

Guidance on using Meetup



What is it?

Meetup is an online social networking portal. It describes itself as *"helping people to find others who share their interest or cause, and form lasting, influential, local community groups that regularly meet face-to-face."* (<http://www.meetup.com/about>)

These notes are intended to help groups use Meetup. They have been compiled, with thanks, by Alex Mannings from the Ramblers London Strollers group.

They are not meant to act as a definitive guide, but as a way to get you started. There are many features to Meetup and the best way is to experiment.

A successful Meetup group should result in your group increasing in new members, helping to spread the word about how great walking is and supporting the Ramblers through membership, something which is vitally important.

Setting up Meetup account

Joining Meetup as a participant is free however being a Meetup group organiser costs approximately £50 for 6 months and this will entitle you to run 3 Meetup groups.

To set up a Meetup group, follow the instructions on Meetup: <http://www.meetup.com/create/>

For each Meetup group you create you need to specify the activities that it is involved in - for the Ramblers this will be *Hiking/Walking*. You give the Meetup group a name usually the same name as the Ramblers group, its location and a description of the group. The easiest way to do this is just copy and paste the information that you have already written from your website.

Scheduling events

Once the Meetup group is created you need to start posting walks to it. This is done literally by copying and pasting the information that has already been uploaded to walks finder. To do this, select *"Schedule a new Meetup"*. Copy the walks finder information and paste it into *"more details"*.

Take the heading for the walk into *"What should we do"*. Select *"Set the date"* to enter the date of the walk and *"Set the location"* to enter the starting point of the walk. When you are happy with the details entered select *"schedule the meetup"*. This gives you another chance to check the information before selecting *"Announce the event"*.

It has to be possible for the person to contact the walk leader - this will be the same contact details you put on walks finder. Questions will be asked by people planning to come on the walk on Meetup and you will need to direct them to the walk leader to answer any questions. It is unlikely that you as the person posting the walks onto Meetup that you will know the details of every walk. If you do not put contact details on walks finder for walk leaders, I would recommend not using Meetup.

Walk leaders can also join Meetup and deal with queries on their own walk.

Members of Meetup groups

People will join the Meetup group by selecting on *"join the group"*. Once they have done this they appear as members of your Meetup group. This means that they have shown an interest in the

group, but it does not necessarily mean they will actually come on a walk!

It does make it possible for you to contact all of your Meetup members asking them to join the Ramblers. This can be done by going to Group tools and selecting *e-mailing members*. You can put a link to the Ramblers website on this e-mail, making it as easy as possible for people to join.

Meetup members coming on walks

If a Meetup member wants to come on a walk they will select "RSVP" and select that they are attending. They can also state at any time that they are not attending. If they select they are coming they might or might not turn up, but it is etiquette on Meetup to let you know. Once they turn up you should treat them as you treat any new person coming on a walk.

Reviews

The interesting thing about Meetup is that participants can review the event (i.e. your group's walk), post comments, upload pictures and give it a star rating. This is useful to seeing if walks can be improved in the future.

Further information

You can have a look at London Strollers on Meetup: <http://www.meetup.com/London-Strollers>

Meetup's help section: <http://help.meetup.com>

You can contact Alex via alex.mannings@yahoo.co.uk