

Pilgrims Way Challenge

Equipment checklist

Make sure you're ready for the Pilgrims Way Challenge with this handy guide to essential clothing and kit

Clothing Checklist

- Pilgrims technical t-shirt
- Walking boots or trail shoes
- Midweight walking socks (1-2 pairs)
- Lightweight trousers, sports leggings or shorts
- Micro-fibre fleece (for layering)
- Waterproof hiking jacket with hood
- Sun hat (peaked or wide brimmed)
- Neck buff

Essential Equipment

- Backpack (20-30L)
- Water carriers
- Mobile phone (fully charged)
- Participant number lanyard
- First aid kit (with blister plasters)
- Cash (for emergencies)
- Hand sanitiser
- Power bank
- Sunglasses
- Sun cream (100% UV protection)
- Lip balm

55km participants

- Head torch and red rear light



Lace up your walking boots, trail shoes or trainers and get ready to hike for hospice care.

We recommend that all participants bring these key items with them on the Pilgrims Way Challenge. Not all items are essential, but ultimately it's up to you to decide which kit works best for you during your training.

What clothing to wear

It is important to remember that you will typically spend between 5-10 hours outside during the Pilgrims Way Challenge, depending on your ability and chosen distance. You should check the weather forecast the day before the event to inform your clothing decisions and remember that the British weather, and temperatures, can be very changeable throughout the course of a day. You may be starting in cooler temperatures and early morning rain, but experience beautiful sunny skies by lunchtime. That is why we would always recommend the following to participants:

- **Hiking/walking boots or trail shoes**

Waterproof/repellent and fully broken in through training. You'll be walking across fields, paths and rural spots during the challenge and there's potential for these areas to be wet. It is possible to wear trainers, but these can become waterlogged in wet conditions, which can cause blisters.

- **Midweight walking socks**

Walking socks will help to keep your feet dry, less sweaty and cushioned, which in turn can prevent blisters from forming. You can of course use cotton socks, but we highly recommend you train in your socks and find what works for you. Whatever distance you choose, it's always good to carry a spare pair of socks.

- **Lightweight hiking trousers, leggings or shorts**

Your choice of trousers, leggings or shorts will depend on the weather and what is most comfortable for you. If you own a pair of waterproof trousers, we recommend packing them just in case.

- **Trekking t-shirts**

Ahead of the event, you will be sent a participant pack, which will include your Pilgrims technical t-shirt. Please wear this and help raise awareness for Pilgrims Hospices while doing the Challenge.

- **Additional layers**

With British weather being very changeable, we recommend packing additional layers such as a **microfibre fleece** and a **waterproof/windproof jacket with hood** to protect you against a variety of weather conditions. You will also appreciate a warm layer for your journey home.

- **Sun hat (peaked or wide-brimmed)**

Hopefully, the sun will be shining on you for the Pilgrims Way Challenge. We therefore recommend bringing a hat or cap to keep the sun off your head, face and neck.

- **Neck buff**

A neck buff can keep you cool during the day by shading your head or neck and keep you warm too as a neck scarf. You can even purchase an official Pilgrims Hospices neck warmer in advance for just £5. Email fundraising@pilgrimshospices.org to find out more.

Keep the sun off your neck with the official Pilgrims Hospices neck scarf. Available for just £5.



Essential Equipment

• Backpack **Essential**

A 20-30L backpack is recommended to carry all of the necessary items you will need for your challenge. The best backpacks have side pockets for water bottles and easy access pockets for the items you use regularly like sun cream, snacks and mobile phones. Even better if it has a belt with pockets on either side.

• Water carriers **Essential**

These can be bottles, camelbacks or water pouches but please aim to carry a reasonable amount of water with you at all times. You'll be working up a sweat and will need to stay hydrated throughout. There will be water stations available at all rest stops where you can top up your supplies along the way. Also consider, **rehydration sachets** – available at most pharmacies. You'll be out in daylight for long hours and these are really helpful to avoid dehydration.

• Mobile phone **Essential**

A fully charged mobile phone is a must for contacting event organisers, medics, loved ones or even 999 in case of an emergency. Event organisers may also contact you on the day to check your progress, particularly in the latter stages. Your phone will also enable you to liaise with anyone who is collecting you from the finish and tell them when you are close. If you have a smartphone, downloading the free Pilgrims Hospices Event App will allow you to see precisely where you are positioned on a detailed course map. And apps like What3Words can tell our event medics your exact location in case of injury.

• Participant number lanyard **Essential**

A lanyard containing your name and unique participant number will be posted to you in the weeks before the event. You must bring this with you on the day so you can be easily identified by the organisers. The folded document inside contains physical trail maps of your chosen route as well as space to note any medical conditions.

• First aid kit **Essential**

A kit with basic supplies to keep you going. Painkillers and blister kits are a key part of this (Compeed / 2nd Skin / zinc oxide tape).

• Cash **Essential**

It's important to have some cash with you for unexpected journeys and emergencies. You will be fully supported during the challenge with regular rest stops and emergency medical assistance, but should you choose to leave the event early, you will need to make your own way home.

• Hand sanitiser

It's a good idea to carry hand sanitiser gel with you to use when passing through stiles, gates and at rest stops. Please consider other hikers by doing this each time. There will also be hand sanitising stations available at each event venue. Please use these regularly throughout the day and remember to wash your hands at the earliest opportunity after the event.

• Power bank

A fully charged power bank is a sensible precaution to have with you. Should your phone's battery run down or die unexpectedly during the event, you will be able to top it up with this handy reserve power source.

• Sun protection

You will be out for several daylight hours in June. It is a good idea to bring **sunglasses** to reduce eyestrain and glare, **lip balm** to keep your lips hydrated, and **sun cream** to protect your skin from prolonged sun exposure, ideally SPF 50.

• Head torch and red rear light **55km only**

You must bring a head torch for the rural sections towards the end of your challenge. You'll be crossing fields, rural footpaths and short sections of woodland during the later stages. As night falls and you become tired, a trustworthy torch will really help to keep you on track. These can be quite basic models, but the best have a red light on the back too so others can spot you from a distance and follow your path ahead. Alternatively, consider wearing a red light on your backpack so that you can be seen by cars or our event staff in the dark.





Best foot forward!

Make sure you wear footwear that feels comfortable and that you have been training in. Pilgrims certainly don't expect you to go out and buy new footwear for this challenge, however, there are some things to take into consideration:

- **Choose your footwear carefully and check the weather forecast**

If it is going to be very hot, your feet will swell and sweat in heavy hiking boots, so they need to fit correctly to avoid this. Swollen feet will make the likelihood of developing blisters much higher. Please note – that good fitting pairs of hiking boots or shoes will help combat blisters. It is all down to personal preference. Make sure they aren't too tight, especially across the front/tongue (heat rash doesn't help either), that your toes and feet aren't cramped and that they are not too slack that your feet move around in them. Make sure they fit well by trying them out with the type of socks you intend to wear on the walk. Whichever footwear you plan on wearing – you must train in them and fully wear them in!

- **If buying new footwear - get them fitted**

When you are investing in a new pair of walking boots/shoes, please don't buy online. Instead, visit a local retailer (Go Outdoors, Cotswold Outdoors, Blacks, Ellis Brigham, Mountain Warehouse etc.). They will fit you properly, find shoes that are best suited for the shape of your feet and that aren't too small/tight/big etc.

- **Blister treatment**

Don't wait until you get a blister to treat it. Everyone gets hot spots that you can feel starting to hurt – prevention is better than a cure! If you feel a warm spot, or a part of your foot that is rubbing, consider your sock position (seams etc.). If it is the start of a blister, stop and put a blister plaster on, ensuring your feet are dry before you apply it as it will not stick if the area is moist.

- **Neat nails**

Make sure you keep your toe nails clipped and trimmed so that your nails aren't hitting the bottom of your boots or trainers, especially on downhill sections. Should it happen, this will likely lead to bruised (and even loss of) toenails during or after the challenge!

For more kit advice, please email fundraising@pilgrimshospices.org

Get fitter, go further and help to raise vital funds to support hospice care right across our east Kent community. Thank you so much for your support and have a great hike!

Did you know?

The total distance hiked at the Pilgrims Way Challenge 2024 was **23,600 kilometres**. That's the equivalent of walking from John O'Groats to Lands End over 19 times!