

# Edinburgh Festival Fringe 2017 – OS Map Fan Club



Helen Wood – a chart  
smash hit.

*'Are we there, yet?'* OS fanatics, the OS curious and OS sceptics are all welcome at the **OS Map Fan Club**.

Join Ordnance Survey enthusiast, **Helen Wood**, for a humorous exploration of the much loved, fold-out, paper map.

Be led on a fascinating, laughter-filled, virtual ramble and celebrate the simple beauty of Britain's inspiring national treasure. This delightful solo comedy takes you along the ancient byways of the no.168, 4cm to 1km, explorer map. Meet colourful characters, hear amusing anecdotes and pause frequently to admire the view.

Eschewing the easy route to humour via a series of puns based on landmark features and key symbols, The Edinburgh Reporter chose to tread the less trodden path and put some questions to the star trekker of this delightful solo-show, Helen Wood. She surveyed our inquiries with dead-reckoning and pin-point accuracy. Her answers do not ramble in the slightest and were well coordinated.

**TER:** What was your light-bulb moment when you realised you had better explore your fascination with OS maps in the form of a show? Cognitive therapy can be so expensive these days, but probably still cheaper than financing a Fringe run.

**HW:** I decided that if I was going to spend a long time researching, writing and rehearsing an hour long show it needed to be about something I'm really interested in. So I chose OS maps because I think they're great, but then wondered

if such a niche subject could attract an audience. Fortunately, I've been amazed how many people have told me they too have a similar fondness for OS maps and over a third of show tickets have already been sold.

**TER:** What is your favourite feature on an OS map and have you ever climbed to an extreme access Trig point?

**HW:** I love planning walks so any green or red line of dashes gets me excited. In the show I talk about the first walk I ever led when I was seventeen. I managed to get my party to the trig point on the summit of Helvellyn, in the Lake District, but only just. The route along Striding Edge was terrifying and I've never been the same since.

**TER:** Do you feel the readers will now have an adequate grasp of what a Trig point is and its function?

**HW:** Over the years I've reached many more trig points, but I'm afraid my non-existent knowledge of surveying means I'm completely unqualified to explain their function. Rob Woodall, who I learnt about in my show research, has been to all 6,190. He should be able to provide the answers.

**TER:** What was your most embarrassing map-reading blunder?

**HW:** I usually blame farmers who've ploughed up the footpath or blocked the exit from fields rather than admit to map-reading blunders. But that early distressing experience on Striding Edge may never have happened if I'd noticed how close the contour lines were.

**TER:** Are you confident that your audience will be able to find their way to the show?

**HW:** Yes I'm very confident. I'm assuming they'll have their see-through map wallets hung round their necks and inside will be their trusty number **350, Explorer map of Edinburgh, Musselburgh and Queensferry** and then they just need to find

grid reference **261734**.

**TER:** Evidently, you deliberately chose Surgeons' Hall as a venue, drawing a parallel with the Age of Enlightenment's approach to 'mapping' the workings of the human body. Discuss with confidence.

**HW:** No. I chose Surgeons' Hall because it's a lovely central venue, with comfortable seats, indoor queues, friendly staff and a great bar in the courtyard.

**TER:** In five word or symbols explain why your show is an unmissable cartographic compendium of previously uncharted territory.

**HW:** I've decided to answer that question with five symbols and several words. In The O.S. Map Fan Club the audience will be led on a virtual ramble and offered a garden of drama and delights, fascinating information and unusual viewpoints and you never know, it might attract several five star reviews.

[Tickets here](#)

Venue54 |theSpace/Surgeons' Hall Southside |11.55am |60mins | 12+ suggested.