest in route furniture of clearing vegetation unless doing so also helps the business of farming the land. In recent years, Local Authorities have taken a lead in identifying improvements to furniture and other maintenance and paying for them, however in light of public sector funding cuts, this will no longer be possible. Landowners will be reluctant to pay for replacement stiles and gates, but they must realise that they would be liable for any injuries caused by neglect or negligence.

Signage

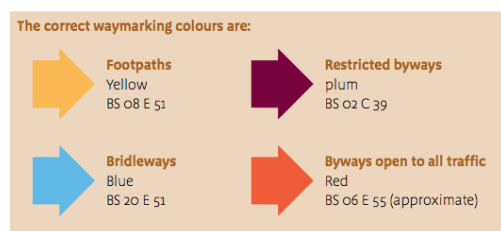
Signs showing where public rights of way leave the metalled road belong to and are the responsibility of the Highway Authority. Anyone (for example a Community Council, local business or access group) can place waymarks along a route, but you will need the permission of the landowner to attach a waymark to any of his or her property (for example a gate or fence). If a landowner withholds consent for a waymark, then the Highway Authority can erect a post for a waymark or sign within the width of the right of way. Where there is no convenient object on which to locate a waymark, you'll need to install a post. Think carefully about these as they can be damaged by animals that might use them as a rubbing post, or obscured by vegetation.



Volunteers replacing a fingerpost at Llanbadoc.

There are standard waymarks for different kinds of route (see below). Sometimes these are customised to indicate a particular promoted route, or network of routes. Some routes, for example National Trails and other long distance routes also have their own, customised signage.

Too many waymarks can be confusing. You can minimise this by, for example, using existing signage where your route follows part of a long distance route and referring to this in your route guide. It is important that waymarks reflect the correct status of the path. Ensure that footpath waymarks are not used on routes with higher rights as this is misleading.



Waymark Arrows for Routes.



Waymark for Open Access.



Waymarks for Long Distance Routes in Monmouthshire.

You can obtain waymarks and signposts from the County Council, which can also supply specialist signs, such as 'No Cycling', 'Open Access', etc. The Council can also provide training on installation

of waymarkers, and you need to give them details of any waymarking you install. Alternatively, the landowner might be prepared to provide them some organisations, such as the Country Landowners Association, provide waymarking packs to their members.

ROUTE FURNITURE

Route furniture includes boundary crossings – gates and stiles, steps, bridges and any other 'structures', for example handrails. From your point of view, these are there to facilitate access, but remember, some, such as gates and fences that might parallel access routes, are also there for the management of stock.

Gates and Stiles

Monmouthshire County Council has a 'Least Restrictive Access Policy', which means that any barriers should allow the best access possible. Specifically, if possible (subject to land and farm management needs) a gap is better than a gate, a gate is better than a stile. This policy is set out on Page 4 of the Council's A-Z of Policy & Protocols <http://wp.me/P1V4mX-g3>

Providing easy access can help lots of people, not just those with a disability (see 'Access for All' section), for example gates are easier to negotiate for people who are less fit.

The specification for gates, particularly width and opening mechanism, is different depending on whether the route is a footpath, bridleway or byway. On bridleways and byways gates must be operable from horseback and swing freely so as to allow safe passage of a horse. Self-closing gate mechanisms, whether manufactured or home made, are not recommended because of the risk of them closing onto a horse as it tries to go through.

If your route includes a bridleway, byway or gated road, ensure that you seek the advice of an experienced horse rider or the British Horse Society before 'improving' or installing gates as there are many factors which a non-rider would not be aware of and which can make a big difference to the safety and ease of use of a gate <http://goo.gl/xU0aB>

Bridges

Bridges are major structures that require specialist design. Also, they are very expensive. If you think an existing bridge needs repairing, or a new bridge is needed, consult the County Council. Bridges that are solely used by Public Rights of Way are technically the surface of the route and so remain in the ownership of the County Council, but with shared access, for example by residents or a farmer, the position could be different. If in doubt, check with the County Council.

FEATURE	OWNER	ISSUES
Surface of the path	Landowner	What do we get out of this?
Boundaries (hedges, fences, walls)	Landowner	The top two spade depths are the responsibility of the Highways Authority
Signage from the metalled road	Highway Authority	The authority has a duty to sign all PROWs from where they leave the metalled road
Waymarks and in route signage	Whoever installs the waymark/sign	Landowner consent needed to attach a waymark to his/her property
Stiles and gates	Landowner	Landowner is responsible for maintaining the structures in good repair
Bridges	Highway Authority or landowner	Ownership normally with the County Council, but some may be owned by the landowner or another authority like Network Rail
Vegetation growing from the surface of the PROW	Landowner	The Highways Authority is responsible for managing natural vegetation that grows from the surface, within the width of the right of way
Other vegetation	Landowner	The landowner is responsible for overhanging vegetation or vegetation that might encroach onto the path from the sides of the right of way
Drainage	Landowner/ Natural Resources Wales	Riparian landowners own the banks of watercourses, though the banks of some main rivers might be owned by Natural Resources Wales

Detailed information on standards for furniture and signage are set out in the Monmouthshire County Council Countryside Access Design Guide <http://wp.me/P1V4mX-g3>.

When planning your project, it's important to avoid negative impacts on biodiversity. MCC's Rights of Way Biodiversity Action Plan <http://wp.me/P1V4mX-g3> has detailed information on how to do this.



Bridge Building.

WORKING WITH CONTRACTORS

You will be able to carry out much of the work yourselves, or with help from other volunteer groups and/or with technical support from the County Council. However, you might choose to appoint a contractor to tackle major tasks. The following advice should help this process to run smoothly:

- Decide exactly what you want before appointing a contractor – though you might want to meet one or more informally in advance if you have more than one design solution
- Write a clear brief and include everything that a contractor would need to give you a price – include a detailed specification, images a plan and a risk assessment
- Consider how vehicles, machinery or materials will get to the site. You may need consent from landowners for access, parking or storage.
- Include provision for removing material from site and its proper disposal, especially cut vegetation or spoil. If there is a risk of contamination, either by invasive species, such as Japanese Knotweed, or heavy metals, you should contact MCC Countryside Service for advice or consent
- Obtain written quotations that include a fixed price and specification for materials, etc.
- Involve the landowner(s) and MCC Countryside Service in developing the brief and appointing the contractor – or as a minimum make sure they are happy with what you are doing

- Be clear about how you will select a specific contractor – price, experience of similar work, reputation, etc.
- Supervise the contractor during the work to identify any problems
- Inspect the work and make sure you are satisfied with it before paying for the work

SOURCING MATERIALS

You might be able to obtain materials as a contribution in kind from a benefactor (see Section 11). MCC Countryside Service can provide some materials, for example gates, more cheaply than on the open market.

Key Points

- Your walk should be one of the 8 promoted walk types specified in the Monmouthshire Walking Development Strategy
- Ownership and responsibilities in relation to rights of way are complicated; use the checklist as a starter and seek help if you are struggling
- It will make your life much easier if you can obtain the consent of landowners for your route
- Set a clear brief for contractors, using the Monmouthshire Countryside Access Design Guide to specify work, and make sure you supervise the work and sign it off before paying
- Check with MCC Countryside to see if you can obtain materials more cheaply

Further Information

- Monmouthshire County Council Countryside Access Design Guide <http://wp.me/P1V4mX-g3>
- Monmouthshire County Council Public Rights of Way Biodiversity Action Plan <http://wp.me/P1V4mX-g3>
- Monmouthshire County Council Public Rights of Way An A to Z of Problems, Policy and Protocols <http://wp.me/P1V4mX-g3>
- On-line Open Access Mapping from Natural resources Wales <http://goo.gl/V3hyAo>
- On-line Definitive Map for Monmouthshire <http://access.monmouthshire.gov.uk>
- Watch Kenilworth Footpath Preservation Group replace a stile with a kissing gate <http://youtu.be/SftQVDYdKMc>

6 Points of Interest

Identifying points of interest can help build local pride and is important in attracting visitors. Interpretation techniques can help bring natural and cultural heritage to life. This section provides advice on how to choose and interpret points of interest to people who use your walk and how to make them more interesting through 'interpretation'.

The Detail

INTERPRETATION

All kinds of things that you might take for granted, because you see them regularly, can be of great interest to visitors, youngsters and others who don't often get into the countryside or do not know your area. There are many different ways to interpret these things to visitors. In addition, 'theming' your walk – linking together the points of interest into a coherent story – is a great way to make it more attractive to people and to encourage them to use it. As set out in Section 5, there are eight types of themed walks in Monmouthshire – 'health walk/ short walk from home', functional route, link or loop to a long distance route, 'heritage walk', 'local produce walk' and 'nature walk', 'dog friendly walk' and 'family walk' but there's no reason why you shouldn't interpret and promote points of interest on the other types of walk.

Heritage – both natural and cultural – needs explanation for most people. To do this, you need to understand it yourself. Work with local experts to give you advice. The problem is that experts will give you a lot of detail. To make this interesting, you need to identify the highlights. These might be aspects of the natural or cultural heritage; they could be tangible or intangible.

NATURAL HERITAGE

- Geological features
- Geomorphological features
- Habitats (woodland, wetland, heath, hedgerows, etc.)
- Species (flowers, fungi, birds, butterflies & other insects, mammals)
- Views and what can be seen

CULTURAL HERITAGE

- Field patterns
- Earthworks
- Ruins
- Industrial archaeology
- Buildings (individual or groups)
- Traditions and stories
- Local crafts
- Associations with famous people from history

'Interpretation' is a process by which you can explain the significance of places they pass to people using your walk. It involves five steps, as follows:

1. Why are you doing it?
2. Who are you doing it for?
3. What will you do and how?
4. Making it happen
5. Is it working?



Interpretation Panel on the Llanfoist Railway Walk.

BEFORE YOU START

Several parts of Monmouthshire already have an Interpretation Strategy or Plan, for example the Wye Valley AONB and Offa's Dyke National Trail. Check to see if there's one in the area of your walk and, if so, make sure that it fits with what's going on round about.

WHY ARE YOU DOING IT?

There are lots of reasons for interpreting a walk. Most commonly, people want to make their walk attractive to bring more people to the area. However, you might also use interpretation for other reasons, for example creating a sense of pride amongst local people and to encourage them to value and look after their local heritage, maintaining local traditions and heritage, encouraging people to behave in a particular way – for example to better protect some aspect of natural heritage, or encouraging better behaviour amongst users, for example in relation to litter, erosion, control of dogs, etc.

Being clear from the start about why you want to interpret your walk will mean you can plan and deliver interpretation that achieves your aims.

WHO ARE YOU DOING IT FOR?

You need to know your intended audience to design interpretive methods that will work. First work out what you already know about your intended audience(s) – are they locals or visitors? When do they come (season, day of the week)? How old are they? How mobile are they? Do they come

independently or in groups (e.g. schools)? How much do they already know about the local area? Knowing these things will help you to plan interpretation that will appeal to them.

Some information on visitors to Monmouthshire and what they are looking for is included in the appendix to this Toolkit. Alternatively, you might like to conduct a survey of existing visitors to your area to ask them what sorts of interpretation they are interested in. A sample questionnaire is included in the Appendix. If you are considering a questionnaire, think about the following:

- Keep it short. Don't collect information that isn't directly relevant – you're just wasting everyone's time, including your own
- You'll need at least 100 responses for reliable results
- Face to face interviews, but you could use self complete surveys if local businesses are prepared to hand out and collect them
- Yes/no questions and tick box questions are easier to analyse, but open-ended questions can also give useful answers

Use the results of your research to guide developing interpretation that will appeal to the people you want to attract. For example, if you have a lot of regular visitors, you might like to provide information on things that change through the year (for example nature or agriculture); if you expect a lot of families, you could consider a trail for children or a treasure hunt of some kind.

WHAT WILL YOU DO AND HOW?

An effective way to communicate your heritage is through 'thematic interpretation'. This involves identifying an overall theme along with several sub-themes, or 'topics' – usually 3-5 feels about right. The story of each topic can then be 'told' at a specific location along your walk and together they explain your theme. The two tables over the page show examples.

Thematic Interpretation Example for Natural Heritage

THEME	TOPICS
This wetland is an important habitat for a variety of plants, insects and animals	Thousands of birds spend the winter here
	Plants that grow here are specialists, they can tolerate salt and inundation
	Migrating birds use this wetland as a service station on their way from breeding grounds in the north to Africa where they spend the winter

Thematic Interpretation Example for Cultural Heritage

THEME	TOPICS
This high ground is strategically important	Thousands of birds spend the winter here
	This high ground is strategically important
	The Romans used this place as an administrative centre
	In the middle ages, a castle was built here
	In modern times, the location was abandoned in favour of land that was easier to develop

There are lots of ways to deliver your themes and topics. In many cases, what people like is a matter for personal choice, though there are some general rules – for example that younger and wealthier people are more comfortable with electronic forms of interpretation. Using more than one method is likely to make your walk interesting to a wider audience.

The main methods you are likely to use are:

- **Printed information** – for example included in a leaflet describing the route
- **Panels** – located at the start, or at strategic points around the route
- **Electronic information** – such as a podcast that people can download to their smartphones, or QR codes that give people information about the place they are standing (subject to mobile signal)
- **Sculpture or art** – these could be combined with something practical (like benches) or be purely decorative
- **Events** – such as guided walks, themed walks (which might be related to some aspect of the route or to a regular anniversary, for example Halloween). Events can also generate some income!

As a minimum, your route guide should have some information about the local area and on points of interest along the route. The appendix contains more information on interpretation and the strengths and weaknesses of different kinds of interpretation.

MAKING IT HAPPEN

Writing for interpretation is a skill. If you want to try it yourself, remember:

- Make sure your facts are correct (ask local experts to help you out or verify your own assumptions)
- Make text easy to read by using simple language and avoid technical terms or jargon
- Use images or illustrations where you can – a picture not only tells a thousand stories, it does it regardless of which language people speak!
- Test out your proposed text and images on people who have not been involved in your project – ideally with potential users of the route

Local organisations such as those listed in the factbox might be interested in helping you. So too might schools. Your interpretation could provide an interesting project for local school pupils and involving them is a great way to promote the route to the local community.



Imaginative interpretation - wind the wheel to receive an audio message.

If you would like professional help, for example in selecting contractors to produce panels, audio, etc., Dehongli Cymru/Interpret Wales and the Association for Heritage Interpretation can help and have useful resources on their websites. Remember to comply with the Welsh Language Act – many potential funders will require that you do this

Of course, all of this has to be paid for. There is information on sources of funding and how to go about raising funds in Section 11.

IS IT WORKING?

When you have installed your interpretation, you'll want to know whether or not it's working. Do people like it? Is it achieving the objectives you set for it (e.g. attracting more visitors, influencing what people think or how they behave)? Some funders will require you to do this, but it is also good practice as you will learn how to do things better when developing interpretation on other routes in the future and you will be able to identify changes in people's needs and tastes so that you can stay up-to-date. Information on monitoring and evaluation is provided in section 10.

FACT BOX

Organisations that might be able to help you with natural and cultural heritage information:

- Gwent Wildlife Trust
- Brecon Beacons National Park Authority
- Wye Valley AONB
- National Trust
- Canal and Rivers Trust
- Local history societies
- Local naturalists groups
- Farming groups, such as the Young Farmers Clubs

Key Points

- Check for existing interpretation strategies
- Interpret points of interest to make your walk more attractive and to achieve other objectives, then follow the following steps
- Ask why you are interpreting your walk
- Ask who you are interpreting it to (research their needs)
- Think about what you will interpret and how you will get the messages across
- Work with others to help get the stories and the delivery right
- Evaluate your work to see if you are achieving your objectives

Further Information

- Dehongli Cymru/Interpret Wales
<http://www.dehonglicymru.org.uk>
- Association of Heritage Interpretation
<http://www.ahi.org.uk>
- The Heritage Lottery Fund has a readable guide to interpretation <http://goo.gl/krrKCn>

7 Promotion

Once your walk and/or ride has been developed, you will want to promote it to maximise use. This section gives some guidance on how to plan your promotion and some ideas on how to promote your route.

The Detail

PLANNING

Think about who do you want to attract?

What kinds of people do you want to use your route?

Ask yourself:

- Are they residents or visitors (what local knowledge do they have)?
- What are they interested in?
- How old are they?
- What sort of parties do they walk/ride in (couples, groups, families)?
- How long will they have?
- How mobile are they?
- How experienced are they (route finding, etc.)?

What sort of experience are they looking for?

- If they are locals, are they looking for a quick walk, run or ride for regular exercise or walking the dog, or longer trips on a day out at the weekend?
- If they are visitors, are they coming for the day, or just for a short time? Are they interested in the following:
 - Enjoying scenery and views
 - Exploring nature or heritage
 - For a challenge

How are they likely to find out about your walk, or where will they look to find out about things to do?

LOCAL PEOPLE

- Local press
- Local radio
- Village magazine
- Village website
- Village noticeboard
- Signs and waymarks
- Library, church, doctors surgery, etc.
- Pub, shop, garage, etc.
- School
- Local group meetings

VISITORS

- Tourism websites
- Guide books and leaflets
- Hotels guesthouses, caravan and camp sites, cottages for rent, etc.
- MCC website
- Cafes, gear shops
- Friends and relatives

Most walks will provide something for a variety of users, but knowing who you are hoping to attract 'your target market' means you can design a walk that will have the greatest benefit.

PROMOTION

Think about how the people you want to use your walk are likely to find out about it. The checklist of on-line and off-line methods below might help, and includes things that won't cost you money:

- Online:
 - Your village website
 - The Walking Monmouthshire website
 - Specialist walking websites
 - o MCC and Wye Valley AONB websites
- A leaflet, which you might distribute at:
 - The local pub, church and shops
 - Doctor, dentist surgeries and other places local people visit
 - Public buildings (village/town hall, library, etc.)
 - Accommodation providers, restaurants, visitor attractions, etc.
 - Groups and societies
 - The local school
 - Village and other notice boards
- Publications aimed at local people (village/church magazine)
- Publications aimed at visitors (guidebooks, leaflets, etc.)
- Social media (Facebook, Twitter, etc.)

When you 'launch' your walk, you should arrange publicity through the local newspaper, radio station. Invite a group of people to a launch event – these should be people who can help spread the word, for example elected representatives, reporters, committee members from local groups, local businesses, etc.

It's harder to maintain awareness after your initial publicity, but you can do this by:

- Appointing one or more of your volunteers to be responsible for on-going publicity
- Making sure tourism officers and businesses know about the route and have up-to-date information about it
- Making sure websites have up-to-date information and posting any news about the route, such as maintenance, new interpretation, etc.
- Making sure leaflet stocks are replenished on a regular basis

- Taking opportunities to generate publicity as they arise – for example submitting seasonal articles to local publications, etc.
- Set up a Facebook Group and Twitter feed, post images to Flickr and Pinterest and video to YouTube, Vimeo, etc. Build followers and make regular posts, tweets, etc.
- Ask local businesses, such as estate agents, to include a copy of your walks leaflet in welcome packs or local information they give to customers
- Ask your local doctor to recommend your walk as a way of encouraging healthy exercise
- Organise the occasional guided walk, especially where this can be linked to a nature or heritage theme

Over time, it's a good idea to find out what works and what doesn't, so that you can concentrate on the effective ways to promote your walk. The best way is to ask people how they found out about the walk. You should be able to find out how local people hear by talking to them. If you don't have the resources to interview visitors, ask local businesses if they can help by asking their customers. Use what you find to review your promotion. Remember, though, just because people don't mention a particular method doesn't mean it doesn't work – you might not be doing it very well! Talk to other groups and see if you can learn anything from them. You could include questions about promotion in any wider survey you might do to evaluate your route; Information on surveying visitors is provided in Section 10 'Monitoring and Evaluation'.

Walking Websites

WEBSITE	COMMENTS
www.walkingworld.com/	Can upload own walks for free Charge to download route maps and information
www.walking-routes.co.uk/	Mostly links to existing downloadable walks
www.go4awalk.com	Own format walks Charge to download
www.getwalking.org	Not clear how selected
http://cwr.defra.gov.uk/Default.aspx?Module=CountryWalksFullSearch	Seems to be only Defra access routes
www.walkingbritain.co.uk	Free to download route description Can upload own routes
www.walkingenglishman.com	Free maps, description and profile Free to upload own walks
www.pawsforawalk.co.uk	Links to existing downloadable walks
www.ifootpath.com	Free to download route description and map on Google Earth Think its free to upload walks
www.gps-routes.co.uk	One to watch
www.tracklogs.co.uk	Free to download GPS route guides for use on tracklogs software Free to upload own routes
www.viewranger.com	Charge to download route description and map Free to upload own walks
http://www.trailzilla.com/	Free to download maps and descriptions Free to upload own walks

Social Media

SOCIAL MEDIA	WHAT THEY DO
Facebook	Builds a network of friends who receive 'posts' of words and images or video. Can link through to websites
Twitter	Builds lists of 'followers' who receive your 140 character 'tweets'. These can be linked to websites or other sources
Pinterest	Enables people to post images they like – clicking on an image someone has posted takes you to the website it came from
Flickr	Lets you post images
YouTube	Lets you post video
Vimeo	Lets you post video

Key Points

- Work out your target market(s)
- Devise publicity around the best ways to reach your target market
- Organise and publicise a launch event
- Use social media and other 'free' methods of promotion
- Appoint someone to be responsible for promotion
- Find out what works and what doesn't and amend your promotion accordingly

8 Route Information

You will need to provide information to enable people to follow your route. There are lots of ways of doing this – leaflet, map, signs and waymarks, online information.

THIS SECTION PROVIDES ADVICE ON:

- Printed and electronic route guides
- Mapping

The Detail

CONTEXT

Different people use different brain functions to navigate. The tables below provide some advice on what works best for different people, but whilst it is possible to generalise about which kinds of people prefer what kinds of information to help them navigate, as with most things, there are exceptions so, whilst men are better at reading maps than women in general, some women are very good at it and some men are hopeless!



Different approaches too mapping.

Characteristics of Different Map Users

MALE		FEMALE	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use survey knowledge • Good at using maps for navigation 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use landmark knowledge • Experience high levels of anxiety over getting lost 	
YOUNGER	MID-AGED	OLDER	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Struggle to understand the environment other than from their own perspective 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Better at reading maps 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lose the capacity to understand mapped information 	
EXPERIENCED		INEXPERIENCED	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Good at reading mapped information • Can understand mapped relief 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mapped relief confuses the inexperienced • Experience high levels of anxiety over getting lost 	

Information for Different Map Users

MALE		FEMALE	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> O/S style maps 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Waymarks linked to simple maps 	
YOUNGER	MID-AGED	OLDER	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Waymarks linked to simple maps 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> O/S style maps 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Waymarks linked to simple maps Written route description 	
EXPERIENCED		INEXPERIENCED	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> O/S style maps 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Waymarks linked to simple maps Written route description 	

The best advice is to provide as much route finding information as you can. So, you should produce information that has a starting point that is easy to find, a map that is easy to follow, instructions on wayfinding at points where help is needed and any interpretive information you might like to provide.

You can see different kinds of mapping at <http://goo.gl/A5Al28>

MAPS

A map of some kind is essential. Experienced walkers will prefer an Ordnance Survey map, or something that resembles it. You can buy O/S mapping for use in leaflets, etc. Many less experienced walkers (general interest visitors who might be encouraged to take a short walk), however, find O/S maps difficult to understand and prefer something more 'realistic' or more familiar. Research by the County Council shows that inexperienced walkers prefer suggested that a maps with routes and symbols overlain on an aerial photographs to Ordnance Survey-based mapping and this method has been used for route information on a recent series of health walks.

The purists amongst you reading this will probably already have thrown your hands in the air in horror. But, think about it – if people struggle to read maps, but are very used to looking at places on Google Earth, it makes sense to give them the information in a way they understand and are comfortable with.

There is further information on map design in the appendix, along with some examples of different methods you could use.



MCC Health Walk Route Cards use Hybrid Maps and simple instructions.

SIGNS AND WAYMARKS

In Wales, all rights of way should be signposted at the point they leave the metalled road; the Highways Authority is responsible for this. Signposting and waymarking along routes is more variable as this is done by a range of people and organisations, including landowners, the Highways Authority, walking groups, etc.



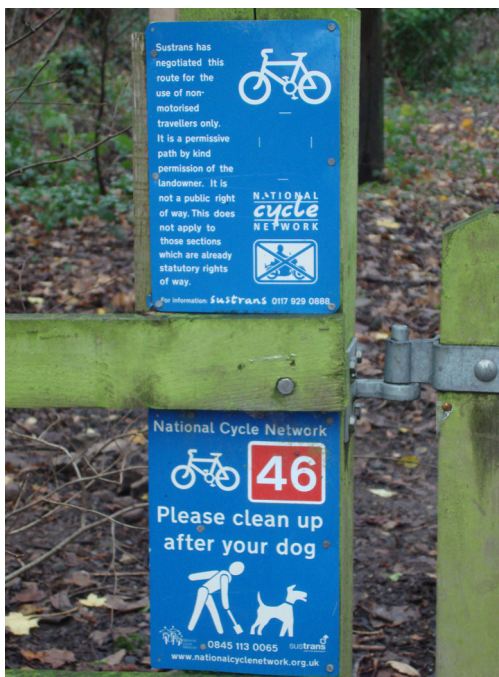
Increasing numbers of people, especially walkers, are familiar with the standard colour coding for waymarks, especially those for footpaths (yellow) and bridleways (blue). Always follow the standardised approach (See Section 5 and Appendix). You might

like to customise your waymarks either to assure people that they are on the right track, to promote your route or your organisation. If so, do this within the standard system. Using an image or a walker or rider is multi lingual and easier to 'read'.

Waymarking Public Rights of Way is a useful guide to waymarking <http://goo.gl/qgCoqE>



Fingerpost and 'No Motorcycles'.



Other specialist signs.

ELECTRONIC MAPPING

Your route guide or leaflet should be downloadable from the internet. New websites for information on recreational routes in Monmouthshire are being developed – check the latest position with the

Council. You could also make your route available through websites and smartphone apps. For most of these apps, you can download the route in advance, so you don't necessarily need mobile coverage on the route. See the the 'Walking Websites' table in section 7.

PANELS

An information panel showing a map of the route and promoting the points of interest can be a good way to raise awareness of your walk, but people will not be able to use this to navigate around the route. If you decide to have a panel of this kind, for example located in a car park at the start of the route, make sure it explains where people can find further information.

Key Points

- Different people prefer different methods of route finding. The best approach is to provide as many as you can (map, waymarking, route leaflet, electronic)
- Most casual walkers aren't very good at reading Ordnance Survey maps, so you might like to consider a different approach, for example information plotted onto aerial photography
- Use the standard waymarking system, though you can customise this
- There are lots of options for providing an electronic version, though the route for mobile phone coverage with more than one network
- A panel at the start can help to promote the route, but has limited use for route finding

Further Information

- Countryside Mapping Scoping Study (a guide to producing maps for countryside recreation) downloadable from <http://goo.gl/q940BK>
- Waymarking Guidance from Natural England <http://goo.gl/qgCoqE>

9 Maintaining Your Route

You will need to maintain it to ensure that your route to ensure it remains in good condition and is safe for people to use. The amount of maintenance required will depend on local conditions. This section describes the things you will need to consider when maintaining routes.

The Detail

Maintaining a route consists of three actions:

- Conducting an annual or 6-monthly inspection to identify work
- Walking the route on a regular basis especially during the spring and summer to cut back encroaching vegetation, sweep away leaves or debris on bridges and steps, and replace missing waymark disks; use the Rights of Way Biodiversity Guide <http://wp.me/P1V4mX-g3> to plan vegetation management and minimise your negative environmental impacts
- Improving or repairing furniture such as gates, stiles, fingerposts and bridges

It is good practice to meet as a group to consider your survey findings and to plan work that will be needed at different times of the year and to agree your approach to the work which might be by:

- Contacting the landowner to ask him/her to carry out the repair
- Carrying out the work yourselves (see sections 4 & 5)
- Paying a contractor to carry out the work for you (see section 5)
- Getting assistance from another volunteer group
- Referring major problems to Monmouthshire Countryside Service
- A combination of the above

Bringing together individual route maintenance plans, along with information from monitoring and evaluation (see Chapter 10) will enable you to compile a long term management and maintenance

plan for your local rights of way network. Monmouthshire Countryside Service can help you with this process.

Remember that it might take some time to resolve more complicated issues, for example where an enforcement or legal process is taking place. Also, some works can only be carried out at certain times of the year for environmental, management or practical reasons. For example consent to work on bridges is often subject to water flow and biodiversity issues, which means there is often a very limited period during which work can be done.

As a community group, you can sometimes get things done more quickly than the authorities by using local knowledge and contacts. However, it is important to consider all of these timing issues and to plan well ahead before promoting your route

MAIN SURVEY

It's a good idea to carry out your main survey at the beginning of the spring, so that you can rectify any problems that might have occurred in the winter. If you have the resources to do two of these, your second one could usefully be in the autumn to identify any problems that arise from 'wear and tear'.

If parts of your route are susceptible to flooding, you might want to walk these sections after heavy rain. It's not a statutory requirement to inform people about flooding, but advanced warning of a path blocked in this way might be appreciated. Also, you might need to remove any debris deposited on the route by flood waters.



Check your route after exceptional events like flooding.

Ask yourself whether the route can be made easier to use by people who have mobility or sensory difficulties, for example by removing unnecessary furniture or by replacing a stile with a gate.

You should use the Pathcare Survey sheet to record issues and plan maintenance work based on this. Also use the survey sheet on regular walk-rounds as you can use it to record your volunteer time, which can be matched against some funding sources (see section 11). You'll find blank survey forms that you can use and a completed example in the appendix.

MONTHLY WALK

If possible, you should conduct a monthly inspection of any promoted route. In Monmouthshire, this has historically been known as 'Patchcare'. On your monthly walk, carry secateurs (and other light tools) with you so that you can cut back brambles and other vegetation growing across the path and any vegetation growing up to obscure waymarks. Technically any overhanging vegetation is the responsibility of the landowner, but it is unlikely that anyone will mind if you also deal with this. In a rural situation, if it is overhanging vegetation from a garden you should check with the householder. If your route is on a bridleway or byway, remember that at least 3.4m vertical clearance is needed.

Take a small spade with you so that you can clear debris and leaves from steps, bridges and other structures. This keeps the route safe and attractive, as well as extending the longevity of the furniture.

Ensure that signs are in place and not obscured by vegetation. You could also carry replacement waymark discs and means of attaching them so that you can replace any that have gone missing.

IMPROVEMENTS AND REPAIRS

Any structural works should take place with the approval of the Council and landowner, obtained in advance in writing. The Countryside Access Design Guide provides help on the legislation, design and correct installation of furniture such as gaps, gates, stiles and fingerposts. Training is also available. If you don't feel competent to repair or improve structures you might like to consider asking another trained volunteer group to assist. Monmouthshire's Countryside Service can help by putting you in touch with other groups and might be able to lead a group installing furniture for you, if resources allow.



Repairing steps.

WHAT TO CHECK FOR

Check any stiles and gates for rot and stability, particularly the posts supporting stile steps and gate hanging posts as these are the ones which are subject to most force and quickest wear. In heavy soil they may also move easily with changes in moisture content which can make the step or gate unstable. If you find this has happened, it should be noted for rectification, usually involving some concrete, depending on any limitations of the land (e.g. conservation restrictions) make a note of work needed – this usually involves back filling and packing with stone.

It should be noted for rectification, usually involving some concrete, depending on any limitations of the land (e.g. conservation restrictions).

Check all gates for ease of opening, closing and latching. Make sure that gates can open to at least 90 degrees and close fully against the clapper post – often vegetation or soil can build up and prevent full movement. This can cause strain on the gate and make it more difficult for walkers to close or latch, so has potential to be left open.

If there are watercourses across the route, check any bridges or culverts for erosion around the edges of the structure. This is particularly important after high water levels and flash floods. Inform the Council of any wear so it can be checked by their inspector and any work scheduled, with which you may be able to assist. The Council has a bridge inspection regime in place but with shortage of labour, this may not be as often as ideal, especially in an upland area prone to sudden or heavy run off. Debris collecting against the bridge or culvert after flooding can also cause damage and should be cleared as soon as possible.



Volunteer clearing out a drainage channel at Llanbadoc.

With wooden structures, you can use a probe to check for density of the wood that may not be obvious, however, inappropriate use can create opportunities for rot so this should not be done without training or supervision.

Be aware of the landholder's responsibilities as you inspect. Cultivation or extreme poaching caused by stock or vehicles should be dealt with, either directly if you have a good relationship with the landholder, or by reporting to the Council.

A photographic record of a route is often helpful so that any deterioration can be verified, especially if it is not always the same volunteer who inspects. People have different views on what constitutes 'muddy' or 'impassable' for example and a stile that is easy for someone six feet tall who has not noticed the missing second step (because he didn't need it) may be impossible for someone of 5 feet or with limited hip mobility.

Try to recruit volunteers to regularly walk each of your routes in both directions.

Key Points

- Walk the route once or twice a year to check for issues and produce a long term seasonal management plan
- Walk the route regularly to cut back encroaching vegetation, replace missing waymarks, clear drainage and remove debris from steps/bridges etc.
- Consider additional inspections after flooding or other severe weather events
- Ensure members of your group receive training to use equipment and carry out works safely from Monmouthshire Countryside Service or elsewhere
- Be sure to consider work required and the time it will take well in advance of any publication/promotion
- Consider any biodiversity, designation and land use issues which might dictate when works can and can't be carried out
- Record what the path was like before and after works (with photos) for funding and other reasons
- Advise and consult with Monmouthshire Countryside Service on your management plan to ensure there is no duplication of effort
- Have fun, but be safe and consider any health and safety issues before carrying out any works or surveying

Further Information

- Pathcare survey form (see appendix)
- Monmouthshire Countryside Access Design Guide <http://wp.me/P1V4mX-g3>
- Monmouthshire Public Rights of Way Biodiversity Action Plan <http://wp.me/P1V4mX-g3>

10 Monitoring and Evaluation

In addition to maintaining your route, you'll want to know how well it's achieving your objectives; Who is using it? What benefits is it bringing – to users and to your community? Your funders, and people who might be able to help you develop and manage more routes (funders, volunteers and other supporters) will also find this information helpful when they decide whether or not to help.

The Detail

Use your aims for developing the walk to plan your evaluation. Evaluate what you have achieved against the aims of the route, for example:

- Local people taking regular exercise
- Visitors coming to walk in the area
- Spending by visitors in your local economy
- Encouraging Coast Path or Offa's Dyke long distance walkers to visit your village/town
- Encouraging residents to walk rather than drive to the shops, pub, school, etc.

WHAT SHOULD YOU MEASURE?

Most funding bodies will require that you collect information on the impacts of your route to show how it is meeting their criteria. They will normally tell you what they want you to monitor during the application process. You will certainly need to make a record of the work done (including images, dates completed, specification for any major works, etc.). Some funders will also ask you to collect information on users and their impacts – for example how many people walk the route, what they spend, whether they have changed their behaviour (for example starting to take regular exercise), etc.

Understanding when and why people are using a route can also help you to manage it. For example, you can avoid busy times when carrying out maintenance surveys or works.

Consider collecting information on the following, subject to your needs:

- Number of users
- How people are using the route
- Who is using the route
- Users' attitudes towards the route
- How the route affects visitors (how much they spend, how long they stay, how frequently they visit, etc.)
- How the route affects local people (walking/running for health, pride in the local area, willingness to volunteer, etc.)

COLLECTING THE INFORMATION

To evaluate a project, you will need to know the position before you start (the baseline) and then you will need to collect information on what has changed (monitoring). Try to do some counting and make an estimate of who is using the route before you start to promote it. This will enable you to quantify the difference the route has made.

Counting Users

You can count visitors manually. Simply sit at a safe, convenient location and record the number of people passing. Ideally you would do this on a number of days, including weekend, weekday and at different times of the year. You can then use this to make an estimate of the overall number of visitors. It won't be completely accurate, but if you use the same methodology, you will be able to monitor

changes. Manual counting also enables you to collect additional information, such as party composition, whether people are locals or visitors, age groups, etc.

Automatic counters give you more comprehensive coverage, but you will need to give careful consideration to where you site one – ideally it should be where only one person can pass at a time; otherwise you will have to ‘calibrate’ the device to make an estimate of any counting errors where people pass in line abreast. Monmouthshire County Council has a number of counters and deploys these to monitor use of rights of way. It might be possible to arrange to have one of these located on your route. Alternatively, a useful guide to counters and where you can source one is available at www.pathsforall.org.uk.

For a more general estimate of user numbers, you could count car parking tickets, or cars in any car park at the start of your walk, or ask local businesses if they have noticed any change in the number and type of their customers. You could also add hits on the walks pages of your website, or downloads of walk guides

Monitoring Attitudes, Behaviour, Etc.

For more complex information, you’ll need to survey visitors. Conducting face-to-face interviews using a questionnaire will give you the best quality results, though it is also the most time consuming. You must

also ensure that your questions and interviewers do not lead people towards particular answers. A sample questionnaire with some questions you could use is included in the appendix. Remember:

- You’ll need at least 100 completed questionnaires for robust results
- Don’t collect un-necessary information – you’ll be wasting everyone’s time
- SurveyMonkey www.surveymonkey.com is an on-line analysis system. You can analyse 100 questionnaires of no more than 10 questions for free

Other methods include the following; they might help you, but are likely to satisfy the needs of funders:

- Promoting an on-line survey or inviting feedback through your own website or on the walk route guide leaflet
- Locating a comments book at a convenient point close to the end of the walk (shop, pub, shelter, etc.)
- Asking local organisations and businesses if they have noticed any difference in membership, customers, etc.

Alternatively, you could work with a school or college to develop a survey project around use of your route. You will have to provide a clear brief, but data collection and analysis would be done by the students.

WHAT YOU WANT TO KNOW	RESEARCH METHODS
Number of users	Manual counting or automatic counter
How people are using the route	Manual counting or automatic counter
Who is using the route	Questionnaire survey, observation
Users’ attitudes towards the route	Questionnaire survey
How the route affects visitors	Questionnaire survey (face to face interviews or self complete at places visitors gather –pub, attraction, accommodation, etc.)
How the route affects local people	Questionnaire survey (deliver to each household and arrange an easy to use return method)

Once you have collected the information – use it! People's tastes, use of technology and other aspects of enjoying a walk change all of the time. You can use information from your surveys to ensure that you are continuing to meet people's needs. Repeat your survey at least every 5 years.

Key Points

- Use your aims for the route to plan your evaluation
- Funders will probably have specific evaluation needs
- Try to collect some baseline information so that you can quantify the changes
- You can count users manually (and extrapolate annual use) or by using an automatic counter
- A face to face questionnaire survey will give the best quality results for more complicated information, but there are several simpler methods you could try
- Use SurveyMonkey or work with a school or college to collect and analyse the information

Further Information

- Advice on survey and questionnaire design in Wales <http://goo.gl/Ufwju6>

11 Fundraising

All routes are likely to involve some cost and some routes might require large items of expenditure.

THIS SECTION PROVIDES INFORMATION ON:

- The likely costs of different aspects of route development/maintenance
- Sources of funding
- Applying for funds

The Detail

WHAT WILL IT COST?

Actual costs will depend on local circumstances and you should make a detailed costing based on exactly what you need. You can gain an indication of costs using the table below.

ITEM	APPROXIMATE COST	
	Materials	Labour for installation
Fingerpost	£25	£25
Waymark post	£10	£20
Waymark discs	£3	£ -
Stile	£60–85	£150–£180
Field gate	£75–130	£230
Kissing gate (timber)	£190	£150
Bridleway gate (metal)	£220	£100
Step board with (2) pegs	£4.50	£ -
Map	£150	
Leaflet (A4) colour, double-sided	£600 for 10,000	
Leaflet (A5) colour, double-sided	£370 for 10,000	
Interpretation panel (800mm x 500mm) colour, metal stand	£800 (incl. design)	£100

Volunteer time is more difficult to estimate. As an example, it took 4 volunteers from Llanbadoc Community Council half a day to repair 2 stiles, install a new fingerpost and address a drainage problem. The important thing is to try to make a realistic estimate before you apply for funding. For this you will need to obtain actual costs from suppliers or contractors.

SOURCES OF FUNDS

For most sources of external funding, you will need to provide some kind of local 'match', as few funders will give you 100% of the cost. In most cases, this can be made up of volunteer time; most organisations have standard rates for costing the value of this. Alternatively, if you have access to existing funds, you could use those to 'lever' in more funding. If you are a Community Council, you could consider increasing the Precept to generate your contribution. Alternatively, you could charge for printed route guides/leaflets or for special events, or sell advertising space on leaflets or interpretation panels to local businesses, or ask a local business to sponsor one or more walks.

There are many possible sources of funds and these change all of the time. In addition, some are very local, so you'll need to do your own research at the time. If you are a not-for-profit organisation, you could use Gwent Association of Voluntary Organisations' (GAVO) 'Funding Service' to locate potential funders for you <http://www.gavowales.org.uk>

Possible sources of funds include:

- The public sector - for example MCC' Community Chest, NHS Trusts, etc.
- Trusts and foundations
- Companies - many large companies including the banks, supermarkets and large high street shops give grants to local projects
- Other institutions – for example local membership organisations such as the Rotary Club

Walkers can mean good business! The Bell Inn at Skenfrith in the Monnow Valley took a commercial decision to develop and promote a series of walks. The owners worked with a local walker to devise the circular routes and produced 5 leaflets that include a map, route directions and information on local points of interest. The leaflets are for sale at the Bell. The Bell encourages walkers to use its car park and also provides a male and female toilet that are accessible from outside of the building.



Examples of local Funding Sources

SCHEME	WHAT IT FUNDS	HOW MUCH WILL IT GIVE?
Monmouthshire Community Chest	Grassroots sports activity (including walking)	Up to £5,000
Cooperative Membership Community Fund	Community projects/issues	£200 - £1,000
Monmouthshire Building Society Charitable Foundation	Local groups working on community, environmental and sports projects	Up to £12,000
Waitrose Community Matters	Each month customers vote for good cases displayed in the store	Share of £1,000 each month

Don't forget about opportunities to generate revenue from your routes. Ayr Rotary Club generates revenue to help towards of maintenance of the Ayrshire Coastal Path by selling a guidebook and branded merchandise – hat, travel mug, porcelain mug, polo shirt and cloth badge – online.

OTHER RESOURCES

Think about any 'in kind' help you can obtain. Is there a local builder or contracting farmer who might be able to supply materials, labour or machinery? Are there existing volunteer groups locally that might come along to help you. Remember, most large companies have corporate responsibility schemes and are looking for community projects their staff can volunteer on.

In 2013 Durham Cathedral attracted 52 volunteers for over 200 hours work on woodland management, footpath improvement and interpretation projects in woods surrounding the Cathedral. They came from Lloyds/TSB Bank and Northumbrian Water (corporate responsibility schemes), local conservation volunteers, Durham University volunteers and the Duke of Edinburgh Scheme.

MAKING AN APPLICATION

Most schemes have a form and standard application process. Check to see if there are deadline dates for applications. Provide as much information as you can to make your project stand out, but remember, most importantly, you will need to demonstrate that you comply with the criteria of the scheme you are applying for. Make sure that:

- You demonstrate how your route will deliver the funder's aims
- You show that there is a need for the project and for the funds
- Explain what is special about the project – what is unique? What is different? Why is it necessary? What other benefits will it deliver?
- Show that you are giving good value for money (choosing the lowest costs, maximising volunteer input, etc.)
- Explain how you will publicise the project and the funder's support

Make sure you are aware of any additional requirements your funder(s) might have – for example providing information on the difference that their support has made (see Section 10 'Monitoring & Evaluation').

Key Points

- Make an estimate of what the work will cost, then look for sources of funding
- Don't forget to look for help in kind and volunteer time
- Follow the funder's application process
- Make sure you demonstrate how you will deliver the funder's aims
- Provide additional information, for example on why the project is needed, what is unique about the project and other benefits it will deliver
- Tell potential funders how you will publicise the project and their support
- Make sure you are aware of and make provision for any information you might have to provide on the difference the funder's support has made

Further Information

- Advice in fundraising is available from the Fundraising Institute <http://goo.gl/5RgzXa>

12 Working with Volunteers

Working with volunteers is different to working with colleagues or paid staff within an organisation. Understanding this will help you to get the most out of your local volunteers, it can also help you in other ways, for example:

- Making better connections between your routes and the local community
- Making more people aware of your routes
- Bring new skills to developing, interpreting and managing your routes
- Help make sure your routes are relevant

The Detail

CONTEXT

There are lots of examples of voluntary groups set up to develop and maintain routes. Some of these, for example the Rotary Clubs in South West Scotland, have developed imaginative projects – in their case developing and managing coastal trails. Others are less ambitious and involve developing and maintaining local routes for local people – for example Llanbadoc Community Council in Monmouthshire, which has set up an access group to plan, develop, promote and maintain a network of local walking routes.

If you are reading this toolkit, you have probably got to the point where you have at least a small group of volunteers who want to work on the access network. Here we consider some aspects that will help you to recruit more people and get the most out of the time they want to give.

RECRUITING VOLUNTEERS

If you already have a pool of volunteers, they might be able to help by recruiting others. If not, you could try contacting existing organisations and asking if they have any one who might be interested in helping. Organisations that have high proportions of retired people, or young people that are looking to build up a good CV (for example the older uniformed groups) would be a good start. You could also promote the opportunity in your local newsletter and on your website.

Try to interview prospective volunteers to check that they have the abilities you are looking for and that they understand what would be expected of them. Don't forget that there are a lot of existing volunteer groups that you could attract to work on a specific aspect of your project. You just need to ask them.

MANAGING AND KEEPING VOLUNTEERS

It's important that you communicate the aims of the project so that volunteers understand what they are contributing to.

People volunteer for lots of reasons. Volunteer groups are often bound together by the enjoyment of working in a group – this might be more important than the activity in terms of motivating people to take part. Llanbadoc Community Council quickly realised this and as a result have planned a programme of volunteer work sessions followed by a late lunch in the local pub

Providing a variety of volunteering opportunities will widen the range of people that might become involved, for example, rather than simply asking for people who are prepared to come along to a session to work on footpaths once a month, you could offer the following:

- Volunteering for a specific skill – physical work, surveying, promotion, monitoring, fundraising, etc.
- Volunteering occasionally
- Volunteering for a specific project, that might be time limited
- Volunteering on a regular basis

Remember, too, that different people like doing different things and just because someone has a particular skill, they might not want to use it when volunteering – for example, not all accountants want to fill out funding applications! Some tasks, however, will need particular kinds of skills. For example at Penallt, permission to develop a route across land owned by Natural Resources Wales meant completing a long and complicated form, then waiting 12 weeks for a response!

Make sure that you provide a clear brief and be sure that volunteers are trained. If the expertise to do the job isn't there, see if there are opportunities to learn from each other. If not, bring in help – for example from the Council's Countryside Field Team, or look for training courses and cascade the learning down amongst your volunteers.

Llanbadoc Community Council's volunteers were not confident about doing physical work on their routes. However, after a day with the MCC Field Officer, they have learnt how to repair stiles, install fingerposts and address some drainage problems.



Monmouthshire Countryside Service can help with training.

Recognise that you will probably make some mistakes along the line. Also, make sure that you thank your volunteers and celebrate your achievements.

Before you take your work group out onto a route, make sure that you have the appropriate insurance. If you are Community Council or other already constituted group, check that your existing insurance covers you for the work you plan to do. If you are a registered Pathcare group, you will be covered by the County Council. If on doubt, check with the Council's Countryside Service.



Celebrate a job well done!

Key Points

- Plan your volunteer recruitment
- Look to other organisations to help
- Offer a range of volunteering opportunities
- Interview – a two way process to build your relationship
- Bring in expert help to show you how to do things and share this knowledge
- Celebrate your successes
- Make it fun

Further Information

- Good information on working with volunteers is available from the Directory for Social Change <http://goo.gl/TJBRfK> and the National Council for Voluntary Organisations <http://goo.gl/FtKFBp> free and charged for resources are available to download.
- Gwent Association of Voluntary Organisations provides a range of support <http://www.gavowales.org.uk/monmouthshire>

13 Appendix

THE APPENDIX INCLUDES THE FOLLOWING:

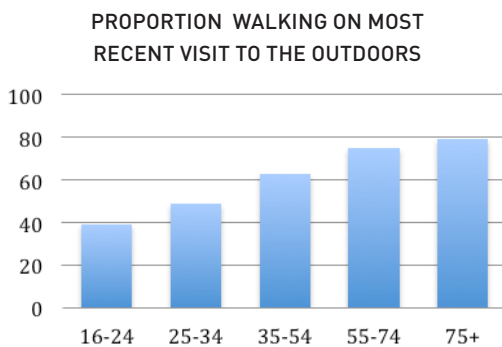
1. Who Wants to Walk?
2. Types of Walk You Could Develop:
Promoted Route Types for Monmouthshire
3. Survey Aids: Forms
4. Draft Questionnaire

WHO WANTS TO WALK?

Almost 9 out of 10 of us has visited 'the outdoors' in the last four weeks¹. People who walk do so at home and when they are staying away. Over half walk from close to where they live or in the case of visitors, where they are staying.

Residents

More women walk than men and older people are more likely to walk than younger people, except for utility trips (getting to school, visiting friends, etc.).



Only a quarter of walking trips are made by people with children and the most common reasons for walking are for health, walking the dog or generally for relaxing or enjoying the countryside.



Visitors

Whilst some people come to Monmouthshire for walking holidays, they tend to visit the Brecon Beacons or the Wye Valley. These tend to be younger adults and young families

General Visitors

However, most visitors go walking at some stage during their stay. For these people, who are attracted by the scenery, heritage or (increasingly) by either food and drink or events, walking is a means to enjoy some other aspect of the County, for example historic buildings, flowers or birds, rather than an end in itself. These visitors come for four main reasons:

- General sightseeing and touring
- Cultural and heritage attractions
- Food and drink
- Cultural events and festivals

Walkers

Serious holiday walkers are more likely to stay in self-catering accommodation. Many visiting walkers come to Monmouthshire on a day trip. Some, of course, bring all they need with them, but for others, visiting a pub or café is an important part of the trip.

¹ Wales Outdoor Recreation Survey, 2012

Why People Visit the Outdoors

REASON	%	COMMENTS
Health/exercise	26%	More important to 55-74 year-olds (32%) and men (30%)
Exercise a dog	25%	Motivation for half of visits with a dog
Fresh air/pleasant weather	16%	More important for infrequent visitors (21%) people with children (20%) and women (18%)
To enjoy/participate in a hobby	8%	More important to males
To enjoy scenery/wildlife	7%	More important to older visitors
To relax/unwind	3%	More important to young people (25-34)
To get somewhere	4%	

Source: Wales Outdoor Recreation Survey, 2012

What do People Want?

Different people need different kinds of walks and supporting facilities; the needs of the main types of residents and visitors who walk in Monmouthshire are summarised in Table x:

Table 12: Product Needs of Target Markets for Walking in Monmouthshire

SEGMENT	SUB-SEGMENT	PRODUCT NEEDS
Visitors (primary purpose)	Long distance walkers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • High quality long distance routes • Information on facilities • Baggage transfer
	More serious walkers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Network of accessible walking routes in interesting landscapes • Good quality maps • Suggestions for routes (long promoted routes)
	Walking events	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Well organised walking festival • Well organised challenge events
	Less serious walkers	Short promoted routes

SEGMENT	SUB-SEGMENT	PRODUCT NEEDS
Visitors (secondary activity)	Those seeking cultural heritage	Themed routes linked to cultural attractions and stories
	Those seeking local food and drink	Themed routes linked to local food and drink produce
	People seeking 'soft adventure'	Destinations with choice of 'soft adventure' activities (including walking, orienteering, geo-caching)
Residents	Walking for pleasure	Choice of good quality routes, easily accessible from home
	Walking for health	Selection of health walking routes Programmes of led health walks
	Exercising dogs	Dog friendly routes
	Walking as a group	Walking groups
	Walking for transport	Convenient routes between home, work, shops, school, friends, etc.
	Young people, including schools	Interesting activities based around walking

Types of Walk You Could Develop: Promoted Route Types for Monmouthshire

It is not envisaged that developing new products will lead to significant further proliferation of routes. In the first instance, existing routes should be 're-branded' or adapted. Some new route development will, however, be necessary.

New routes should be as follows:

- Health walk/short walk from home
- Functional route
- Long Distance route link or loop
- Short heritage walk
- Short produce walk
- Short nature walk
- Dog friendly walk
- Family walk

HEALTH WALK/SHORT WALK FROM HOME

Circular walks of 30 mins to 90 mins duration on relatively level terrain (some short ascents are permitted). Ideally these should be free of stiles, but where stiles are present, they should be easy to negotiate and few in number. They should be accessible directly from areas of population, or should be within easy reach (i.e. on a public transport route or within a short drive, with parking). There should be a place close to the start/finish where people can find shelter and obtain food and drinks. Mapping and route descriptions should conform to MCC's existing format – an example is included in the appendix.

FUNCTIONAL ROUTE

Routes that link places people live or stay with nearby places they want to get to. For residents, this might include school, work, the shops, etc. For visitors, these might be routes between

accommodation and attractions, restaurants and pubs. Functional routes are the subjects of the Sustainable Travel Bill. However, at the time of writing, there is uncertainty about how this will be applied (for example what constitutes a settlement and where the boundaries of settlements should lie). MCC should monitor progress on the bill and determine the most appropriate way forwards for functional routes once the final proposals are known. Local Ways groups should be encouraged to work with local schools to identify and develop routes to school.

LD ROUTE LINK OR LOOP

A link to an existing long distance route or a loop route linking to a long distance route. This could attract two kinds of users – (a) users of the long distance route who might divert to your community to find a place to stay or to eat, or to visit a shop or other services and (b) casual walkers who want to do a walk partly along a long distance route.

SHORT HERITAGE WALK

Short, circular or out and back routes aimed at casual walkers. It is suggested that they should be of 20-60 minutes, but a degree of flexibility should be adopted here to accommodate local conditions. They must be located in places where visitors already come, or could be attracted to easily. They must incorporate interpretation of an aspect of Monmouthshire's cultural heritage. Interpretation could be through a leaflet (available locally), downloadable route guide, through a smartphone app, or in situ. Ideally they would take visitors to cultural heritage sites, or help them to experience some aspect of cultural heritage.

SHORT PRODUCE WALK

Short, circular or out and back routes aimed at casual walkers. It is suggested that they should be of 20-60 minutes, but a degree of flexibility should be adopted here to accommodate local conditions. They must be located in places where visitors already come, or could be attracted to easily. They must incorporate interpretation of an aspect of local produce for example they might explain some aspect of farming, but they should also be linked in some way to local food producers or outlets. For example they might start and finish at an establishment that serves local food, or they might pass close to a local food producer.

SHORT NATURE WALK

Short, circular or out and back routes aimed at casual walkers. It is suggested that they should be of 20-60 minutes, but a degree of flexibility should be adopted here to accommodate local conditions. They must be located in places where visitors already come, or could be attracted to easily. They must take people to places where they can see, and they must interpret some aspect of Monmouthshire's natural heritage. The same walk might have different seasonal aspects.

DOG FRIENDLY WALK

These could be close to where people live or close to places where visitors stay. They should be free of stiles and, where possible include areas that are free from cattle/horses and away from roads. Places where dogs can run off the lead are to be included if possible. These walks should be aimed at casual walkers and people looking for moderate walking – day or half day walks.

FAMILY WALK

Short, circular or out and back routes aimed at casual walkers. It is suggested that they should be of 20-60 minutes and interesting for children in some way. This could be achieved by including places where there are opportunities for natural play, or by incorporating some kind of trail – for example where family members have to find things, or spot clues, or answer questions.

Summary of Promoted Route Types

WALK TYPE	LOCATION	LENGTH	KEY ELEMENTS	FACILITIES
Health	Where people live	30 – 90 mins	Level, stile free	Shelter, places to find food and drink
Functional	Where people live	As required	Links to places people want to go	Easy access
LD loop	Link LD routes to facilities and places of interest	As required for links Half day for loops	Visitor facilities Places of interest	Accommodation, places to eat and drink
Heritage	Where people visit	20-60 mins	Cultural heritage interpretation	Cultural heritage features
Local produce	Where people visit	20-60 mins	Local produce interpretation	Local producers or outlets
Nature	Where people visit	20-60 mins	Nature interpretation	Nature features
Dog-friendly	Where people live and visit	No limit	No stiles Places dog can run off lead	Dog bins/stick and flick notices as appropriate
Family	Where people live and visit	20-60 mins	Activities for family members	Shelter Place to find food and drink

Surveying Aids

Two blank survey forms are included here to download and use and there is an example of a completed PI survey. The Performance Indicator Survey form should be used for your initial and annual surveys (as this provides information that will help record keeping by the Countryside Service. The Pathcare Survey Form should be used for regular surveys during the year.

Use a map to mark the location of any points you make on the survey forms. You can download maps to use from <http://access.monmouthshire.gov.uk>.

Public Rights of Way Survey Form

(Performance Indicator Survey)

Name of Surveyor _____

Date of Survey _____

Route No. _____ / _____

Status Footpath/Bridleway/Restricted Byway/Byway (Delete as Appropriate)

QUESTION

RESPONSE

1

AT START OF LINK

Mark on plan "S" at Start

Please insert a 6 figure grid ref for your start point

Please circle the applicable response

Signage

- | | | |
|--|------------|-----------|
| - Does the link start at a metalled road? | Yes | No |
| - If yes, is there a fingerpost for this link? | Yes | No |
| - If present, is the fingerpost in reasonable condition? | Yes | No |
| <i>Make note of type and anything written on the post</i> | | |
| - Is the start of the link way marked? | Yes | No |
| <i>Please note this even if there is a fingerpost in place</i> | | |

2

ALONG THE LINK - 'Ease of use Following the Path'

Please mark the position of all furniture on the route with a letter on the attached plan and note below what the type of furniture is

The better the description of the furniture the better our records will be to support any future maintenance work. Please use your own letters on the map to identify locations of individual pieces of furniture and write your own descriptions below for each letter (e.g. '(A) 4 bar 1 step stile')

- Stile/s _____
- Footbridge/s _____
- Kissing gate/s _____
- Gate/s _____
- Other please specify _____

- | | | | |
|--|---------------|------------|-----------|
| - Is the route waymarked? | Partly | Yes | No |
| - If Yes or Partly, are the correct way markers used? | | Yes | No |
| <i>(i.e. Yellow - Footpath / Blue - Bridleway / Plum - Restricted Byways / Red - BOAT's)</i> | | | |
| - Is the route easy to follow without a map? | | Yes | No |
| - Is the route easy to follow with a map? | | Yes | No |
| - Does the route generally follow the alignment shown on the map? | | Yes | No |

If 'No' mark on the map where the alignment is on the ground

3 Hazards / Obstacles

- Are there any obstacles making the route impassable? **Yes** **No**
- If **Yes**, please mark the position on the attached plan with a number and give details below:
As above, please provide as much information as possible. Please use a separate number on the map to identify each obstacle/hazard and write your own description of the issue below for each one. (e.g. ' (1) Fence across footpath')

- Is any of the furniture in a poor (P), unusable (U) or dangerous (D) condition? **Yes** **No**
- If **Yes**, please mark the position on the plan with a number and give details below:
Please use a separate number and the letter that refers to the piece of furniture on the map, to identify each hazard and write a description of the hazard for each number below, noting whether P, U or D. (e.g. '(2A) broken stile step - U/D')

Surface

- Is the surface of the route poor (P), unusable (U) or dangerous (D)? **Yes** **No**
- If **Yes**, please mark the affected section with a line and a number on the attached plan and give details below:
Please describe the surface type and condition noting whether P, U or D (e.g. (3) large hole across grass path - D)

4 AT END OF LINK Mark on plan "E" at End

Please insert a 6 figure grid ref for your finish point

Signage

Please circle the applicable response

- Does the link end at a metalled road? **Yes** **No**
- If yes, is there a fingerpost for this link? **Yes** **No**
- If present, is the fingerpost in reasonable condition? **Yes** **No**
Make note of type and anything written on the post
- Is the end of the link way marked? **Yes** **No**
Please note this even if there is a fingerpost in place

Any Other (Please Use Additional Sheet of Paper if Necessary)

Thank you for taking part in this condition survey

P A T H C A R E S U R V E Y & A C T I O N R E P O R T

Name of Pathcare route: _____

Name of Surveyor(s): _____

Date of survey: _____ Number of hours spent on survey: _____

1. If using paper maps, highlight the paths surveyed on the map provided.
2. Annotate the map with points 1,2,3 . . . where work is carried out or problems remain. Clearly mark each problem in its exact location on the map in numerical order.
3. Give details of the work carried out at each point e.g. *'Overgrown stile cleared', '15 cm dia fallen tree cut through'*. Include the number and location of any waymarks added or damaged waymarks replaced. Note: Pathcare surveyors are expected to carry out minor clearance and repairs to waymarks and signage.
4. Report full details of any problems remaining at each point e.g. *'1 m dia beech tree fallen over track - no alternative route round'. 'Stile step damaged - have made safe, but will need replacing'. 'Field between 1 and 2 planted with cereals, no route defined'*.

Location /point	Work carried out
	<div data-bbox="1219 2011 1481 2047">Please turn over</div>

Location /Point	Details of problems remaining

Signed

This report should be returned immediately following survey to the Pathcare Supervisor at the Countryside Service, by email or in a FREEPOST envelope provided.

Draft Questionnaire

Interviewer to complete:

Location:

Date:

Time of Day:

Weather:

Dog(s) in party:

You can amend these questions or add other ones to meet your needs. However, before you do, think about what information you need and what you are going to do with it. Also think carefully about your questions – do not lead the interviewee towards particular answer (there is no point in asking what people think if you do this) and do not ask complex questions that might provide ambiguous or complicated answers (these will be difficult to analyse).

- Q1.** Where have you walked today
- Q2.** What did you like about your walk?
- Q3.** Are there any ways in which we could improve your walk?
- Q4.** Have you used/do you intend to use any local services today (shop, café, pub, etc.)?
- Q5.** If so, which services have you used?
- Q6.** Which of the following best describes your trip?
- ☐ Local trip (I live in the local area)
 - ☐ Day trip from home
 - ☐ Trip from holiday accommodation
 - ☐ Trip from the home of a friend or relative where you are staying on a visit
 - ☐ Other (please specify)
- Q7.** Which of the following best describes your party?
- ☐ Single adult
 - ☐ 2 adults
 - ☐ Group of more than 2 adults
 - ☐ Family (adults and children)
 - ☐ Other (please specify)
- Q8.** Where have you travelled from today?
- Location
- Q9.** What is your age group?
- ☐ Under 16
 - ☐ 16-24
 - ☐ 35-44
 - ☐ 45-54
 - ☐ 55-64
 - ☐ 65 & over