

# How to Waymark a walk 4 life mile

Waymarking can have a big impact on encouraging people to walk further along a route and building confidence.

By waymarking your Walk4Life mile you will attract attention to the route and encourage people to walk it. The Walk4Life waymarkers, in addition to sign-posting Walk4Life routes, have been designed to be eye-catching and fun, thereby raising awareness of the project and pointing people to the Walk4Life website.



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## Walk4Life waymarkers

The waymarkers are designed to show people where the Walk4Life Miles are. They should be put up to show the start and finish of the mile. If necessary additional arrows can be used to help people find their way along the route.

There are 4 styles of waymarkers for Walk4Life Miles:

- **start** for the start of the route
- **turn round** if it is a half-mile-there-and-back route
- **you've walked 1 mile** for the finish
- a **direction arrow** to show the route if there is a place where walkers might get confused.

Most routes will be fairly easy to follow and shouldn't need many direction waymarkers – if you find you need a lot to help people follow the route it is probably not ideal as a Walk4Life Mile. Try to avoid using unnecessary signs – the idea is not to plaster the route





with signs, but simply to show where to start, turn round and finish the Mile, without getting lost on the way. A good guide is no more than 5 or 6 arrows on a Walk4Life Mile.

The 'start' waymarker is pretty straightforward – it needs to be at the start of the Mile. Usually this will be somewhere people can easily get to, and be at an obvious start point.

If the Mile is a linear route then the 'finish' waymarker will need to be as close as possible to the exact end of the Mile. But if the route is a half-mile out and half-mile back route then the 'finish' waymarker will be in the same location as the 'start' waymarker, but facing the other way, for example the 'start' waymarker will be on one side of a post, and the 'finish' one will be on the other side of the same post. The same will apply if the Mile is a circular route.

Locating the 'turn round' waymarker on a half-mile out and back route is likely to be a bit more tricky. The 'turn round' waymarker will need to be as close as possible to half a mile from the start and clearly visible.

If you need to use any additional arrows to help people find their way take care to point them in the right direction. The arrow should point in the direction people walk. An arrow positioned at "12 o'clock" (straight up) indicates that the path goes straight ahead. Arrows positioned at other angles indicate a change in direction from straight ahead. If you are using a sticker then ensure it is pointing the right way as you start to stick it down. Use a tissue to rub out any air bubbles as you gently stick it down.



## What can you fasten waymarkers to?

The first thing to do is to think about what you want to attach the waymarker to. Waymarkers are designed to be nailed or screwed to wood (not trees though). It is possible to fasten them to other material, but we recommend looking for timber wherever possible. The stickers are designed for sticking to a smooth metal pole, like a road sign pole. They may not stick so well to a rough surface like a wall. In those cases try to find an alternative location.

There should be no need to install posts to attach the discs or stickers to – this guidance has been written with the assumption that you will be able to find something suitable where you need it. If you want to fix it on an existing post or sign, a lamp-post, gate, fence post, bridge handrail or similar, **you will need to ask permission from the owner**. In some cases this will be a farmer, or sometimes the local authority.

If you really need to attach to a wall (especially at a turn or at the end where there might be nothing else to attach to) then consider if the Walk4Life Mile can be slightly altered so that there is some alternative post or similar to attach a waymarker to. If it can't be avoided, take extra care to find out who owns the wall! If you do want to fasten a waymarker to a wall it might be best to consider using a strong glue (something like no-more-nails) instead of screws.



## Waymarking Do's and Don'ts

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### Do :

- Ask permission first !
- Fasten waymarkers to vertical posts at a height people can easily see, including people who may be in wheelchairs.
- Plan ahead if you think vegetation will grow up. Try to fix them high enough so that they will still be visible in midsummer.
- Consider the landowner and respect their wishes.
- Take care to avoid confusion, especially if there are other waymarkers on the same post (try to avoid a "scout's arm" effect - where several waymarker discs are all in a column on the post.) Ask yourself if the Walk4Life Mile could possibly start and finish anywhere else nearby.
- Take care about the direction the arrow is pointing in. Make sure it points along the path you want people to follow.

### Don't :

- Put waymarkers up without asking permission.
- Fasten waymarkers to trees.
- Fasten waymarkers to the tops of posts.
- Fasten to anything of historical value, such as Ancient Monuments.
- Fasten waymarkers to posts which are smaller than them – they will come off !
- Fasten waymarkers to gates or other moving objects; use fixed objects such as gate posts rather than the gate itself.
- Cover up any existing information.
- Fasten them to old rotten timber, or hammer nails into any structure which looks a bit wobbly.

The next section gives some help on how to find out who to approach.

## Finding out who owns the land

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Approaching the landowner can seem daunting, but it need not be. The local council will be able to give advice and help. See the sample letter on page 9 to send to landowner/s once you've tracked them down.

### Ask the local council

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If you don't already know who the landowner is, you might find the local parish council clerk can help. To find their details look on local notice boards or ask in a local shop. Failing that, you can find parish council contacts by using the map on the website [www.nalc.gov.uk/](http://www.nalc.gov.uk/). Some parishes have a dedicated footpath representative.

A second point of call will be the local authority (this may be a district, borough, county or unitary council). Use their website's A-Z section to find who you need to speak to. Lamp-posts and other street furniture probably belong to the Highways Department. If the path is more rural, you may need to speak to the Countryside Team; (sometimes called the Rights of Way Team, or Public Rights of Way Team). They may be part of an Environment Section, Transport Section, Planning Section, Highways ... every council is organised differently!



Once you are through to the right person at the council, they may well be interested to know about the proposed Walk4Life Mile or more about the project. Walk England are contacting as many Countryside Teams as possible to explain the project. Hopefully the person you speak to will already know about the project, and will be supportive.

When talking to landowners and council contacts the word “footpath” may cause confusion – make it clear whether you mean a rural path or a pavement.

## **Talk to local Rangers**

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If the Walk4Life Mile uses a Country Park, or a park, you will need to contact the Rangers or on-site staff. If there is an office on site the easiest approach is usually to ask them in person. Have some example discs with you so that you can explain what you want to do.

## **Local Access Forum**

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Most councils have a Local Access Forum – where there is a representative for walking – as well as cycling, horse-riding, and landowners. They may be keen to help you. To find out about your Local Access Forum ask Natural England, you can look on their website [www.naturalengland.org.uk](http://www.naturalengland.org.uk) where there is a list of forums, or ring them on 0845 600 3078.

## **Other contacts**

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- If the Walk4Life Mile is on a cycle route (one of the National or Regional Cycle Network signs might be about), you could make contact with the Sustrans ranger. Try [www.sustrans.org.uk/](http://www.sustrans.org.uk/) as a starting point.
- If the Walk4Life Mile is on a towpath it might be owned by British Waterways, try [www.britishwaterways.co.uk/home](http://www.britishwaterways.co.uk/home)
- Contact the local Ramblers Association local group. See [www.ramblers.org.uk/areas\\_groups/areas\\_and\\_groups](http://www.ramblers.org.uk/areas_groups/areas_and_groups) - it may be useful to liaise over projects and share advice.
- For useful farming contacts look at the National Farmers Union or The Country Land and Business Association’s websites, [www.nfuonline.com/](http://www.nfuonline.com/) or [www.cla.org.uk/](http://www.cla.org.uk/)

## **As a last resort**

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If all else fails, try writing a letter to the landowner (you can base it on the template on page 9), laminating it, and posting it up on your chosen mile route using string or drawing pins. If you leave it for a few weeks the owner might get in touch!

## **Keep a record**

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It is a good idea to keep a record of your contact with landowners. Keep any letters, and if you have a phone conversation make a brief note of what is said and the date.

## **Be positive but respectful**

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The landowner may agree to a Walk4Life Mile being waymarked in one place, but not in another. Concentrate on the ones you get agreement for! Be considerate of the problems landowners sometimes have from public access, such as uncontrolled dogs or trespass. If a route is in dispute refer the matter to the local council and then concentrate on a different Walk4Life Mile.



## Permissive paths

Some routes are known as permissive paths. This means that the landowner has given people permission to use the route rather than that there is a public right to use it. It may not be possible to be sure of its status just by looking at it on a map or on the ground. This is another reason why it's important to get the landowner's permission and to talk to the local authority before you do any waymarking.

Some permissive paths have been created on farmland where the farmer is getting payments from the government to look after wildlife and to provide public access.

The landowner may ask you how the act of waymarking affects the status of the permissive path, thinking about the future use of the land. Although our waymarking by itself does not necessarily indicate an intention to make a route a public right of way, it does encourage the public to use the route, so it's a good idea to put up the waymarker at the same place as a 'permissive path' sign. However, if the landowner needs more reassurance or if there is any doubt or dispute about the route, then it is best just to choose a Walk4Life Mile somewhere else.

## Fixing waymarkers

### Tools

This guide assumes that you can attach the Walk4Life waymarking discs to existing posts, or other structures, so all you will need is a hammer and/or screwdriver, depending on whether you are using nails or screws. A bradawl (a sharp pointed tool with a handle) may be useful to make a small starter hole.



Check that the tools are safe to use before you set off. Have a rucksack or other bag to carry the tools, nails or screws and the discs or stickers.



Galvanised nails or screws are best. If you are using nails then small-headed shed-roof-felting type nails are best (some shops call them "clout nails"). Similarly, a screw only needs to be about 2.5cm or 1 inch long at most. Each disc needs 3 screws or nails.

Consider using screws rather than nails, especially if you don't want to weaken a gate post or bridge handrail by hammering on to it. Make a small starter hole using a bradawl if you have one.

When you use a hammer be careful of your thumbs! Make sure you have a good grip, not just with fingertips. If you're wearing gloves, take them off for hammering so you have more control. Be aware that people will be walking on the path or pavement while you are working. You should stop work to let people pass; they may also want a quick chat to know what is going on. This is a good opportunity to spread the word about Walk4Life Miles.





## Recording and celebrating success

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When the Walk4Life Mile is waymarked you may want to tell people about it – here are a few things you could do.

### Take photos

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Take a camera with you and take photos, either of the Walk4Life Mile being waymarked, or of somebody using the waymarked route. Make sure you ask permission before taking photos of other people. If your camera is a digital one, then put it on to the highest “megapixel” option beforehand. The photos may be useful for a local newsletter or for a walking group leaflet, or for showing to another landowner about making a second route.

### Hold a party

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It may be that the local council or a local walking group would like to arrange or join in with a ceremony to celebrate the route once the Walk4Life Mile is waymarked such as cutting a ribbon or organising a special walking event. Visit <http://www.walkengland.org.uk/content/acr.aspx> for information on organising an event.

### Media coverage

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The local newspapers, radio and even TV may be interested to cover your good news story, so send them a brief media release telling them what the Walk4Life Miles are all about, where your Mile is, when it will be ready, who will be there if you are having an event and who to contact. The press may send a photographer and that may be another source of good promotional photos for the scheme. Remember - a picture is worth 1000 words – it can tell someone the story in a single glance.

## Your health and safety when marking the route

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Waymarking a Walk4Life Mile is not a dangerous thing to do but it’s a good idea to think about any risks that might be involved and then work out what can be done to keep them to a minimum. Think through what you are going to do and in what order. It may be useful to make a note of the risks and what you’re going to do to reduce them. If you think the risks can’t be minimised to a level you are happy with, then don’t proceed.

If you don’t feel happy doing the waymarking job on your own, ask a friend to come with you. If you are going on your own, then let someone know where you are going and how long you should be. Take your mobile phone if you have one and make sure the battery is charged. In case there isn’t reception where you’re going find out where the nearest alternative phone is – a phone box, pub, shop or railway station for example.

### Some examples of possible risks are:

#### Busy roads

If the waymarker needs to be on a roadside – wear a high visibility vest or something fluorescent, to make sure you can be seen while you’re there.



## **Bad weather**

Consider postponing your visit, or take warm, waterproof clothing.

## **Hot, sunny weather**

Take a bottle of water and wear a hat, sunglasses, and sun cream. Be aware of the signs of heat exhaustion or sun stroke (or better still, enjoy the sunshine, and do the work when it cools down.)

## **Rough ground**

Wear appropriate footwear.

## **Barbed wire**

Keep a careful eye out for such hazards when you get to the waymarking site. Take a small first aid kit with you, or at least take some clean tissues and plasters. If you are scratched by old, rusty wire, talk to your doctor about a tetanus jab.

## **Insect bites**

If you know you're allergic then take the precautions you would normally. If you walk through a field where sheep, cattle or deer graze then wear long trousers tucked into socks and check your legs for ticks afterwards. If you find one, pull it out using tweezers ([www.bada-uk.org/defence/removal/removaltweezers.php](http://www.bada-uk.org/defence/removal/removaltweezers.php)). Go to the doctor if you get an infection from a tick bite.

## **Infection from rubbish, dog mess etc**

Wear gloves if you like. Cover any open cuts on your hands before you set off, consider taking some wet wipes or antibacterial hand gel with you. Wash your hands as soon as you get home.

## **Twisting awkwardly**

Be aware of your posture while you're working, Do not stay in an uncomfortable position or twist awkwardly. Bend your knees if you are bending down.

## **Supervising children**

If you have children with you when you are out make sure you keep an eye on them.

## **Accidents/Incidents**

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If you do have an accident, write down what happened as soon as possible afterwards. If you are physically or verbally attacked during the waymarking, then just stop and return home, and let the police know what has happened.

If you would like more information about assessing risks then visit <http://handbooks.btcv.org.uk/handbooks/content/chapter/781>

## **Responsibility and insurance**



This guidance has been put together to help and support people like you who want to waymark their local Walk4Life Miles. It is up to you to make sure you have permission and are safe while you're doing so. If you are already part of a Health Walks group, or a local authority Path Volunteers (or similar) group, then the chances are you are already covered by their insurance. Check with the organiser if you want to make sure.



## How to get hold of your waymarkers

The waymarkers are available now.

You can order them from us anytime and we'll send them out to you as soon as we can. There is an order form on the Walk England website at <http://www.walkengland.org.uk/content/acr.aspx>. You can order waymarkers, or stickers, or a combination of both. The stickers come 4 to a sheet, with all 4 designs on the same sheet.

## Want to know more about waymarking?

If this guidance isn't enough for you, and you would like to know more, detailed guidance for waymarking is available at <http://handbooks.btcv.org.uk/handbooks/content/chapter/377>



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## Suggested wording for a letter or email to send to a landowner.

### Notes:

- You can copy and paste the text of this letter into a word-processing document. This letter is also available as a Word document on the Walk England website. Change the bits written in italics, fill in the blank bits and add or delete phrases as appropriate
- If you are part of a Health Walks group or a local path group, you may wish to say so
- It might be helpful to include a map (draw a sketch map if need be) and / or some photos of where you would like to fix your waymarkers

*Your address  
and contact details*

*Their name and address*

*Date .....*

Dear ...,

I am writing to you because I think you are the landowner of...

I was wondering if you would give me permission to fix a waymarker to...

This is part of a national project called Walk4Life Miles and is about encouraging people to walk more. This particular Walk4Life Mile starts at.... and ends at.... There is more information about the project on the website [www.walk4life.info](http://www.walk4life.info).



Here is a picture of one of the waymarkers.  
They are 75mm (3 inches) across.

- I would like to:
- nail a waymarker disc
  - screw a waymarker disc
  - stick a waymarker sticker to....

- I am attaching:
- a map to illustrate
  - a photo of what is proposed

Please let me know what you think or if you would like to know more. You can reach me at ...../ on....

Looking forward to hearing from you,  
Yours sincerely,

*Your name*