

Organising a Walk for Marie Curie: An introductory guide for Fundraising Groups

A charity walk is a great way to raise money and have a good time, bringing local people together. Walks are a popular fundraising event, which can involve the whole family and suitable for a wide variety of participants, no matter the time of year. Across the UK, there are already thousands of pre-planned walking routes, which make a great start to organising your event.

If this is something you are considering, please read on to find out more. If you decide to go ahead, your Community Fundraising can send you a more detailed guide, including templates to support you with putting on a great event.

1. What is a charity walk?

A charity walk is a promoted event aimed at attracting people to walk a particular route on a particular day. This could be a social walk which does not have set start and finish times or could be a walk led by a volunteer, which is usually promoted as a sponsored walk.

The format, length and route of your walk will depend on what you want to achieve from the event.

How much can be raised?

Depending on the challenge of the walk and the number of participants we anticipate that a walk could raise you anything from £500 - £2,000.

However, in March 2017 the Bradford Hospice Fundraising Group, who have been organising a Daffodil Walk for Marie Curie for 9/10 years, raised £4,500 which was beyond their expectations.



Two of the walkers raising money for Marie Curie at the Bradford Hospice Fundraising Group Daffodil Walk in March 2017.

The Poole Fundraising Group have organised a local coastal walk along the Jurassic Coast. The first time they ran the event they raised just over £1,000 from a small number of walkers, but have managed to increase the numbers of walkers in more recent years. The group held their most recent walk in May 2017 and raised over £3,500.

What type of group can organise a successful walk?

A walk would be suitable for most groups to organise. It is important to have links with the local community to encourage walkers to get involved. It would be useful to have group members that are interested in walking, so that they can help to support the event on the day and may have local knowledge of suitable walks.

2. How does the fundraising work?

Some groups set an entry fee for taking part in the walk and encourage participants to raise sponsorship for getting involved.

If your walk is a social event rather than a challenge, people may not raise sponsorship but you can still charge an entry fee.

3. Organising the event

1. Decide on your route
2. Notifying the authorities or land owners
3. Publicise your event

How much time is required to organise this event?

We would recommend you start planning your event approximately 4 months in advance. This will allow for plenty of time to find a suitable route, notify any authorities and to promote to individuals.

Deciding on your route

There are thousands of pre-planned routes across the UK which would be a great starting point to organising your walk. You could also approach local walking groups to get advice on the best walks or alternatively look at other charity walks that have taken place.

You will need to decide on an appropriate walk length, depending on who you are going to market the walk to. Most groups have previously organised a 5k or 10k walk.

It is a good idea to organise a circular walk so that individuals start and end in the same place. This helps as people may arrive in cars.

Depending on the route it is likely that you may need volunteer marshals to ensure that everyone keeps on track. First aid cover may also be required.

Notifying the authorities or land owners

The route you select may take you through national trust properties, national parks or council land. Whilst you may not need permission to organise the walk, it is important that you make contact with any relevant party to inform them of your plans. If your walk goes on to roads, you will need to contact the local Highways agencies to notify them of the event. If it is a larger, sponsored walk then you will also want to notify the local police authorities. They will likely want to know the date, the time and numbers expected.

They will also be able to notify you if this conflicts with any other local walks, which it would be best to avoid.

Publicising the event to encourage participants to get involved

You will want to start publicising your event at least a couple of months in advance so that if people are raising sponsorship that they have time to do so.

A sample press release will be provided to support you with this.

The Bradford Hospice Fundraising Group found a local company to sponsor some banners to use in the local area too, which encouraged more people to get involved.

The local radio, magazines and social media are also great ways to promote your walk.

A registration form template will also be available for you to use, along with a welcome pack to send to participants.

What happens next?

If you are interested in going ahead with organising a walk, your Community Fundraiser can send you a more detailed document about how to go about it. This will help the group determine the amount of input required to organise the event and any further actions they need to take.

We're here for people living with any terminal illness, and their families. We offer expert care, guidance and support to help them get the most from the time they have left.

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