

MAIVIKEN WALK

Extended Walk Visitor Management Plan

v2015



Walk Rating: Green

Staff/Guest Ratio: 1/20 (minimum)

Max Guests: 100

Distance: 3.5 km to the Whalers Church in Grytviken

Height gain: 205m ascent/descent

Est. time 2-3 hours

Map: Thatcher Peninsula Series BAS 25 Sheets 4A and 4B

INTRODUCTION

This gentle walk is a lovely way to approach Grytviken and a good path exists for large parts of it's length.

Maiviken is a study site for scientists from King Edward Point studying both fur seals and the gentoo penguin colony in Tortula Cove. The gentoos in particular should be left undisturbed by visitors, so landings should be made in Poa Cove. At certain times of the year it may be impossible to access the start of this walk due to fur seal numbers. A KEP scientist regularly visits the beach so the Government Officer can be contacted in advance for advice on the likelihood of the walk being accessible.

While, as with any extended walk on South Georgia, parties should be self sufficient, good shelter can be found in deteriorating conditions for a large group of people in the Sealers Cave in Poa Cove. In addition, very small numbers (2-3) could be sheltered in the hut at waypoint 4 in the event of an incident, and Grytviken also has provision for sheltering large numbers of people. As a result, this walk is slightly less committing than some of the other extended walks.

Nevertheless, extended walks should never be undertaken if guides or visitors have any concerns. Careful consideration must be given to the fitness and ability of visitors intending to undertake the walk before participation can be approved. The remote location, lack of medical facilities and highly changeable weather mean that the consequences of an accident on an extended walk will be far more serious than would otherwise be the case in other less remote locations. For this reason alone, it is inappropriate to treat these walks as something that 'anyone can do'.

It is a condition of the visit permit that Visit Permit Holders (and all staff) adhere to Site Visitor Management Plans and guidelines for extended walks. Permit Holders must ensure that all other staff and guides are equally well briefed and that they adhere to all SVMP's.

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WALK PLANNING AND PREPARATION

○ **Walk Grading**

Extended walks have all been graded on the basis of length, terrain and technical difficulty.

The Maiviken Walk has been graded as green.

Green Walk:

- Straightforward walk, which might cover large distances, but poses little technical difficulty and does not require difficult navigation or route choices en route.
- Minimum staff (guide) to visitor ratio: 1:20. Additional staff should accompany the walk to ensure adequate staffing levels are maintained at all times if responding to an incident.
- Suitable for adequately fit novice hill walkers. Robust footwear is essential, and walking boots are recommended.
- Maximum group size 100 visitors (plus guides / staff). Guides are strongly encouraged to manage walkers in discrete groups, rather than one long extended chain.

○ **Waypoints**

The waypoints have been produced as an aid to navigation on the walks. In the majority of cases, these provide a tangible point to head towards in poor visibility; the ground covered between the points is at the discretion of the leader and will depend on, for example, the nature and experience of the group.

○ **Staff Experience**

Leading guides should ideally hold recognised qualifications (for example Mountain Leader Award).

All staff should be able to use GPS, map and compass and hold a current first aid qualification. Previous hill walking and guiding experience is important. Every staff member is expected to have sufficient experience to be able to independently and confidently manage and navigate a group of visitors down off a hill to safety..

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○ Staff Equipment

There should be sufficient equipment carried by the each staff member to keep a group sheltered from the elements, raise the alarm if necessary, deal with immediate first aid, and have the tools to navigate independently.

This should include:

- Compass and whistle
- Local area map (plus GPS as required)
- Spare food and drink
- Spare clothing
- Basic first aid kit
- VHF

As a group, the staff should ensure they carry:

- 1 Iridium phone (minimum)
- 2 GPS units and spare batteries (minimum), more are required for larger groups
- Spare walking poles
- Group shelters to accommodate the complete party distributed between staff members

○ Visitors Equipment

Visitor's personal equipment should include:

- Spare clothing
- Hat and gloves
- Emergency food & Drink (or access to these at all times)
- Personal medication (in case of delay ashore)
- Walking poles (if they normally used).

Careful consideration must always be given to footwear. Wellington boots should be avoided, particularly if visitors are not steady on their feet. Walking boots are strongly encouraged and recommended for this walk, due to the slippery conditions.

Guides should pay close attention to the footwear worn by the visitors.

○ Medical Provision

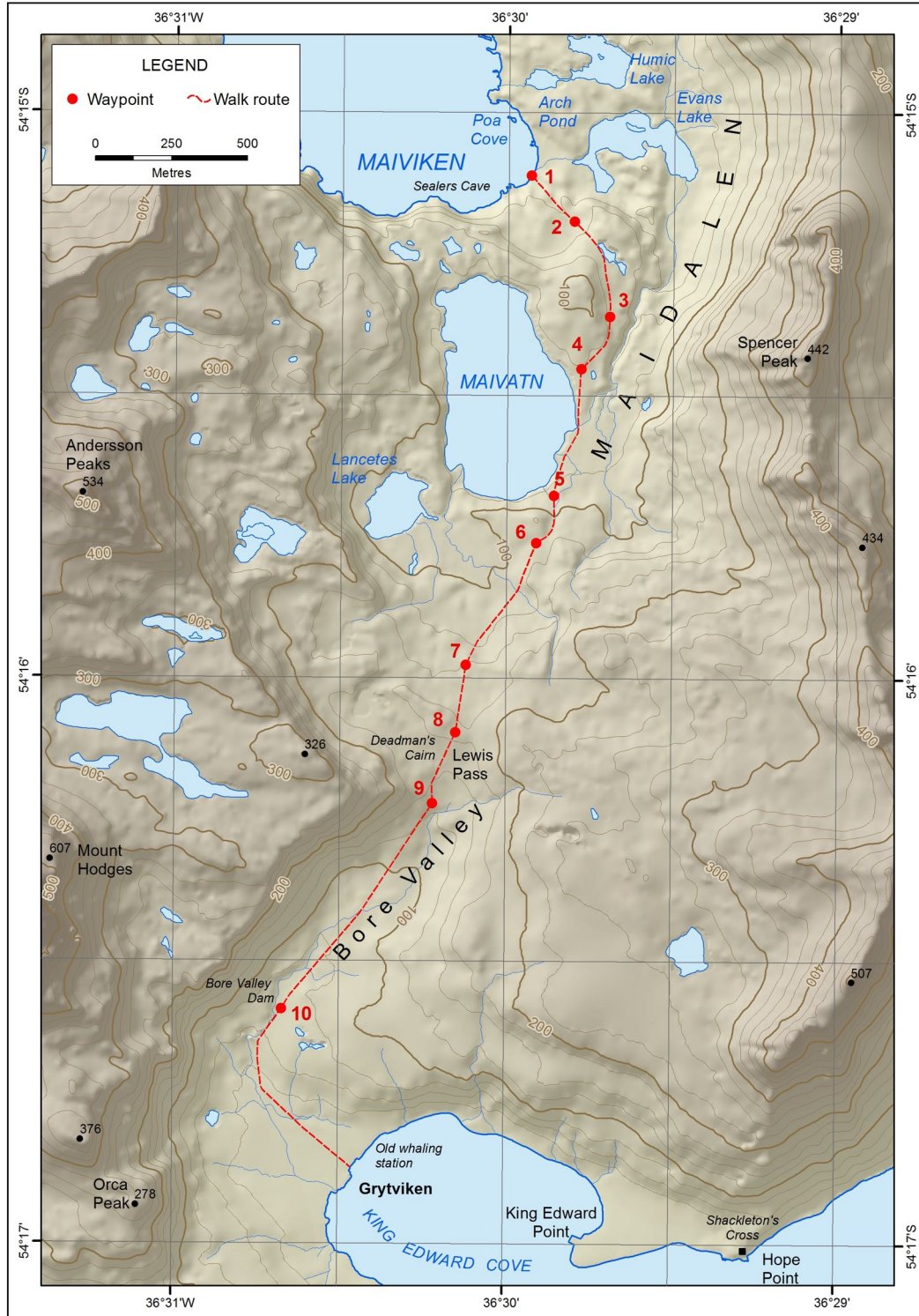
It is a requirement of visiting vessels to be self sufficient in every respect, including medical cover. The visit permit holder and leading guide must both check and ensure that there is adequate medical provision and a tested medical response plan in place to rapidly respond to any injury sustained during the walk or medical trauma incident.

All incidents, accidents and injuries, no matter how minor, must be reported to GSGSSI.

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ROUTE DETAILS



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WPT 1 Poa Cove
54° 15.111' S
036° 29.931' W
0m ASL



Start at Poa Cove at the western end of beach, with the Sealers' Cave to your right looking inland. The shortest route through tussac starts here.

Walk through the tussac, aiming for the drainage line approximately 50m inland. After the tussac the route opens onto a widening grassy strip that leads to a short, steep, wet grass gully. The grassy strip is very boggy in places so stay to the margins to minimize impact.

WPT 2 Foot of grass gully
54° 15.192' S
036° 29.800' W
40m ASL



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Ascend the gully, which is very boggy, wet and can be slippery. There are alternative slopes that are drier but have extensive moss beds and lichens which are susceptible to trampling, so use of the gully is preferred.



From the top of the gully (65m ASL) follow the track south.

WPT 3 Fork in track
54° 15.360' S
036° 29.692' W
75m ASL

At this waypoint there is a fork in the track. Take the right hand path leading gently upwards towards the hut.

WPT 4 Hut
54° 15.453' S
036° 29.777' W
75m ASL

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From the hut follow a very obvious track leading south, on the east shore of the lake.



Note there is a stream crossing on the path where there is a potential to get wet feet in high water conditions.

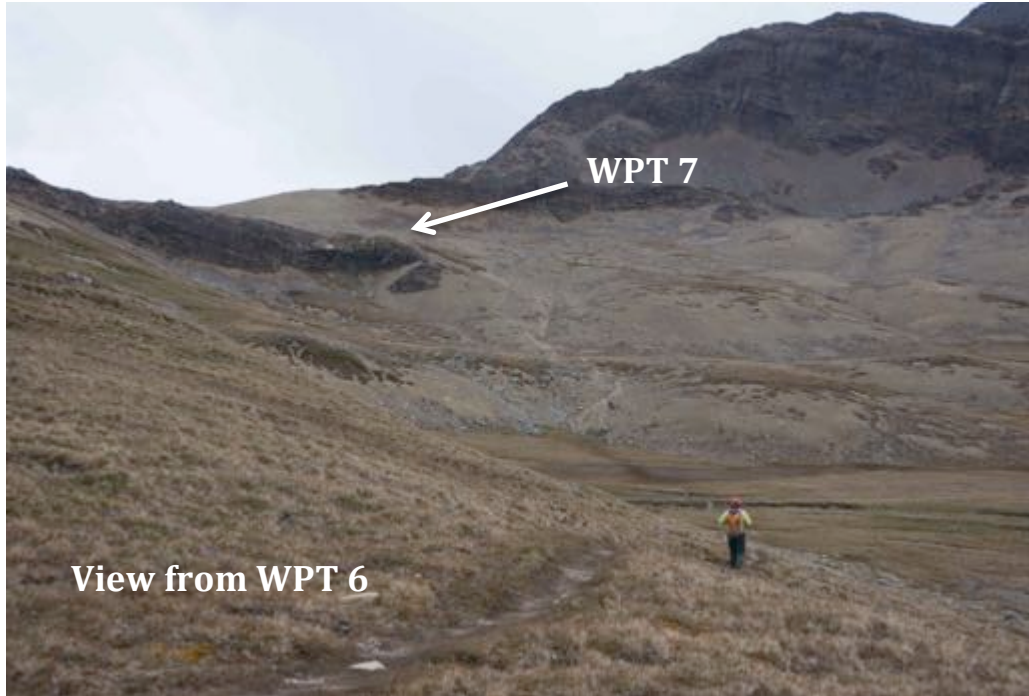
WPT 5 Base of shallow gully
54° 15.677' S
036° 29.858' W

The path trends up the left hand side of the shallow gravel gully, veering right at the top. The path can be difficult underfoot in places and may be avoided by walking up the streambed.

WPT 6 Flats above gully
54° 15.761' S
036° 29.911' W
125m ASL

From here the occasionally indistinct path drops gently down to the SW onto the flats below (105m ASL) before rising up a series of shelves. The path crossing the steep scrappy section leading to WPT 7 can be avoided if desired by using shallower slopes just to the west.

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WPT 7 Top of second shelf
54° 15.977' S
036° 30.121' W
165m ASL

The route rises to the S, leading to the cairn at WPT 8. The path is frequently indistinct but travel is straightforward throughout this area.

WPT 8 Cairn
54° 16.096' S
036° 30.151' W
190m ASL

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View looking SW from the cairn (WPT 8)

From the cairn, in good visibility the waters of Gull Lake can be seen to the south. Gull Lake lies above Grytviken. The path is not immediately obvious. Follow the valley leading SW, keeping to the west side of the stream.

WPT 9
54° 16.222' S
036° 30.220' W

The path becomes more distinct and skirts above the streambed before dropping onto a small plateau. It then crosses the stream and carries on across the plateau.

WPT 10 Dam and shed
54° 16.586' S
036° 30.672' W

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From this waypoint the path descends steeply at first before easing. It then traverses steep slopes above the stream before heading east and dropping down to the Whalers' Church at Grytviken.



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