

# Walking Tour Toolkit



part of the

**Restalrig, Lochend and Craigentenny**

**People's Parish Project 2022**

**Resource Pack**

## **INTRODUCTION**

There are many benefits to walking tours. Easy to organise and cheap to run they can provide an informal setting to help people:

- Discover their neighbourhood
- Connect with their community
- Take gentle exercise in the fresh-air
- Stimulate new interests
- Engage with others
- Meet new people

This guide has been created to help an individual or a group organise and host a walking tour. It will take you through the process step-by-step and give you ideas, tips and resources to make your tour a success.

## **CONTENTS**

- Five easy steps to organising a walking tour
- Ideas for themes
- Ideas to add interest
- Things to consider
- Tips for leading a walking tour
- Useful resources

## **FIVE EASY STEPS TO ORGANISING A WALKING TOUR**

Planning > Creating > Practising > Marketing > Implementing

Follow these steps using the prompts below to help you:

### **1. Planning – the five Ws**

- Why?** What is the purpose of the walking tour and what will people gain from coming on it?
  
- Who?** Who will lead the walking tour and who is the target audience? How many people do you want on the tour?
  
- What?** What is the walking tour going to be about?  
Choosing a specific theme will help keep your tour focused. Think about how long you want your tour be, both in time and distance? Consider what is suitable for your target audience and chosen location.
  
- Where?** Where will your walking tour take place?  
Remember to consider accessibility and facilities.
  
- When?** When will your tour take place? Consider things like the weather, temperature, hours of day-light, when people will be available, how busy the location of your walk will be.

## **2. Creating – tour route and tour content**

Once you have chosen where your tour will take place and what the main theme is, it is time to consider:

**Your tour route** – choose 4 -10 places of interest (POI) in your chosen area that link to your main theme in some way. Create a route that links your POIs together. This might be a circular route which starts and finishes at the same place, or it might be a linear route which starts and finishes at different places.

Consider where you will meet and where you can stop and stand as a group for each POI. Keep in mind the safety of your group and other users of the space. Think about how noisy it might be at your POI. Will your group be able to hear you if you are next to a busy road or children's play area?

**Your tour content** – think of your over-arching theme and purpose of your tour, write down the three most important aspects to your tour and use these to guide what you put in the content. For each POI make a clear and concise link to the main theme(s) of your tour.

Consider writing a short introduction and conclusion to your tour. This doesn't have to be long or complicated but it lets your group know what to expect and when it has finished.

### **3. Practising – walk-the-walk, talk-the-talk**

Once you have decided your tour route and planned your tour content it is a good idea to practice. This will not only give you confidence but will highlight any major issues and give you time to address them.

If possible, walk your tour route and consider things such as where it is safe for your group to cross roads, where you are going to stand at each POI and where you want your group to stand. Where will they get the best view?

Practise reading over your content. It is best to do this out loud, as reading can be quite different from speaking. If possible, get a friend or colleague to listen to you. Does it make sense? Are there phrases you stumble over?

Time roughly how long it takes you walk your route and how long it takes you read your content out loud. Remember with a group it will take longer, plus you will be stopping to talk.

***“Confidence comes with practice.”***



#### **4. Marketing – getting the word out**

Marketing your walking tour is really important. If no-one knows about it, they won't be able to attend and, if no-one attends, your hard work will have been for nothing. There is no single way to market something, the best approach is to try a few different things so that you reach as many people as possible.

Think about the best way to reach your target audience. Is it flyers, posters, email, social media, word-of-mouth? Ask community centres, libraries, local business and relevant organisations if they can host flyers or a poster or mention your tour on their online platforms, in a newsletter or email bulletin. Don't forget simple word-of-mouth - tell people about your tour and ask them to tell others.

When promoting your tour on social media remember you can increase how many people see it by using relevant #hashtags!

**The most important thing in any marketing is giving people all the relevant information, so remember to include:**

**WHAT it is, WHEN it is, WHERE it is,**

**WHO it is for, HOW to book and a**

**CONTACT for any queries!**

## **5. Implementing – action stations!**

When the day of your tour arrives, you will probably feel nervous. Don't worry, this is absolutely normal! If you have planned, created, practised and marketed you have done everything you can to be prepared.

Use the tips below to help you deliver a great tour:

- Make sure you have everything you need for the tour before you leave the house!
- Arrive at the meeting point about 15-20 minutes early and welcome people as they arrive.
- When you start the tour, introduce yourself and the tour. Make sure you mention practical information such as how long it will take, where and when toilets are available, etc.
- Keep an eye on the time. You are leading the tour so it is your job to make sure it keeps moving at a suitable pace.
- Give clear instructions when necessary and make sure the group stays together and doesn't leave anyone behind. During the tour give people opportunities to ask questions and voice their thoughts.
- When the tour is finished give a brief round-up or conclusion, inform people how they can give feedback, and thank everyone for their time.

***Most importantly relax and enjoy yourself!***

## IDEAS FOR THEMES



Memories and stories; nature and wildlife; history and heritage; architecture and design; art and entertainment; people and places; food and drink; community projects; seasonal activities.

You will find it easier if you chose a theme that you are interested in. It might also help to consider what is it that makes your neighbourhood unique; does it have a link to an important event or person; does it have any special features or buildings; what spaces do you like and don't like; what would you change.

## IDEAS TO ADD INTEREST



Compare 'then-and-now' images of views, buildings or people – what's changed? The landscape, fashions, architecture?



Ask participants to focus on one particular thing – the changing seasons or what they can smell, hear. Use these for other activities – create a map of smells and sounds, a colour poem.



Recite a themed poem, short reading, quote or song lyrics.



Involve a local person to share their perspective – a local councillor, retiree, visiting student or business owner.



Ask participants to think about how the area would be represented in a street mural – what would be in it? Get them to draw or describe it.



## **THINGS TO CONSIDER**

Some further practical points to consider:

- How will people get to your tour? What is the minimum and maximum number of people you will have on the tour?
- How many people do you want/need to lead the tour? It can be useful to have two people for a large group.
- Do participants need to bring anything with them? Is your route accessible for baby-buggies and mobility-scooters?
- Are there benches, toilets or refreshments available on route?
- Are you going to ask for feedback? How will you do this? There is a simple template you can adapt at the end of this guide.

## **TIPS FOR LEADING A WALKING TOUR**

- Watch people's body language. Are they getting bored, tired or cold?
- Face your group whenever you are talking, stay focused on the theme of your tour and keep it concise. If people are interested, they will ask for more detail.
- It's okay not to know the answer to a question. Simply say that it is an interesting point and admit you don't know answer. Ask if anyone else in the group has any ideas.
- Keep your cool. Nerves are normal, be calm and confident even if you don't feel it.

## USEFUL RESOURCES

### Edinburgh history and heritage

- Searchable historical images of Edinburgh:  
[www.capitalcollections.org.uk](http://www.capitalcollections.org.uk)
- Historic maps, documents and images of Edinburgh:  
<https://maps.nls.uk/towns/>
- A searchable collection of books and pictures about the city's history: [www.edinburghbookshelf.org.uk](http://www.edinburghbookshelf.org.uk)

### Nature and Wildlife

- Leaflets about different areas of Edinburgh:  
[www.edinburghgeolsoc.org/publications](http://www.edinburghgeolsoc.org/publications)
- Edinburgh nature projects and resources:  
<https://edinburghlivinglandscape.org.uk/projects/>
- Information on Scottish wildlife:  
[www.scottishwildlifetrust.org.uk](http://www.scottishwildlifetrust.org.uk)

### Community Walks

- Guidance on creative walks: [www.pathsforall.org.uk/lets-walk/creative-walking](http://www.pathsforall.org.uk/lets-walk/creative-walking)
- Useful ideas and resources for those organising community walks: [www.livingstreets.org.uk/communities](http://www.livingstreets.org.uk/communities)
- Tips on hosting a Jane Jacob's Walk:  
[www.janejacobswalk.org/get-involved/host-a-walk](http://www.janejacobswalk.org/get-involved/host-a-walk)

This guide has been written and created for the Restalrig, Lochend and Craightinny People's Parish Project 2022 by Hetty Lancaster of *Hetty's History Walks: Edinburgh Uncovered* - an independent, local business specialising in Edinburgh's social and urban history.



Hetty is available for advice and guidance on creating community walking tours, research on Edinburgh's history and heritage, leading walking tours and giving talks.

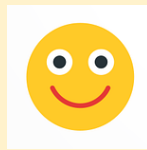
Visit [www.hettyshistorywalks.co.uk](http://www.hettyshistorywalks.co.uk) for more information or contact Hetty at [hetty@hettyshistorywalks.co.uk](mailto:hetty@hettyshistorywalks.co.uk).

Simple feedback form template. Adjust as necessary

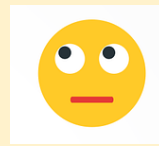
**WHAT DID YOU THINK OF TODAY'S TOUR?**



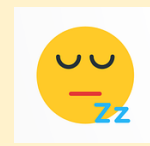
**It was great**



**It was good**



**It was okay**



**It was boring**

**WHAT BIT DID YOU ENJOY THE MOST? TICK ALL THAT APPLY**

- Getting out of the house
- Exploring the neighbourhood
- Discovering the area's history
- Hearing and sharing memories
- Meeting other people

**FURTHER COMMENTS:**



Walk

Explore

Enjoy