



WALKERS WELCOME!

Woodland Access and the Woodland Grant Scheme



This leaflet describes the “Walkers Welcome” package which the Forestry Commission provides to those who welcome public access on foot to their woodlands.

Grants for providing access in woodlands

The Woodland Grant Scheme (WGS) provides the following grants to woodland owners who welcome the public into their woods.

COMMUNITY WOODLAND CONTRIBUTION

Community Woodland Contribution is available to encourage people to create new woodlands near communities, which can be used for informal public recreation.

ANNUAL MANAGEMENT GRANT

Annual Management Grant (AMG) is available to help towards some of the cost of work to create, maintain or enhance public access to woodlands. We can pay AMG for public access so long as there is enough use of the woodland by the general public to justify paying the grant. AMG replaced Special Management Grant in 1994.

WOODLAND IMPROVEMENT GRANT

The Woodland Improvement Grant (WIG) is a discretionary payment to help improve woods if you undertake certain projects in selected areas. This may include providing public access. Your local Conservancy Office can tell you if there is a WIG project operating in your area.

Extending a welcome to walkers

OUR “WALKERS WELCOME” PACKAGE

If you wish to get grant aid under WGS for providing public access, you will need to tell us about the provisions you intend to make for this. You will also need to explain how people will know that they are welcome, for example, from leaflets or articles in local papers. We will expect you to put up signs which clearly show that people are welcome to walk in the woodland.

We have put together a package which will help you meet our requirements. It is available, free, to anyone who has an approved WGS and allows access to their woodlands.

This package consists of:

- Walkers Welcome signs;
- Walkers Welcome discs; and
- free advice of a general nature.

Using this package will help you make the most of welcoming walkers to the woods. It will direct people to areas where they will most enjoy the woodland and allow you to safeguard areas which are less suitable. If people are made welcome, they may begin to understand more about your woodland management.

We will give you the “Walkers Welcome” signs and discs which you need, free of charge. If you wish to use your own signs instead, we will have to agree that they are suitable.



Walkers Welcome Signs for Existing Woodlands: Use at main entrances to your woodland



1 - for use on posts, (250mm x 100mm).
NB all measurements given in millimetres, height shown first.



3 - a dual language version for use in Wales, (250mm x 100mm).



2 - for use on gates and buildings, (125mm x 265mm).



4 - a dual language version for use in Wales, (125mm x 265mm).

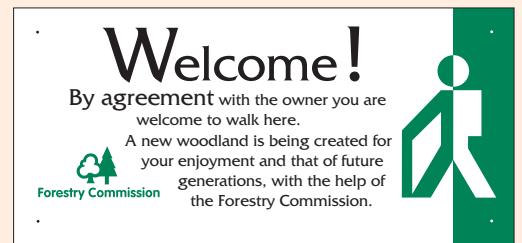
Walkers Welcome Signs for New Woodlands: Use at main entrances to your woodland



5 - for use on posts, (250mm x 100mm).



7 - a dual language version for use in Wales, (250mm x 100mm).



6 - for use on gates and buildings, (125mm x 265mm).

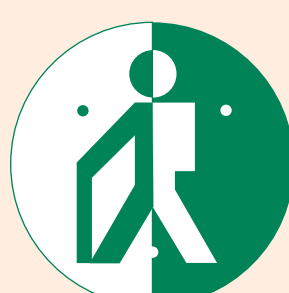


8 - a dual language version for use in Wales, (125mm x 265mm).

Walkers Welcome Disc Signs: Use these to reinforce the sense of welcome



9



10

9 & 10 - put at intervals along routes through the woodland and to draw attention to other access points, (75mm dia).

Meeting our basic requirements

You will be expected to:

- display Walkers Welcome signs at the places we agree;
- display supporting Walkers Welcome discs; and
- provide us with a map which shows the whole of the woodlands where people are welcome and the main access points.

Other things you need to think about

Depending on the level of use you expect and the range of activities people might take part in, you may wish to divide your woodland into zones. In this way, you can direct and spread activity through the woodland (and across time) to reduce the likelihood of conflict between uses. The basic signs we provide are related to walking. You need to consider what information people will need about other activities such as horse riding, cycling and dog walking. Check with your local planning authority whether you require planning permission.

If you wish to close part of your woods from time to time, perhaps because of other recreational activities or for forestry operations, we will agree this with you.

How many signs and discs will you need? Where to put them?

THE WALKERS WELCOME SIGNS

- Use at main entrances to your woodland.
- Is it an existing wood? Or are you planning a new woodland? There are signs for each.
- Use the vertical signs on posts.
- Use the horizontal signs on gates and buildings.
- Avoid putting these signs on Rights of Way in case people misunderstand - walkers are welcome on Rights of Way by right!

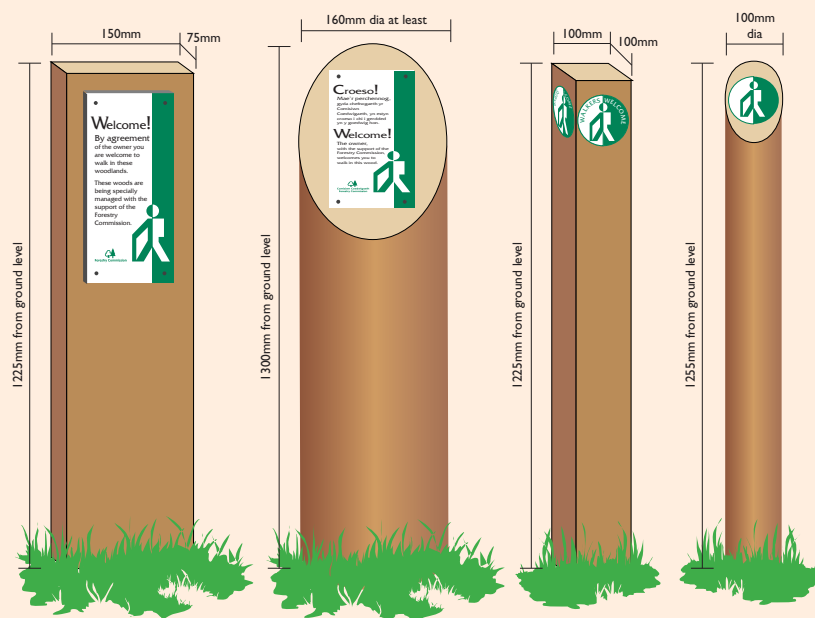
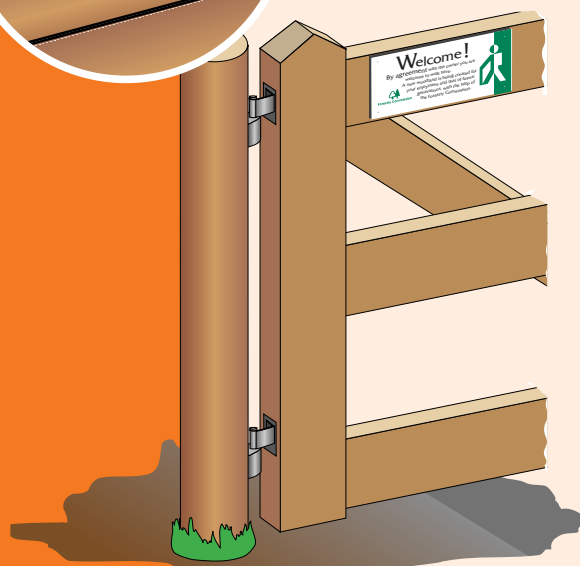
THE WALKERS WELCOME DISCS

- Use these to reinforce the sense of welcome.
- Put at intervals along routes through the woodland.
- Use to encourage walkers along the routes you wish them to use.
- Use wherever walkers need to be reassured of the correct way or that they are still welcome.
- Use discs to draw attention to other access points.
- If a Right of Way is used to connect routes, mark it with the discs.



How to display the signs

- Your Woodland Officer holds advice sheets – ask to see them.
- Always use the dimensions given in this leaflet and in the advice sheets.
- For posts, consider using local wood produce to fit with the woodland.
- For best effect, use natural sawn wood, pressure treated to make it last.
- If you use a wood stain, choose tones to reflect the surroundings – a light chestnut to reflect the warmth of Scots pine or a light grey to reflect the bark of birches and the local rock – but using the natural wood is simpler.
- Fix the discs onto square posts or, if you prefer, to round posts cut at an angle.



Entrance Signs - use 2, 4, 6 & 8 on gates and buildings and 1, 3, 5 & 7 on posts.

Additional Signs - fix the discs (9 & 10) onto square or round posts.

Maintaining the signs

- Check the signs regularly.
- Wipe with a damp cloth occasionally.
- Keep posts, gates or anything else with the signs, well maintained to give people the right impression.
- Replace vandalised or damaged signs promptly - ask the Conservancy Office for more.

What next?

KEEPING IN TOUCH

We are building up a comprehensive collection of examples of good practice. We have a good deal of information on how to welcome people - particularly for more extensive woodland access or recreation schemes.

From time to time, we hold woodland access and recreation training events. If you would like your name added to our mailing list, please let your Woodland Officer know.

We are discussing with the other principal countryside agencies, through the Countryside Recreation Network, how best we can publicise access. If you have ideas on how the "Walkers Welcome" package can be improved, let us know.

FOR MORE INFORMATION

Contact your Woodland Officer for more advice and information. Two publications which provide helpful advice are:

Forest Recreation Guidelines - Forestry Commission, 1992, HMSO, London.

The Public in your Woods - Irving, J., 1985, Land Decade Educational Council, Packard Publishing Limited, Chichester.


Order Form

WALKERS WELCOME!

Order Form

What signs do you need? How many?

FOR EXISTING WOODLANDS:

	CODE	QUANTITY
Walkers Welcome! (vertical)	1	
Walkers Welcome! (horizontal)	2	
Walkers Welcome!/Welsh (vertical)	3	
Walkers Welcome!/Welsh (horizontal)	4	

FOR NEW WOODLANDS:

	CODE	QUANTITY
Walkers Welcome! (vertical)	5	
Walkers Welcome! (horizontal)	6	
Walkers Welcome!/Welsh (vertical)	7	
Walkers Welcome!/Welsh (horizontal)	8	

DISCS:

	CODE	QUANTITY
Walkers Welcome! (words & logo)	9	
Walkers Welcome! (logo only)	10	

For woodlands in Wales, your threshold signs will have both Welsh and English wording.
Discs are available only in English.

Name _____

Address _____

Postcode _____

Telephone: _____ Fax: _____

E-mail: _____

Please return completed form to your local Forestry Commission office.

