

A toolkit for Welcoming Walkers

How to welcome walking visitors

Visit **County Durham**



Why is walking tourism important?

According to Britain's most comprehensive survey of sport and recreation participation, 9.1 million adults in England (22% of the population), walk recreationally for at least 30 minutes in four weeks ([read more](#)).

Long walks, hikes and rambles are often a key motivator for taking a break. A recent study found the following motivators for a walking break;

- **25%** sole reason
- **33%** very important reason
- **32%** fairly important reason

Spend motivated by long walks, hikes and rambles among domestic visitors is valued at **£1.85Bn** ([read more](#)).

58% of walkers are day visitors while the other 42% stay overnight (16% of which are international visitors). ([read more](#)).



Walking in Durham

The county offers a variety of walking with routes for any age, ability or energy level and walks to suit all preferences such as along railway paths, around reservoirs and rivers and in the open countryside. The North Pennines Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty, which is a European and UNESCO Global Geopark offers excellent walking within Weardale and Teesdale. The Durham Dales has stunning landscapes of open heather moors and peatlands, attractive dales and hay meadows and a number of nationally recognised routes such as the Pennine Way, Weardale Way and the Teesdale Way. The Durham Coastal Footpath follows the England Coast Path National Trail where you can discover and explore spectacular grasslands and magical coastal denes. The Waskerley Way in the Vale of Durham passes through a varied landscape; from an urban fringe through to upland sheep farms and then on to exposed heather moorland. The Sea to Sea (C2C) passes through the county and descends through the railway paths of Durham Walking in the city offers a riverside trail taking in the sights of internationally significant World Heritage Site of Durham Castle and Cathedral.



Find the top 10 walks in the county here:

<http://www.thisisdurham.com/inspire-me/durhams-top-10s/top-10-walking-routes>

The information below is meant as a guide to help you be more walking tourist friendly and is not a checklist of everything that should be done.

Accommodation providers

1. **A drying room for wet clothes**
2. **Laundry facilities** – washing dirty clothing for guest or offering facilities for them to do this themselves. They may need to have a fast turnaround.
3. Access to a first aid kit
4. **Picnic provision** – can you offer this or provide information about where they can get cycle friendly food?
5. **Flexible check in** – walkers may arrive late to check in and require early departures especially those doing the longer routes.
6. **Flexible durations** – walkers may only want to stay for one night and don't want to be tied into minimum stay periods.
7. **Access to Wifi** – many walkers use online apps and websites for route checking and progress reports.

Case study

Boot & Shoe Cottage

A self-catering cottage set in the heart of Teesdale is an ideal base for exploring the surrounding countryside. The area is well placed for a number of walks from a gentle meander to the Pennine Way.

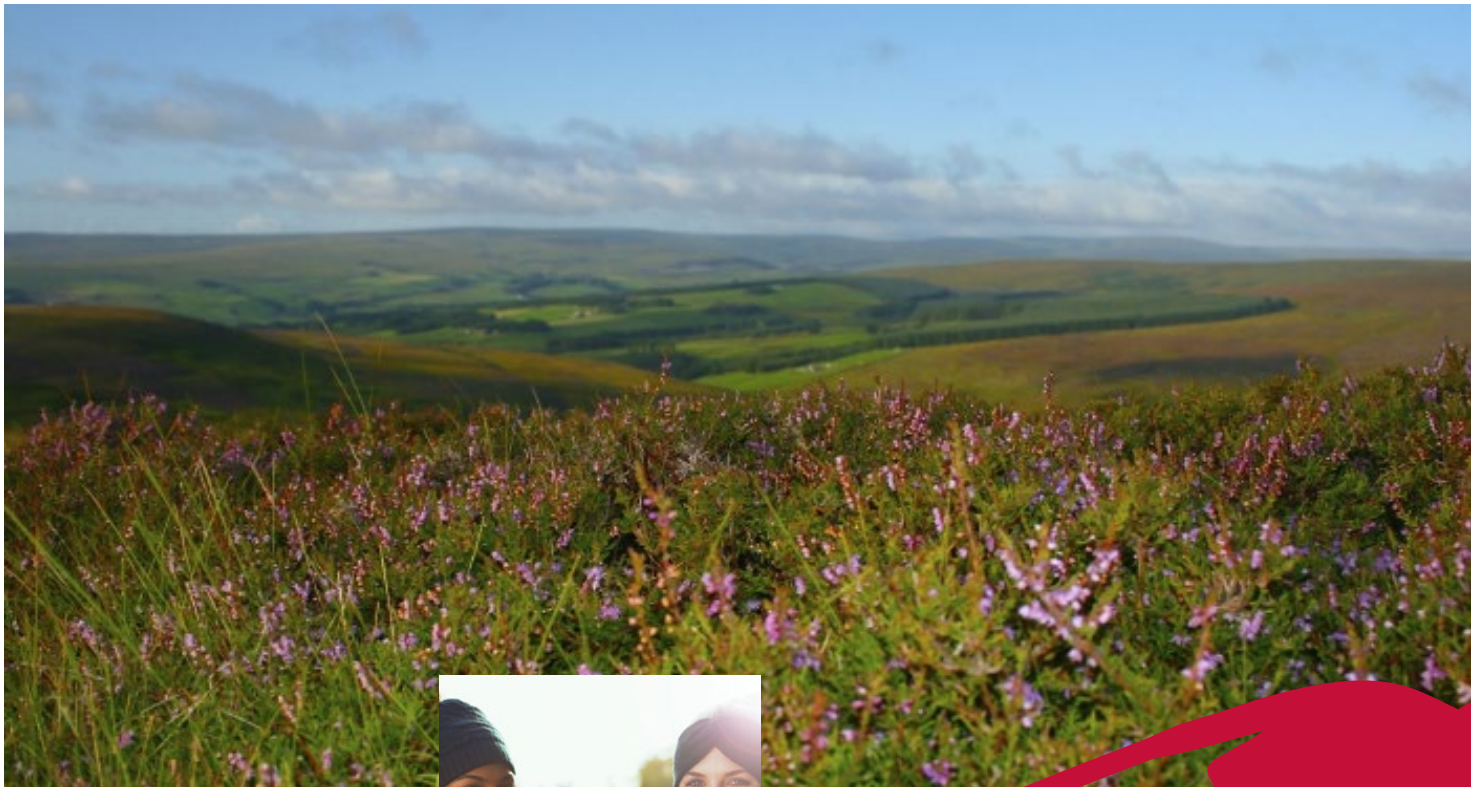
This Walkers Welcome accredited cottage has a good selection of guide books and leaflets, a utility room with space for walking boots, ceiling ailer for drying wet clothes and a selection of walking sticks. Many visitors include walking as part of their stay to the area and being able to offer these guests the necessary facilities and information they need enhances their experience.

Happy customers = return customers.



1. Local maps and guides
2. Find out your local routes and provide access to maps. Use www.thisisdurham.com/outdoors/walking-in-durham to find out routes near to your property.

3. Eateries who welcome walkers.
4. Public transport – do you know which services cover key walking routes?
5. Local medical centres and pharmacies.



Food outlets & retailers

Facilities

1. **Toilets** - do you mind walkers using your facilities or do they have to be a customer? If not, do you know where the nearest public toilets are?
2. **Take away food service** - do you offer the facility for walkers to take away food in appropriate containers?



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Customer service

Going the extra mile



Familiarise yourself with local maps and guides. Perhaps you could see if they had enjoyed the walk so far.

If you can't provide the information are you able to source this easily and pass it on?

Weather forecast – can you provide your guest with the day's weather?

For more information;

www.thisisdurham.com/outdoors/walking-in-durham
www.durham.gov.uk/walkingandrunning