



Everything you need to know about Gwent Scouts premier walking competition!

#GT2022

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Introduction to Gwentrek

What is Gwentrek

Gwentrek is the Gwent Area event for expedition challenges for Scouts and Explorers from across Gwent and beyond. It involves a weekend of hiking challenges, designed to test teamwork, navigation, expedition skills and kit.

Teams of 4-7 compete in different categories to complete a hike with checkpoints and challenges on the route to test scouting skills. This is a competition where teams will be tested on knowledge, self-reliance, kit, navigation and camping skills.

Gwentrek Categories

There are 3 entry categories suitable for all abilities

<u>Gwentrek (GT)</u>	<u>Gwentrek+ (GT+)</u>	<u>Gwentrek Xtreme (GTx)</u>
Aimed at the Scout section, a great way to experience Gwentrek from the new to the seasoned Scout. Leaders can accompany their teams on the route if necessary. This level of the competition is designed to get new people involved and the chance to get some experience, in a few years they will be able to tackle GT+. There is a GT trophy for the winning team.	For those more experienced in the Scout section. This is undertaken without leaders for the whole weekend. Feeling independent, feeling lucky? Teams will be expected to be self-sufficient for the whole challenge.	This is a 2-night independent expedition, for Explorers, on a challenging route.

Key differences between categories

The overall event runs from Friday evening through to Sunday afternoon, however depending on category, the competition times vary.

	GT	GT+	GTx
Competition format	Arrive Friday night 2 x 1-day hike with skills challenge on Saturday evening	Arrive Friday night Starts Saturday AM on departure and Sunday PM on return	Starts on check-in Friday evening, finishes on Sunday PM
Distance	Saturday: 14km to 16km Sunday: 8km to 10km	Saturday: 14km to 16km Sunday: 8km to 10km	Saturday: 18km to 20km Sunday: 12km to 14km
Competition support	Walking: Adult leader-accompanied Camping: with Scout group	Independent	Independent
Camping	Friday: With Scout group Saturday: With Scout group	Friday: With Scout group Saturday: Separate area in basecamp	Friday: Separate area in basecamp Saturday: Remote site
Kit to be carried on hike	Day kit only	Full kit, with the exception of the tent, cooking equipment and fuel, which are left in a controlled area	Full kit for weekend

If you have any considerations for your team, please contact the team at Gwentrek@gwentscouts.org.uk

Leaders Notes

We recognise for many leaders this may be their first Gwentrek, this guide will hopefully answer any questions you may have! But please reach out to the team for any additional information using Gwentrek@gwentscouts.org.uk

Spirit of Competition

Gwentrek is a competitive event that has been running for over 25 years, and is a recognised activity for young people to gain top awards such as the Chief Scouts Awards and DofE. As a priority we want to ensure the entire event is enjoyable and open to all. However, please consider carefully if your Scouts and Explorers are competent to enter their category. It is expected that participants will have completed some training in advance and are suitably equipped and prepared for the event.

Where teams struggle, the safety team will endeavour to be supportive and provide additional guidance. However, this may need to be reflected in their scores. In some circumstances (on safety grounds) the team may need to be reclassified and may mean that they may no longer be able to continue. Please note if GT+ team is reclassified to GT, then the scout group will need to provide a suitable adult to accompany them on the hike.

The event is set-up to provide support to struggling teams; we will collect kit, relocate teams, or provide short-cuts if necessary. This will incur penalties on the scoring but allows groups to continue and gain enjoyment and learning from the weekend.

Routes will be provided in advance of the competition, but this does not mean the route can be walked prior to the event. Event organisers will be conducting safety checks the week before and any teams found undertaking reconnaissance will be disqualified.

Please remember, the fundamental aim of the weekend is to provide young people with a fun and enjoyable experience.

Preparation

All teams should have undertaken adequate preparation prior to the event. Please recognise that many young people will not have undertaken regular hike over the last two years and therefore may be behind in training and have a lack of skills and competencies.

To support groups that may have inexperienced leaders, the Gwent Scouts Land Activities unit will be running navigation workshops open to all leaders - please register your interest at <https://booking.gwentscouts.org.uk/>

All teams should be competent in (GT with assistance of accompanying adult):

- **Route planning:** Be able to plot a route between checkpoints, produce a route card and estimate walking speeds and timing
- **Map Reading:** able to locate themselves on map using multiple methods, orientate the map to the ground, describe the route they will be walking and key features of the route.
- **Navigation:** able to use a compass to confirm location and bearings, understand key navigation techniques such as back bearing, catching features and aiming off.
- **Safety and Wellbeing:** aware of basic immediate aid and what to do in emergency, understand key signs of team members' discomfort. Briefed on the need to remain as a group and how to behave in public areas.
- **Camp Skills:** Able to erect a tent and stay dry, cook food safely and maintain a safe camping area.

Open navigation workshops will be:

- Tuesday 12 July 1800 to 2100 – Wentwood
- Friday 15 July 1800 to 2100 - Rudry
- Monday 18 July 1800 to 2100 – Beacon Hill
- Wednesday 20 July 1800 to 2100 – Bloreng

Adult Attendance

All GT teams must be accompanied by an adult with a **full** membership role on Compass (Young Leaders can support a team in addition to the adult), this is in addition to the 4-7 young person team. We encourage this to be a learning environment and leaders to provide reasonable support and direction (but not lead).

Occasional Helpers, parents and provisional appointment holders are not full members.

GT+ teams will camp with leaders on the Friday night, this will reduce the amount of kit they need to carry, and it will allow a leader to undertake any final checks on Saturday morning.

While GT+ teams will walk and camp on Saturday night unaccompanied, we encourage at least one leader to remain on site / available during the event to be on hand in case their team struggles and needs to change category. The Leader can assist the event team if their team does not require their assistance.

GTx teams are expected to be self-sufficient throughout the whole weekend, and as such do not need adult support. However, to run the competition, we need as many adults to help as possible and strongly encourage Explorer leaders to support the event team as staff (We will feed you!!).

Please note all adult attendees staying overnight must be DBS checked and either registered on the groups Nights Away permit or registered as staff.

Passports

All teams that are unaccompanied (GT+ and GTx) must have Nights Away Passports for the competition element, to be shown on check in, and be competent enough to have been issued a passport. GT+ teams must be covered on a group's Nights Away Permit on Friday evening.

Nights Away Notification

All teams must be registered on their own group's (or partner) Nights Away Notification. Permit holders are responsible for scouts and leaders outside of the competition challenges.

Your risk assessment needs to cover your group's camping space and activities, the event team will maintain a risk register for the event.

Please ensure the event safety team are informed of any safety issues immediately.

Gwentrek 2022 Details

These are outline details; final instructions will be given in early September.

Event date: 23 to 25 September 2022

Location: Within Gwent on OS map OL14 – Exact details will be confirmed nearer to the event

Costs: £7.00 per participant (There is no cost for leaders)

Booking: <https://booking.gwentscouts.org.uk/>

Timetable

FRIDAY

[Arrive from 18:30 onwards](#)

Please ask parents to follow the instructions of the marshals - traffic management will be implemented during drop off to avoid traffic jams and disturbing the local community.

- A one-way system with a 'drop off and go' will be in place, participants may need to walk a short distance with their equipment, to the campsite, therefore a single bag is essential. Where participants arrive before their leaders (or rest of the team) they will be held at a safe location. A timed drop-off window may be given before the event. This is dependent on numbers and planning.
- There is limited parking on site, leaders may bring kit to site, but vehicles may need to be parked remotely for the weekend. Please register all cars that will be staying at time of booking.

[Registration](#)

All groups must register on arrival at the reception desk. Groups will have pre-allocated camping areas. Please let us know at time of booking if you are sharing equipment / permit holders. GTx teams will be allocated camping in a leader free zone, therefore teams need to be self-sufficient from time of arrival.

Leaders (or team representatives where no leaders are present) must proceed to reception immediately when arriving on site.

[Route Scrutineering \(from 2000\)](#)

On arrival all GTx teams will be required to hand in a copy of their route cards and map traces (They **must** retain a copy) and an allocated time for route scrutineering. At their allocated time they must present themselves to the scrutineering point and provide a route card, trace, and checkpoint times. In addition, they will be a safety check on equipment and team wellbeing and preparedness.

[Lights Out](#)

Lights out is from 2230 on site, with many groups leaving early on Saturday we ask all participants and leaders to respect this time.

Saturday

[Kit Check & Departure – 0730 to 1000](#)

All teams will be provided with a kit check time at registration on Friday night, they should arrive at their designated time to allow for checks.

Checks before departure include:

- Safety kit
- Route navigation
- Team wellbeing
- Emergency contact numbers and protocol

GT+ teams will be able to leave their hike tent and cooking equipment in a secure location. All other kit (food, clothes, sleeping bags, roll mats) must be carried on the hiking route.

All teams will complete the route under timed conditions, with teams checked in / out of each checkpoint. Competition times are based on the leg times and route card 'windows' will be adjusted to reflect actual departure time from each checkpoint.

[Hike completion](#)

On completing the 1st day hike teams will have skills challenges to complete on site depending on category.

- **GT Teams**
 - Will be allowed to return to their scout groups.
- **GT+ Teams**
 - Will be allowed to collect their items from controlled storage and directed to their 'leader free' pitch (they will not be allowed to return to their scout groups) where they will need to erect their tents.
 - On arrival to site, they will confirm a mealtime so they can be observed cooking their evening meal at their pitch
- **GTx Teams**
 - Will be checked in at their remote site by the safety team and provided a pitch.
 - They will also confirm a timeslot to observe cooking their evening meal at their pitch

[Saturday evening](#)

Teams / groups are expected to be self-sufficient for the evening. The competition requires that an 'expedition' environment is maintained at all times. Only nominated safety and competition staff will be permitted to enter the GT+/GTx camping area – any infringements may result in points deduction or full disqualification.

[Lights out 2230](#)

With many groups leaving early on Sunday we ask all participants and leaders to respect this time.

Sunday

[Kit check & departure – 0800 to 0930](#)

All teams must check out within the designated time window.

Checks before departure include:

- Safety kit
- Route navigation
- Team wellbeing
- Emergency contact numbers and protocol

GT+ teams will be able to leave their hike tent and cooking equipment in a secure location. All other kit (food, clothes, sleeping bags, roll mats) must be carried on the hiking route.

GT+ and GTx should ensure their site is left clear, inspections will take place after their departure and can impact the competition results.

[Hike completion \(Sunday\)](#)

All teams will need to provide an estimated walking time to complete the route, with teams checked in / out of each checkpoint. Competition times are based on the leg times and route card 'windows' will be adjusted to reflect actual departure time from each checkpoint.

On completing the hike teams will be checked in at the base, this is the end of the competition for all categories. Where scout groups are on site, teams may return to leaders, where there are no leaders, a safe area will be established.

[Prizes and results](#)

It is the intention to provide results and prizes at the event for all 3 categories, however, due to the nature of the event and the need to ensure the safety of all teams, it is sometimes not possible to provide the results on the day.

[Departure \(1500 to 1600\)](#)

Please ask parents to follow the instructions of the marshals; traffic management will be implemented on drop off to avoid traffic jams and disturbing the local community.

- A one-way system with a 'collect and go' will be in place, participants may need to walk a short distance from the campsite, therefore a single bag will be essential. In some locations a timed pick-up window by team may be required. Leaders will be informed before the event
- Where group kit is needed to be collected, leaders will be able to bring limited vehicles onto site at the direction of the marshals.

Routes and route planning

All teams will be given checkpoints and instructions. Using this, they must produce a planned route between the checkpoints given in the most effective manner possible. They must prepare a route card and will be tested on it before allowed to leave the site. All teams must provide checkpoint times via the booking system before the event

GT teams will still be checked and marked but their knowledge is not expected to be at the same level as the GT+ / GTx teams.

The route must use paths and tracks denoted as Public Rights of Way or 'Access Land' on the OS map OL14.

When preparing your route card using the designated template, note that teams will be scored on their accuracy in reaching the checkpoints at the planned time. A nominal score will be given for reaching the base.

Sections of the route may require escorting along public roads and crossing road sections; therefore, the Highway Code and Country Code must be always adhered to. Teams must be warned of the dangers of crossing busy sections and reminded not to take risks. Where manned crossing points are in effect, teams must not cross at any other point.

All details for planning the Saturday route for all teams will be emailed to booking contacts on 15 September, which gives all sections a meeting night to plan their route and prepare route cards in advance. The Sunday route will be provided on Saturday evening as a map trace to be followed (GPX files available on request for leaders)

All route cards and traces for Saturday should be planned in advance and a copy handed in on registration, however make sure you bring everything you need to prepare a route card, paper, blank route cards, pens etc, in case corrections are required.

GT+ / GTx teams will be camping in a leader free area, points will be deducted for intervention. If a leader needs to contact the competing team this should be done via the event organisers. All GT teams should have sufficient leaders to meet your nights away requirements for the event (including GT+ on the Friday night)

Whilst it may be prudent, due to the weather, to bring a mess tent, it is not in the spirit of event to bring tables, chairs, and non-expedition equipment. This does not apply to leaders.

Note to leaders

It is the responsibility of leaders to prepare teams according to the needs of the event, Gwentrek can only function effectively if young people are properly prepared. If you are unsure of the level of training, please attend one of our open evenings where the Gwent Land activities unit will provide guidance and support

Teams require working knowledge of navigation and its application, emergency procedures and a good helping of common sense! They must be aware and practice the Country and Highway Codes.

Scoring

Scoring is consistent across all categories, with more emphasis on expedition skills for GT+ and GTx. Scoring is split into 2 areas and has increasing focus on expedition skills (eg cooking, pitches, route cards) for the higher categories.

Navigation

Teams are scored against times provided on their route cards and scored for each individual checkpoint leg. e.g., if a team loses time on the 1st leg, the next leg window is adjusted based on the new departure time from Checkpoint 1, therefore teams are only penalised for a single leg, rather than the whole route.

Scoring is out of 50 for each leg, full points are awarded for arriving on time within an allowance, with points lost for being too early or too late.

Points are available for Saturday and Sunday (on Sunday Route Cards will be provided with pre-determined checkpoint times)

Note; if teams are observed 'loitering' before the checkpoint, the time recorded will be their observed time, not arrival time.

Expedition Skills

All challenges have a maximum 50 points.

Skill	GT	GT+	GTx
Route scrutineering	✓	✓	✓
Expedition skills	✓		
Saturday evening kit inspection		✓	✓
Cooking (evening)		✓	✓
Cooking (breakfast)			✓
Campcraft		✓	✓
No-trace camping		✓	✓ (2 Nights)
Route cards			✓

Gwentrek competition staff follow a strict scoring matrix to ensure consistency between teams.

Event staff are split into teams. Competition staff are the only volunteers that can have an impact on scores, and will have a specific hi-vis colour. All other staff, particularly the safety and wellbeing team are there to prioritise the safety of young people and adults and not the competition scores or results.

Nights Away and InTouch

It is the responsibility of the team(s) leader to ensure that the requirements of the InTouch and Nights Away scheme are met.

Leaders in charge of teams must have suitable Nights Away permits (campsite or lightweight expedition level or above) and where applicable Passports must be issued to the teams - GT+ (Saturday evening) and GTx teams will all need passports. This will be checked and disqualifications are likely to occur if Scouting rules are broken.

Nights Away Notifications should be made to your home DC and a copy kept for the team, in-line with POR.

A suitable In Touch system must be arranged, documented and implemented.

For further reading please see the website or search on the scouts.org.uk website for In Touch.

The campsite will have fixed toilets and water points (with mains water). The event safety and wellbeing team will supply water on route if necessary.

Please ensure all Scouts and Explorers are briefed to treat facilities with respect.

Kit List

The following kit list include essential items that must be carried. To ensure fairness of competition all must be carried on the hike. Points will be deducted if kit is not carried

The event team will provide an itemised kit list prior to the event to remove an ambiguity

[GT Kit List](#)

Day hike list

Team Equipment (Mandatory)

- Survival bag (at least one per team)
- First aid kit; The first aid kit is required for all teams it should be comprehensive enough to cope with most minor emergencies. The team should know how to use the equipment effectively.
- Food for the day hike, including emergency rations that maybe checked on departure and arrival each day.

Individual Equipment (Mandatory)

- Waterproof coat and over trousers
- Lunch and drinks
- Emergency rations (E.g., chocolate or energy bar.)
- Torch
- Whistle
- Warm headgear and gloves
- Suitable rucksack
- Hiking/walking boots

[GT+ and GTx](#)

Expedition list

Team Equipment (Mandatory)

- Map and compass; The team should carry the relevant map, their route card and a compass and know how to use them effectively.
- Hike tent: GT+ and GTx teams are expected to be able to put their own tents up, keep them tidy and carry a tent as part of their team kit. GT teams are allowed help with their campsite by leaders and do not have to carry their tent which can be left at the site. GT+ and GTx teams must carry all equipment!
- Bivvy / survival bag (at least one per team) – GT+ must have suitable shelter for safety if tents are to be left at base
- Food for the competition period; Teams should be able to cook for themselves at each mealtime.
- Cooking equipment & fuel; GTx should carry their cooking equipment for the route, GT+ can leave cooking equipment at checkout; they will be expected to cook their evening meal and Sunday breakfast without assistance and using the equipment they have carried.
- Emergency rations: these maybe checked at start and end of the competition.
- First aid kit; The first aid kit is required for all teams it should be comprehensive enough to cope with most minor emergencies. The team should know how to use the equipment effectively.

Individual Equipment (Mandatory)

- Waterproof coat and over trousers
- Full change of clothes
- Sleeping bag
- Emergency rations (E.g. chocolate or energy bar.)
- Torch
- Whistle
- Warm headgear and gloves
- Suitable rucksack
- Hiking/walking boots

Individuals need to be able to complete the expedition with their own kit, therefore they should have an appropriately sized and weighted bag.

Individuals should wear appropriate clothing and footwear for the event and the weather conditions, failure to do so can prevent participation in the event at the discretion of the leaders assessing the activity.