

# EVENT BRIEFING



5<sup>th</sup> May 2024

## Meet the Team

- Team Leader – Marc Duschenes, Regenesis Events CIC. Mountain Training UK Group Leader, Search Technician - Cheshire Search and Rescue Team. Group and Outdoor and Paediatric First Aider
- Tony McGuiness. Outdoor Instructor, Group Leader Mountain Training UK, Member Oldham Mountain Rescue Team. Outdoor and Paediatric First Aid Instructor. DofE Remote Supervisor
- Assisted by volunteers  
Team Cheshire: Simon, Jonny & Linda,  
Team Mersey: Danni & Rick (with Marc and Tony)  
Steph (bike) and Mel (social media) & Jennie

## Updated Arrival Information

As numbers are higher than expected (60!!) we have had to change arrangements in the previous days and have used this Guide to answer as many questions as possible – apologies if it is long!

You do not need to print your tickets but will register you on arrival and you will sign into the event declaring you are fit and well.

We are now walking in three groups in the morning, and two in the afternoon.

An event WhatsApp Group will be created the day before, and this document added, so no need to print it. Use the WhatsApp Group to share pictures to us for upload, otherwise it will remain for any important messages about the route. We will share locations of as many turning points and rest stops as possible for information only, but you are not expected to navigate during the day. The mentors will know precisely how far ahead each rest stop is.

The VIP Coach is over full, but it is not cost effective for us to rent another coach, so minibuses have been booked. Everybody has access to the coach or stowage, its facilities and storage, water and bananas during the day.

## Getting there

**GO DIRECT:** Meet at the Start Area

Location: The Childe of Hale Statue. LA24 4AX

Meeting time: from 7.30 for 7.45 briefing/meet mentors

Drop off/parking: roadside near The Childe of Hale pub LA24 4AX

**COACH TRANSFER:** Bus from The Grammar to the Start Area

Location: Marlborough Road. Bowdon WA14 2RY. Parking on street

Meeting Time 6.50 to depart by 7am.

Arrival at the Start Area 7.45 briefing/meet mentors

Bus transfer option is at an extra cost in advance only. If you require a seat, please visit [giantwalk.org](http://giantwalk.org) to book.

## 1. **Initial Groups and ID Cards**

We are going to begin the event immediately on arrival in the start area by walking the first 4km loop to the lighthouse, along the coast and then back to the start area. This is intended to be a quick warm up in random groups, after which we will hold the main event briefing before setting off in three groups a few mins apart due to higher than expected numbers. We need you to be very punctual and attentive at the beginning of the day.

The lead group is a combination of two Search And Rescue Teams who are fundraising along the walk and need to get to Stockton Heath (21KM) as quickly as possible to fundraise there. After Stockton Heath, all the members of the SAR group must join either of the following teams.

The following groups will be called **Team Cheshire** (Simon, Jonny, Linda) and paces quicker than the rear group **Team Mersey** (Marc, Tony, Danni, Rick). Groupings have been arranged from your info, friends, charity teams and walking speed. You can change groups at any of the 5 rest stops.

You will be given an ID card and armband with your personal event number. Any medical information will need to be written on the back of your ID if you haven't already completed our questionnaire, which will also have the phone number of Event Control. If possible wear your ID all day or have it to hand so that we can easily count you in and out of intersections and rest stops. There are a couple of marshals on route, and they will recognise your armband.

After the SAR Teams leave, Team Cheshire will set off next and Team Mersey will follow. When the groups coincide at the rest stops, Team Cheshire's rest will always end, and mentors will immediately lead off leaving space for Team Mersey to use the same facilities. These are also the only times you can change group.

Teams/Charity Groups should take any start photos after the warm-up by the Giant Child of Hale Statue before heading off to the Estuary. Teams need to wait their turn for access to the statue and can take any pictures in the next few minutes and then will start.

Steph is providing event support from her bike and will be carrying a medical kit as well as team sign in/out sheets. At rest stops, Steph will need to see your event number to tick off your arrival. You can assist her by saying your first name and number if it is not visible.

The event team will have radios, GPX, route cards and access to your medical information. The team will be talking to you all day checking on your welfare. Tell us if you have any personal concerns or are worried about another team member. They also have promotional cards for next year's event if a member of the public asks you what on earth we are doing!

## 2. **EVENT CONTROL Rest Stop & Group Change Locations**

- KM 4 Childe of Hale Pub (not open in a.m.)
- KM 10/11 Spike Island. Bus to park by Giant Blue Tea Cup
- KM 22 Stockton Heath Morrisons 30 minutes
- KM 28 Stockport Road on the Trans-Pennine Way
- KM 36 Entrance to Dunham Massey
- KM 41 Altrincham Grammar For Boys. Will remain here after finish

## 3. **Other Public Rest Stop Locations/WCs not Group Change**

- KM 10 Spike Island Visitor Centre WC, coffee shop WC, picnic area
- KM 10 Catalyst Science Museum public WC opens at 10am
- KM15 The Ferry Tavern, Pub and WC Opens at 12pm
- KM 23 Morrisons WC's and cafe
- KM 29 Pennine Coffee Shop (No WC)
- KM 36 Dunham Massey, Ice cream, Tea Rooms and WC

#### 4. **Changing Groups – always head to the Bike/Steph to sign in/out**

- **Moving forward a Group from Mersey to Cheshire**

If you would be more comfortable at a faster group pace, head to the front of Team Mersey as you approach Event Control/Bus and discuss with the group leader. You will not be getting a break at the stop and will be carrying straight on so be prepared to grab and go. Head to the bike and sign out of one group and into the other. The first opportunity to do this is at the 10 KM marker. We expect a lot of group changes at lunch time so discuss during rest.

- **Moving back a group from Cheshire to Mersey**

This may be your personal decision, or you may be asked by a mentor to be checked. If they ask you to join group Mersey it is because we want you to finish comfortably and we have the skills and training to support you, particularly in Team Mersey. If the switch is simply your choice, at the rest stop, head to the bike and sign in/out and you will have a very quick chat with Marc/Tony. It will mean you will have taken a double rest, providing more recovery time. That's OK, put your feet up! Don't worry about leaving your team mates – we will regroup teams later in the day.

- **Taking a break on the bus**

At any point you can take a break on the bus, if you have an injury, for example. If this is voluntary, you may disembark and continue walking at the next stop. Please sign back into the event with Steph.

If we have asked you to do this for your safety, you will need to remain on the bus. This decision is final and not only is for your welfare, but it ensures the rest of the group's day is not affected by your circumstances. You will still earn a medal, and be able to finish the event on foot if possible by disembarking the bus at the final stop.

- **Regrouping with your friends and charities**

At the 36KM and 41 KM markers, we are hoping that Mersey and Cheshire Teams will merge into one big Hale 2 Hale group and we finish closely together. Cheshire Team will need to wait and get an ice-cream or visit Dunham facilities but this break allows us to regroup with your start group/friends/charities.

However, we know that some walkers will want to power walk through to the finish as quickly as possible or have other commitments. Jonny will facilitate an advance group to the end and will present you with your medals if you need to make a swift get-away.

Any walker wanting to walk even faster than the guided groups or leave a rest stop without a mentor will be deemed to have signed out of the event and will be unsupported. No refund will be given.

#### **Stockton Heath Regrouping for SAR Teams**

After Stockton Heath, the SAR teams will disperse into Teams Cheshire and Mersey. Please choose your team based on your personal expected pace for the second Half of the Marathon, and bear in mind you can extend your rest by joining the Mersey Team at the rear. You might want to leave some of your fund-raising buckets on the bus.

## 5. Weather and Kit List

The weather is now looking fair, but showers can happen at any time so bring a waterproof. The early start will be cool, and there are always gusts along the Mersey estuary. At the lunch rest, you will cool off again, but may be walking in afternoon sun until we get to the shaded parts of the Trans Pennine trail mid-afternoon.

So you are going to need a bit of everything, a small rucksack to carry it all, and be able to change/feed/hydrate on the move!

**Footwear** Gym shoes are too light for this walk, but winter hill walking boots are certainly not necessary either. Choose a good **strong trail running shoe** or a **lightweight walking boot, or both**. Consider changing your shoes on one of the afternoon stops to alter pressure points. You will need walking socks or compression socks, not gym socks. The first 4km are a bit muddy if it has rained in the previous days.

**Clothing** Go for a **layered approach**. You will need 4 layers of anything but denim or cotton. We suggest short and long sleeve base/mid layers, a top warm layer for the start and finish and a lightweight waterproof, plus a **rain hat** or a **hooded waterproof?**

**Rucksack** As the event is a supported day event, only a **small rucksack** is needed, and you can even share between friends. It must be sufficient to carry your **spare layers/waterproofs snacks** and **water** plus any **medication, personal hygiene, wet wipes, sun cream/glasses, snacks** etc

**Food and water.** There are opportunities to get snacks/drinks on route and a lunch stop is planned at the Stockton Heath Morrisons, but you should be prepared to carry enough with you to last for at least half the day +/- anything you leave on the bus. Keep some sugary snacks on hand at all times.

**Energy** How will you keep your calories topped up to finish the event strongly? Cereal bars, sweets, drinks, caffeine, gels – there are lots of tried and tested methods. Phone chargers might help you fundraise or navigate. Your battery will not last all day if you are using GPS.

**Not necessary but helpful** Event control will have a group first aid kit, but you might want to remember your own blister plasters, painkillers etc. Mentors will have the more detailed route maps/GPS but you can upload the GPX route file to your device. There are no hills on the route, but some people like the assistance of a walking pole on long days.

**Tips** Hand gel or surgical spirit: use this to prevent blisters by soaking your feet in it before to harden skin. Keep your toenails trimmed. Don't wear rings if your fingers swell on long walks. Keep car keys extra safe. At rest stops, sit down, raise your legs to put the blood back in your brain, change shoes perhaps, slow your breathing, have some personal time and re-focus, and then be ready for a quick departure.

**A Smile** This is intended to be a fun way to earn your marathon medal. There is no chip timing, and we have an inclusive group philosophy. Be well prepared, but also be honest with yourself, your mentors and Event Control because if you are struggling with something, we can help you and want you to finish! Don't put yourself in danger or feel embarrassed at any time or feel the burden of letting your team or charity down. Meet new people, test yourself and chat all day!

6. **Your safety** Your safety is our priority, and this means we have trained and practiced for the event. Some decisions have been made in advance whilst other decisions can change on the day.

- **Briefings** There will be a briefing immediately after the 4km warm up. Please pay full attention. There may be further briefings at rest stops, or by WhatsApp Message.
- **Emergency Info** When you are given your ID card, please fill out the information on the rear if you haven't filled in the online questionnaire. Your ID also contains the group phone number.
- **It's a marathon** We can't avoid this hazard! Walking a marathon is a serious matter. You've heard of the wall? Well you will hit it in exchange for your medal, but may need us to check on you. Be honest with how you are feeling, and we will assist. Don't hide injuries, dizziness, exhaustion etc. Its ok to get your head down and focus at difficult periods, but talking to others is the best way to be assessed because we can't see hydration, energy and glucose level. If you have blisters or chaffing, better talk about it than hide it.
- **Mentors** are experienced and assist Event Control. They are all volunteering to help you. Some are professionals in their field. Wearing your armband will help mentors see you amongst members of the public.
- **Your responsibility** Ultimately you are responsible for your own safety, so please take every possible step to ensure that the team can offer you advice and assistance. We will encounter risks, hazards, weather, navigation issues – this is normal for a trek and is always dynamically assessed and your input is appreciated.
- **Road Safety** We are a hazard for the public, walking in such a large group. Don't fill the width of any footpath, walk to the left, cross in small numbers, and call out if a bike is approaching from behind. Don't bunch together where tree roots are a trip hazard so you can all see ahead.
- **Photographs** Unless you say otherwise, you may be photographed and these may be published online. Please let us know asap if you do not want to be.
- **Countryside Code** Please stick to the countryside code. A great example of how to follow the code has been filmed by the "Muslim Hikers" on [YouTube](#)

## 7. Finish arrangements

At the finish area, we will give you a unique H2H bamboo marathon medal, and let you take pictures in your group with the Hale to Hale banner in front of the Hale Millennium Clock. There is another public event taking place and the road will be closed, however we want walkers to return to the bus as quickly as possible and collect their belongings.

Jonny (Team Cheshire mentor) has a business making wood fired pizza. His oven will be situated at the nearby Bowdon Cricket and Hockey Club who have made available their club bar and facilities (showers/WC etc) and you can buy Jonny's pizza! Your friends and family are encouraged to join you from anywhere after the 36KM Marker or the finish and come for pizza too. From the 40KM Marker at the top of Green Walk the remainder of the walk is wheelchair accessible.

The event team will remain in the club for a while after and we will thank the volunteers. Any feedback is welcome. See final map below.

## 8. Fundraising during the day

We have found that fundraising using social media on the day during the walk is very powerful so remember to take lots of pictures as your marathon unfolds. There will be a WhatsApp group set up to share pictures during the day and communicate any important group messages. Always use the **#hale2hale** and **#giantwalk** and tag us and your chosen charity in your posts as we will pick them up and repost them. You will be surprised how many messages of support you will get during the day if you do this.

If you are not fundraising for a particular cause, please be reminded that Regenesi is fundraising itself for a lightweight defib and to subsidise educational foreign treks for youth workers and there is a donation option back at our main website [giantwalk.org](http://giantwalk.org) or on [Just Giving](#). We would appreciate your support.

If you are fundraising on the day with cash buckets for your charity, make sure the registered charity number is visible, do not overly harass the public, and do not delay your group pace whilst you talk to members of the public. Don't spend your entire rest stop fundraising. The two SAR teams are kindly asked to fundraise in Stockton Heath on opposite sides of the road. No shops have given permission to enter in advance.

If a member of the public makes a cash donation on the day and you are not fundraising, please kindly place this in the SAR Team buckets.

## 9. Rules and Conduct

Our volunteers are experienced guides and assistants and who will keep an eye out for risks but will rely on your group conduct and support. Some are also Outdoors or Training professionals. The mentors will set different paces, so please find your most suitable pace and always walk with others.

**Your pace will naturally change during the day, so enjoy meeting new people. Changing group is not a criticism but an opportunity.**

**No muddy boots on the bus as we cannot afford a cleaning charge.**

You should not be alone at any point of the day or be left on your own. Please don't be offended if you are asked to change groups or are supported. Anyone unable to continue or remain with the group will be asked to wait with the bus and a chaperone added if necessary. This decision will be final, and in the interests of the whole group, in accordance with our insurance risk assessment, and to ensure event success.

Respect other people, consider local community, environment and do not litter. Do not be under the influence during the walk. Dogs are not allowed.



10. **Next year** Save the date and share 10<sup>th</sup> and 11<sup>th</sup> May 2025. Giant Walk II. Tickets on sale now. It is being run consecutively over two days and we have added a *Stockton Half* for novices.



## 11. Contact and personal information

**EVENT CONTROL/FIRST AIDER – 07770 868 380**

**Marc Duschenes, Team Leader**

Mountain Training (UK) Leader (1571762)

Allianz Insurance PLON99/0115515/6

£5,000,000 Public Liability

Best wishes to you all, and stay safe!

Marc and the volunteer team.