

How do I find the walk start point?

Taking weekend walks first. Our weekend walks programme appears on our ECG website (www.ramblerseastcheshire.org.uk) (as well as in paper form which is snail mail posted to every member). The website version though has a useful addition. Roger Fielding, the Weekend and Evening Programme Coordinator, has created a clickable link to a web-based mapping system for each weekend walk. Click on the grid reference and you will be taken to a map of the walk start point and you can select a list of directions from your home to the start point (you have to type in your home postcode where requested). You can print the map and the directions and off you go! If you want more, you will find that the map directions also included a long number which is the latitude and longitude coordinates of the walk start point. Most car Sat Nav systems will accept latitude and longitude coordinates instead of the more often-used post code. So now you have your map of the start point, directions to the start point and a lengthy latitude & longitude number that will let you use your car Sat Nav system to get to the start point (make sure you tap that lengthy number in correctly, though).

Mid week walks are by their nature more immediate affairs - the information is available only a day or so before the walk date and most walk leaders define the start point by a grid reference and a few words. No opportunity here for easy website clickable links. All is not lost though and again we are indebted to Roger Fielding for explaining how, with minimal effort, we can use web based mapping systems and sat nav systems to help us get to the start point of a mid week walk. To obtain the map of the start point and directions from your home to the walk start point, tap the start point grid reference into web based Multimap or Streetmap where they ask for a destination address, town or postcode. This will produce a map of the walk start point and directions which you can print. A word of WARNING - don't do this with Google maps, experience has shown that a local Cheshire grid reference tapped into Google maps will direct you to mainland Europe or beyond. You have been warned!

Mid week walks information, provided by walk leaders, can also be used to find the latitude and longitude coordinates of the walk start point, so you can use these in your car sat nav. To convert a grid reference to latitude and longitude coordinates, go to <http://www.nearby.org.uk/conversions.cgi>. This site, as well as giving latitude and longitude coordinates, also gives a postcode but another WARNING - post codes are related to addresses to where mail can be delivered. So if your walk start point is a lay-by on a country road, you will be given the nearest post code - nearest might be quite far away from the actual start point. The <http://www.nearby.org.uk> website tells you how far the postcode is from your grid reference. If the two are very close, say less than one kilometre apart, you can probably use the post code in your car sat nav and make a manual adjustment as you get near the start point. If the two are not close, use lat and long coordinates in your car sat nav.