

walk this way

Walkers Spring 2017 Newsletter Issue



Wokingham Health Walks

Welcome to the Spring edition of the Wokingham Walking for Health newsletter.

It really is a delightful time of year with many changes to the season. We have had a mixture of glorious sunny weather with the added variety of the seasonal rain and winds. The days are getting longer and I'm sure our walkers at the Maiden Centre in Lower Earley on Monday evenings are enjoying the brighter evenings.

The early part of 2017 has been incredibly exciting as we have seen a steady growth in new walkers joining the programme along with the introduction of 2 new walks in Wokingham. Our programme is supported by a number of committed volunteers who help make your walking experience as enjoyable as possible. With new walkers and new walks, the need for volunteer walk leaders is paramount. Leading walks and helping out as a middle or backmarker is rewarding and very satisfying. To be able to assist a group to navigate a walk whilst maintaining walker safety and enjoyment is a challenging but fulfilling role.

We have a number of Walk Leader training days booked for 2017 and I urge to contact me if you wish to find out more about volunteering for Walking for Health. We also have volunteering opportunities within the Sports & Leisure team.

A recent report has found that Wokingham and Brighton & Hove has the lowest number of inactive people (13% & 14% respectively) and these figures prove that Wokingham Borough is a fantastic place to get active and stay active. We have over 1000 registered health walkers on our programme and your efforts to attend the walks and stay active, have gone a long way to producing these fantastic figures.

In this edition, we also focus on the new walks from Waitrose and Norreys Church in Wokingham and I have included feedback from walkers on how much they enjoy the walks and we have information on the upcoming social events.

Have a great spring.

Glenn

Wokingham Walking for Health



Spotlight on.....Waitrose Walk

A new short walk took roots in January 2017 as the Waitrose walk became a reality. The new walk began after discussions with representatives from Waitrose and the Wokingham Borough Health Walks to start a walk from the town centre store. The walk began life as a 6 week pilot and the uptake from walkers exceeded expectations. 18 people attended the first walk and what is satisfying is that all of the walkers were new to the programme. Leaders Sheila Morgan, Brian Wooldridge and Sue Barton have done a fantastic job building the walk which sees an average of 20 people in attendance.

The walk begins from the main entrance of the store and gently makes its way around the surrounding roads and pathways of Wokingham. The walk cuts along the edge of Cantley Park before making its way back into the town centre. Walkers are able to complete a spot of shopping and/or enjoy the onsite café.

The walk is approximately 1.5 miles and takes roughly 30 minutes to complete.
The walk takes place from Waitrose Wokingham on Monday mornings at 10:00am.

Spotlight on.....Norreys Church



Every Thursday morning at 9:00am, an enthusiastic group of walkers meet at the Norreys Church in Wokingham to take part in either a short 'health' stroll or a longer walk. Led by Walking for Health coordinator, Glenn Goudie and Community Development Worker Lisa Hookway, the walks began in January 2017 and they have slowly built to over 8 walkers.

The walk is split in two with a short stroll designed for walkers returning to walking or who experience health issues and a slightly longer walk for more active participants. The Church is open after the walk for light refreshments.

We asked walker, Dean, what drew him into walking. He said, "I enjoy the fresh air and it is great fun as I walk with my friends and we have a great laugh. The walks have helped me lose weight and it makes me feel good about myself." Fellow walker Michael added, "I enjoy walking with my friends and the exercise helps me to stay healthy."



Supporting you to
get active and stay active

Together the Ramblers and Macmillan Cancer Support run Walking for Health, helping more people – including those affected by cancer – discover the joys and health benefits of walking.

The Ramblers' Association is a registered charity (England & Wales no. 1093577, Scotland no. SC039799) www.ramblers.org.uk
Macmillan Cancer Support is a registered charity (England and Wales no. 261017, Scotland no. SC039907, Isle of Man no. 604) www.macmillan.org.uk

Breakfast Walk

On Friday 10th March, as dawn broke over the Henry Street Garden Centre at Arborfield, forty six intrepid health walkers gathered for the annual "Breakfast Walk". The fresh morning air soon revived those who were not used to being awake so early and we all set off at 8 am in high spirits --- and looking forward to a good breakfast at the end!! The walk was around three and a half miles long and led by Peter Astill. Luckily the rain held off and, apart from the odd muddy patch, it was a lovely walk with great views.

Most walkers tucked into a well-deserved "Full English" at the end, although there was the option of a "Continental" which was enjoyed by the others.

Having topped up their energy supplies with bacon, eggs, sausages etc. a hardy thirteen of the forty six then did another 3 mile walk --- again led by Peter.

Thanks to Valerie Astill for organising the event, to Peter for leading the walks --- and to the cooks at the Garden Centre for cooking our breakfasts!!

The next social event will be the "Spring Walk, Lunch and Quiz" on Saturday 29th April.

Brian Hughes



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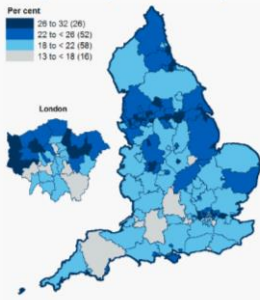
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Wokingham Top on Activity Levels

Adult physical activity

Inactivity levels by Local Authority¹



The Local Authorities with the highest inactivity levels were South Tyneside, Leicester, Barking & Dagenham and Rochdale (all 31%).

The Local Authorities with the lowest inactivity levels were Wokingham (13%) and Brighton and Hove (14%).

1) Only upper tier LAs are shown. LA data includes gardening activity within the definition of physical activity. For more information: Sport England, Active Lives Survey 2015/16

In a recent NHS research study on Obesity, Physical Activity & Diet, Wokingham as a borough came out on top with the lowest percentage of inactive people with 13% of the recorded population inactive. We are incredibly proud of this figure and the borough of Wokingham has an abundance of well-maintained parks and open spaces for walkers to enjoy. We are also fortunate to have wonderful opportunities for residents of all ages to enjoy being active. The Wokingham Borough Health Walks has over 1000 registered walkers and with many walkers enjoying more than one walk a week, we are hopeful that more and more people are feeling the benefits of regular exercise.

Wokingham Walk

The Wokingham Walk is a Charity walk with 3 routes 5, 10 and 15 miles starting in Wokingham Town Centre on Sunday 7th May 2017. Elms Field, Elms Road, Wokingham RG40 2LD.

All profits from the event will go to The Wokingham Borough Mayor Charity Appeal. The current Mayor Cllr Bob Pitts has chosen Wokingham, Bracknell & Districts Mencap as his charity of the year

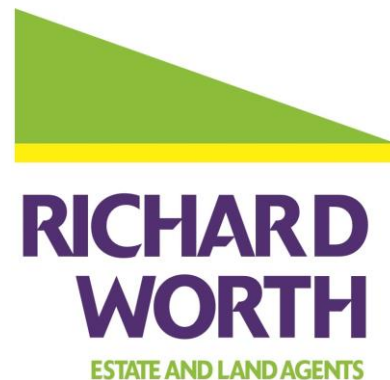
The event will start in Elms Field, Elms Road Wokingham and will have a rolling start time from 9am until 11am.

The finish will be manned until 6pm and you will receive a goodie bag for successfully completing the walk.

For more information, visit www.wokinghamwalk.co.uk/



Event Sponsor



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Walk Leaders Desperately Required

The Wokingham Walk for Health programme relies heavily on the goodwill and service from a number of committed volunteers. Without their commitment, many of the walks would not take place or they would need to be scaled down. Whether you are an experienced walker or new to the programme, we are always on the lookout for new volunteer walk leaders and back markers.

You will receive full in-house training and be rewarded with a first aid qualification. (To be completed after the one day training). The programme has an experienced walk coordinator who designs the rota for the walks and you will be fully supported by Wokingham Borough Council Walking for Health coordinator. Walk leaders (and back markers) receive a uniform and the satisfaction of contributing to the success of the programme.

The next walk leader training course takes place on **Friday 19th May at Cantley Park, Wokingham.**



For more details contact Glenn at Healthwalks@wokingham.gov.uk or contact 0118 974 3729

Social Events 2017

HEALTH WALKS PROGRAMME OF SOCIAL EVENTS FOR 2017		
EVENT	DATE AND TIME	VENUE
Spring walk, quiz and buffet lunch	Saturday 29 th April at 10 am	Barkham Village Hall
Summer walk and hog roast	Saturday 29 th July at 6 pm	Barkham Village Hall
Autumn Barn Dance with fish and chips supper	Saturday 14 th October at 7 pm	Hurst Village Hall
Christmas dinner and dance	Thursday 7 th December at 7 pm	Sonning Golf Club

Booking Forms available from Walk Leaders or visit www.healthwalks.org.uk



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Thank You Roger



Earlier this year, Roger Nuttall retired from leading the monthly Sunday long walks. Roger, with his wife Paula, began the programme of long walks some twenty years ago and for many years they led the walk every month. The walks have been very successful attracting more and more people to them over the years. We have had some super rambles and walked many hundreds of miles in the Chilterns, along The Ridgeway and along The Thames Path. Even though he is not leading them anymore, Roger is still coming on the walks and intends to 'Carry on Walking'.

On his last walk as leader, the walkers presented Roger with a thank you card and some garden vouchers. Roger has used the garden tokens to get a collection of large white pots and some stone geese (as Roger says less noisy than the feathered ones). Roger is opening his garden on Sunday 11th June in aid of Thames Valley Air Ambulance Charity.



Picture of Roger with his card taken by Hilary Smee

Article by Paul King



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