Sponsored Walks: how to run your own event

Overview

A charity walk is a simple and accessible fundraising event that brings communities together while raising money for Marie Curie. Walks can be organised as sponsored challenge walks, social community walks and themed walks (e.g. Santa Walks or Daffodil Walks). Most events are 5k or 10k, but the route, distance and difficulty can be adapted to suit your community and goals.

A typical walk can raise **£500-£2,000+**, although established events can generate significantly more through sponsorship and strong participant numbers.

Key points to consider

Success Factors Successful walks often have: • Strong local community support • A well-planned and safe route • Good promotion and participant recruitment • Volunteer support on the day • Additional fundraising activities at the start or finish point	**Timeline** Start planning around **4 months in advance** to allow time for: • Selecting and testing a route • Notifying landowners and authorities • Recruiting participants • Promoting the event • Completing event planning and risk assessments	**Planning the Route** When choosing a route: • Consider using an existing walking route • Aim for a circular route where possible • Consider accessibility, terrain and participant ability • Check suitability for families, children and dogs • Identify marshal points and signage requirements • Consider weather conditions and seasonal risks Most groups have successfully organised 5k or 10k routes.
Permissions and Notifications You may need to contact: • Landowners • National Trust sites • National Parks • Local councils	**Participants** Walks appeal to: • Families • Friends • Walking groups	**Fundraising Model** Groups commonly: • Charge an entry fee of **£5-£10** • Encourage sponsorship through friends and family

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• Highways authorities (if roads are involved) • Police (for larger organised events) Confirm there are no issues with your route before publicly promoting the event.	• Workplaces and community organisations • Individuals looking for a fundraising challenge Participants can be charged an entry fee, encouraged to seek sponsorship, or both.	• Set up online fundraising pages Themed walks can help participants raise additional sponsorship. Boost income through: • Refreshment sales • Raffles or tombolas • Games and stalls • Book sales • Business sponsorship • Corporate matched funding
Promotion Promote through: • Social media • Local newspapers and magazines • Walking clubs • Gyms and leisure centres • Community groups • Friends and family networks • Posters in local venues Allow participants plenty of time to register and fundraise.	**Volunteer Roles** You may need volunteers to: • Run registration • Lead or back-mark the walk • Marshal key route points • Check and signpost the route • Provide refreshments • Support first aid arrangements • Welcome walkers at the finish	**Health & Safety** • Complete an Event Activity Plan and risk assessment in advance. • Test the route beforehand. • Consider first aid provision. • Ensure participants have emergency contact information. • Consider weather, terrain and route hazards. • Keep participant information stored securely. • For any emergencies on the day, call CFIT on 0800 3047112
Event Day A typical event may follow this format: 1. Registration and sign-in. 2. Briefing and route information. 3. Walk start. 4. Marshals and volunteers supporting along the route. 5. Finish area with refreshments and fundraising activities. 6. Participant sign-out and thank yous. Maps, signage and emergency contact details	**Resources** Your Community Fundraiser will have all the materials you need to support with running an event like this. This includes: • Registration forms • Participant welcome packs • Press releases • Template to record sign ups • TryBooking to sell tickets online (if needed)	

should be available for all participants.		

Expected Outcome

A walk is a flexible, community-focused fundraiser suitable for most fundraising groups. With good promotion, volunteer support and participant fundraising, a walk can raise **£500-£2,000+** while increasing awareness of Marie Curie and engaging new supporters. For more support on running an event like this, speak to your local Community Fundraiser.

Case Study: Poole Fundraising Group



The Poole Fundraising Group organised a walk along the Jurassic Coast from Swanage to Poole. The group did not charge an entry fee but encouraged participants to raise sponsorship for Marie Curie.

This was a 10-mile route. As this was not a circular walk, they had volunteers on hand to drive participants back to their cars, however people also had supporters to meet them at the end. The group started the event in an area where there is free parking.

On the day, the group allocated a volunteer who was a registered first aider to drive along the route, and they had water on hand.

The group started organising their event approximately 4 months in advance and found the concept relatively quick, with planning the event and route being the main tasks.

The group had 57 people take part and raised over £3,500.

Your Sponsored Walk Checklist

Before the event

☐ Decide on a route, starting/finishing points date and time
☐ Contact local authorities or landowners
☐ Complete a walk of the route to determine marshal points, terrain, etc.
☐ Complete your Event Activity Plan
☐ Confirm first aid
☐ Confirm volunteers for the event
☐ Produce promotional material
☐ Organise refreshments
☐ Promote the event in the local community
☐ Set up the registration form and welcome letters
☐ Complete a timeline for the event

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☐ If using signs along the route, print and laminate
☐ Print out route maps for participants

On the day

☐ Make sure the registration desk is set up in plenty of time
☐ Put signs along route
☐ Run extra fundraising activities (raffle/tombola/games)
☐ Ensure phones are charged in case of an emergency

After the event

☐ Bank all your fundraising money
☐ Thank volunteers and participants
☐ Review the event with your group members and Community Fundraiser

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