

The Spectacular Scotland Challenge: Walk, Run, Fun! Briefing Pack



1. Walk

Are you a serious backpacker or do you prefer a gentle stroll along a river or canal? Either way, this is the challenge for you!

Girlguiding Scotland is challenging all its members to put their best foot forward for the Spectacular celebrations and walk the length of Scotland in The Senior Section's centenary year.

Whether you are the youngest Rainbow or the oldest Trefoil Guild member, there is a walk for you. Your walk can be completed with your unit, your friends and family, or (if you're over 18) on your own any time between April and October 2016.

It can be as big and epic or as low key and relaxing as you want it to be - and the whole of Scotland is there for the taking! The aim is that if all of us sign up to complete a walk then by the end of 2016, guiding footsteps will have covered as much as possible of Scotland's beautiful landscapes during the year.

Where can I go for my walk?

Girlguiding Scotland would like to cover as much as possible of the newly-created Scottish National Trail, which stretches almost the length of Scotland from Kirk Yetholm in the south to Cape Wrath in the north.

It consists of official, waymarked routes as well as more demanding sections where a map and compass are essential and the terrain can be rough and paths difficult to find. Whatever your experience, there's a section for you!

However, we also appreciate that not everyone can access the Scottish National Trail and we don't want to leave anyone out. So you are free to choose to do a walk or trail in your own area instead.

Check out www.walkhighlands.co.uk for information on recognized Scottish National Trail routes near you, along with information on distances, times and difficulty level. There's also information on places to stay overnight, if you fancy making a longer trip out of it.

How can I get involved?

Email your name, guiding County, chosen route, who you intend to complete the walk with and any Girlguiding walking qualifications held by you or anyone in your group to linseyhoughton@btinternet.com to claim your section of the Scottish National Trail or notify us of another route you'll be taking.

What preparation will I need to do beforehand?

The most important things you need to consider are qualifications, paperwork, experience and fitness.

It is essential that both your District Commissioner and County Walking Adviser have been told that you are taking part and been informed of the route you've chosen. Make sure you appoint a home contact and have completed the necessary paperwork.

It's also essential that you hold the relevant Girlguiding walking qualification if anyone in your group is under 18. The qualifications are:

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|--------------------------|---|-------------------------------|
| • Walks in lowland areas | = | no qualification required |
| • Walks in open areas | = | Level 2 Walking Qualification |
| • Walks in remote areas | = | Level 3 Walking Qualification |
| • Walks in extreme areas | = | Mountain Leader |

Further information on what is required to walk in each of these areas can be found in the [A-Z activities](#) section of Girlguiding's Online Guiding Manual.

You will also need to consider your own skills and fitness and those of the group you plan to walk with. It's essential to think carefully about the capabilities of your group before choosing your route. A relatively inexperienced group with little walking experience may be better suited to a gentle lowland walk, whilst a group used to backpacking in all weather conditions and difficult terrains may prefer a more challenging route.

Remember, the [Walk Highlands website](#) has information on how challenging each section of the Scottish National Trail is.

If we all work together then anything is possible - even walking the length of Scotland!

2. Run

If you think walking's for wimps, fear not - we're challenging members with the necessary fitness level and mountain skills to sign up for one of Scotland's mountain marathons or mountain challenge events in 2016.

Pentland Push

The Pentland Push is a cross country trek around the stunning landscapes of the Pentland Hills in the south west of Edinburgh. You can choose what level suits you and your friends. The bronze route is 14 miles, silver route is 20 miles and for the more adventurous, there's a 26.2 mile gold route.

But be warned - you underestimate the Pentlands at your peril! The routes demand a lot of determination and teamwork to tackle the peaks and rough nature of the hills - but the sense of achievement when you reach the finish will stay with you for a long time.

The whole event will take place over 12 hours culminating in a hearty meal and plenty of pampering to soothe those aching joints.

So, get your boots on and push up the Pentlands in aid of a great cause, St Columba's Hospice!

When? September 2016 - date to be confirmed. Keep an eye on the [Pentland Push website](#) for updates.

Who can enter? Guides and Senior Section teams of up to six girls with appropriate training and supervised by someone with Girlguiding Level 2 Walking qualification or above. Those aged 18 years or over can do the event unaccompanied.

Fancy a mountain marathon?

A mountain marathon is a competition in which teams of two navigate their way around a two-day course in mountainous terrain, with an overnight camp. The pair run together and carry lightweight camping equipment, clothes and food to sustain themselves for 36 hours.

These events can provide unique challenges and unforgettable experiences. Events usually take place in a remote, high mountain region of the Scottish Highlands.

You can choose from six courses ranging in length and difficulty with direct routes and a score event. The aim is to visit each of the checkpoints on your course and the times for both days are totalled to find a winner.

The Lowe Alpine Mountain Marathon (LAMM) has a reputation for providing competitors with unusual surprises and organisers ask you to expect the unexpected. Teams who apply should be ready to join in with the fun and have a sense of adventure. Competition for places in the LAMM is so keen that the event always fills to capacity so it's strongly recommended to enter early to avoid disappointment.

When? June 2016 - date to be confirmed. Keep an eye on the [LAMM website](#) for updates.

Where? The exact location is not publicised until the week before the event.

Who can enter? Anyone over 18 who has experience of mountain navigation and is physically fit.

There are two other potential events on the horizon for 2016 - the Highlander Mountain Marathon in the Highlands (usually in April) and the Grampian Mountain Challenge in north east Scotland. Both can be subject to weather restrictions as snow is possible in these months so search online for the latest news and updates.

Please email Clare Martin on m60_jam@hotmail.com if you take part in any of the above events.

3. Fun

Share what you get up to!

If you're chatting about Walk, Run, Fun! on social media, remember to use the hashtag #Spectacular2016 if you're using Twitter or Instagram and to tag Girlguiding Scotland where you can. For all the latest on Spectacular opportunities and goings-on, visit the [Girlguiding Scotland website](#) and social media feeds.

You can also share photos and stories by emailing yourstories@girlguiding-scot.org.uk or pressing the [Tell us your stories](#) button on Girlguiding Scotland's website.

We'll also be collecting together all the photos submitted from the walking or mountain challenge events for a photobook to mark the year's epic Walk, Run, Fun! achievements.

If you're a geocaching fan, 2016 will be your year to shine!

The Scottish Spectacular team will be hiding around 100 caches all over Scotland - marked 'Spectacular' on www.geocaching.com. The geocaching challenge will be launched soon so keep an eye on [Girlguiding Scotland's website](#) for all the latest updates. If you're keen to get involved, get an account at www.geocaching.com, download the app to your phone and start practising!



Girlguiding Scotland is a registered Scottish charity, number SC00548.