

walk this way

Walkers Autumn 2018 Newsletter Issue



Wokingham Health Walks

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

2018 was the joint hottest summer on record for the UK as a whole, and the hottest ever for England, the Met Office announced.

It said highs for summer 2018 were tied with those of 1976, 2003 and 2006 for being the highest since records began in 1910. England's average temperatures narrowly beat those seen in 1976, they added. The heatwave saw soaring temperatures across much of the UK throughout June and July. * Source BBC News

It seems like only a short while ago we were experiencing one of the hottest summers for a long time. Remember the bright, warm summer mornings as you waited with anticipation for the walk to begin. The sights, sounds and smells of the summer are making way for the cooler, crisp autumn mornings. However, whatever the season, it is always a great time to get out and walk. One thing that does not change with the weather is the social element of the walks. We are lucky that the Wokingham Health walks have a dedicated *social committee* who do a great job organising social events for leaders and walkers to attend. Many walks also socialise afterwards and create a vibrant spirit of companionship and belonging. In this edition, we look back on how the committee formed and some interesting stories of how it was created along with how walking has prevented people becoming socially isolated.

Our 'Spotlight On' guest met a very young Roy Orbison in her youth and we have evidence to prove it. We welcome Sue Barton to the autumn edition and we also have a *lovely poem from Jean Hill* on how she started getting involved in walking, 20 years ago.

Walking is a great way to meet new people and we hope our 'newbies' are settled into the walking fraternity. For all walkers, *motivation is a key factor and we include some top tips* to help you stay motivated and gain from your walks. We must also be vigilant during the seasons and we have a story highlighting the need to remain aware of *tick bites* even as we enter the autumn/winter months.

We hope you enjoy this edition and we finish off the year with our Christmas newsletter in late December.

Happy Walking

Glenn



Spotlight on.....Sue Barton Walk Coordinator & Leader

I retired from my job as a Personal Assistant to the Senior Nurse, Child Health in the NHS who was responsible for Child Health in West of Berkshire from Wokingham to Newbury. I was based in Craven Road, Reading. I was also a fire warden for my section and during fire training enjoyed trying out the various methods of fire extinguishers. The Chief Fire trainer had set a small fire in a tin tray and in my enthusiasm to show I could put the fire out I blew it out the pan and nearly started a bonfire of my own! Having worked inside all of my working life I was looking for something to do out in the fresh air. I joined the Tuesday morning health walk and found I liked walking in a group and getting to know everyone.

I joined the Sunday morning walk at Dinton Pastures and in 2009 was invited to become a walk leader. You will find me there most Sundays, I do enjoy taking the group round and even if I am not leading it is nice to walk with everyone. We have recently had some new walkers join the group; I am looking forward to seeing them come on a regular basis.

Outside of the health walks I have been a member for about 35 years of FL Exercise (Fitness League Exercise, old name 'Women's League of Health & Beauty') and yes, it is still going! I go to fitness classes in St Pauls Church Hall in Wokingham and also Winkfield Row. I have recently joined a Barre Class to help strengthen and condition and yes I can get my leg up on to the bar! I ride my bike regularly when the weather allows.

As some of you know my husband of 50 years is a Harley Davidson nut and I would ride pillion in our younger days. He had a Harley built by Pete Gray in Worthing. Doug was asked to take his new bike to Worthing to show Roy Orbison who was doing a show over here and was having a vintage Talbot car built specially for him. The car appeared on the cover of one of his long playing record sleeves. We set off early on a freezing cold morning to meet Roy but had to wait around until he woke up at lunchtime!



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
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Social News

In the depth of winter we may not always remember the summer heat-wave, but seventy-seven of us will think back with undiluted pleasure to the 2018 Health Walkers Hog Roast held on Saturday, 30th June. It was a perfect evening.

Preceded by two shady walks of either just under 4 miles or just under 2 miles, through Barkham woodlands and around California Lake, walkers then relaxed with a cooling drink and the aroma of the roasting hog. The longer walks were led by Margaret Argent and David Wilmott with back-marking by Keith Jennings-Frisby and Renata Proctor. The shorter walk was led by Brian Hughes. The roast hog was supplied by The Arborfield Hog Roast and Bouncy Castle Company – the first time they have provided this service for us. They proved to be an excellent choice of caterer and their professionalism was much appreciated. Very tender and generous portions of pork and a superb salad were consumed under the leafy trees of Barkham Village Hall.

Our thanks to Valerie Astill, Joan Hughes and Jean Hill for their hard work in producing such an excellent buffet to accompany the Hog Roast; to Peggy-Sue Giles for organising the raffle (£175 being raised for the local branch of the Multiple Sclerosis Society) and to the Walk Leaders and Back Markers. But the biggest 'thank you' must go to all the walkers who joined us and made the event such a success. With so many positive feed-back comments it turns organising our social events into a rewarding pleasure.

The next Social Event will be the annual Dinner Dance at the Sonning Golf Club. This, our most popular event of the year, will be on Wednesday 12th December starting at 7pm. Booking forms should be available early in November. These will be sent to Walk Leaders to distribute and will also be on the website www.healthwalks.org.uk



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Social Event 2018

HEALTH WALKS PROGRAMME OF SOCIAL EVENTS FOR 2018		
EVENT	DATE AND TIME	VENUE
Christmas dinner and dance	Wednesday 12 th December 7:00 pm	Sonning Golf Club

Health Walks Social Events Committee --- a potted history

The Social Events Committee was first formed in the year 2000. As the new millennium got going Brian Martin became the committee's first chairman; Audrey Lear was the first secretary and Jo Brown was the first treasurer.

The first event was a meal at the Chinese restaurant in Lower Earley --- closely followed by the first "breakfast walk" which was at Dinton Pastures. There was no booking system and people were simply invited to turn up. The inevitable result followed ---- the café could not cope with the number of breakfasts and a valuable lesson was learnt!! The breakfast walk was moved to the Henry Street Garden Centre near Arborfield for the following year—and has been held there ever since.

However, other events were held at Dinton Pastures, notably barbecues at which walkers did the cooking while the committee prepared salads and desserts. Christmas dinners were at the Crescent Centre in Lower Earley --- once again with the committee doing the catering!

Since those early days the Social Events Committee has gone from strength to strength and now comprises of 10 keen walkers, working together as a team to run 5 big events each year. Brian Hughes is now the chairman, Jean Hill is the secretary and Valerie Astill is the treasurer. Committee meetings are always well-attended---- no doubt helped by the home baked cakes provided by Valerie!

Unlike the early days we now have a good booking system and attract between 50 and 100 walkers to each event. Feedback from those attending is very positive and we have tried several new events in response to suggestions. The village hall at Barkham is our venue for 3 of the 5 events each year, with Sonning Golf Club proving to be an excellent and popular venue for our annual dinner dance. This is a far cry from the self-catering dinners that used to be held each Christmas at the Crescent Centre and the walkers look very impressive (and very different!) in their posh frocks and dinner jackets!!

The social benefits of Health Walking should never be underestimated and we hope to continue with our social events programme for many more years.



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Top Tips to Stay Motivated

If you've started walking then you've already taken your first steps to a healthier, happier you. But we know that sometimes it can still be a challenge to keep going once you've started. Here are some top tips to help you stay on track and make walking part of your everyday life.

Set Goals

Setting yourself personal goals can really help to keep you focused and keep you walking. Set SMART goals. Specific-Measurable-Achievable-Realistic-Timed. For example:
"I will attend at least three Walking for Health walks per month for the next four months."

Take on a challenge

Signing up for a walking challenge is another way to give you a goal to aim for. For example, you could sign up to do a walking event for Macmillan, or another favourite charity. Having an event to aim for and people sponsoring you will give you the encouragement you need to get training by walking more day to day.

Groups are great

Walking with a friend or a group is a great way to keep motivated – you can help and encourage each other to keep going. What's more, with friends to meet, you'll get your walking done before you know it. Our walkers often say that they're so busy chatting to one another that they don't even notice how much ground they've covered!

Use technology

It can be really satisfying to see the distance you've walked, the steps you've taken, or the calories you've burnt mounting up. If you have a smartphone, there are lots of great apps around to help you track how far you've walked and provide lots of other stats. Or you could use a pedometer or step counter to keep track of how many steps you're doing.

Find new routes

It's great to get out and discover new places. You can find new routes by joining different Walking for Health walks around you. We have 17 walks to choose from!!!



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Social Prescribing. What is it?

*Social prescribing is a means of enabling GPs and other frontline healthcare professionals to refer people to 'services' in their community instead of offering only medicalised solutions. *NHS England*

Wokingham Borough Council Sports & Leisure team are incredibly keen to support the initiatives behind social prescribing. Our walks, along with several other projects, help people who are at risk of isolation and loneliness to join physical activity programmes to help improve general health along with increasing social interaction and networks.

We are keen to hear from walkers and walk leaders who would like to champion the health walks and learn how to encourage people who are isolated and lonely to join up with our walks and become more active.

Our mentoring programme encourages volunteers to become 'Senior Peer Mentors' who will help others to overcome some of the barriers to physical activity that older people face. Volunteers help support people to find appropriate activities. They do not run classes or give medical advice. A workshop will be delivered by Glenn from Wokingham Borough Council in early 2019 and this course will give people the skills and knowledge to help peers become more active along with supporting the government's desire to reduce loneliness and isolation in older people.

What do 'Senior Peer Mentors' do?

- help point people in the right direction
- help by providing appropriate information
- are someone that an older participant can talk to
- are someone who will understand things from "their point of view"
- are someone who provides positive health promotion
- are a positive role model.

Requirements

Volunteers will be aged 50+ and they will need to be friendly and supportive and able to work individually or as part of a team. Good communication skills and a willingness to attend training to develop skills and knowledge are also required. Volunteers should also be willing to demonstrate their own commitment towards regular physical activity.

To find out more

Please contact Glenn at Healthwalks@wokingham.gov.uk to find out more information about peer mentoring and how to get involved.



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Beware of the ticks!!!

One of our walkers has shared her personal experience of a recent tick bite and we hope that it raises awareness for walkers as you go out and enjoy the great outdoors.

“I have got a tick bite and had no idea-apparently they can be very small. I developed what seemed like ringworm and 2 months later when it has spread I have found out that it is Lyme disease from a tick bite.

I am attaching a couple of pictures above and am happy for you to circulate or use these to show walkers/leaders what it looks like so they can recognise it as my GP did not. The rash creeps outwards leaving a bull’s eye pattern with a red, raised rim.”



Ticks do not die off during the colder months and often lay dormant within covered leaves and can still find a way to bite.

According to Stopthetick.co.uk, follow these steps to protect yourself this autumn.

These prevention tips will help you avoid being bitten:

- When outdoors, cover yourself as much as possible to reduce exposed skin. Wear long shirts and pants, and tuck your pant legs into your socks.
- While outdoors and after returning inside, check yourself and children regularly and thoroughly for ticks. Regularly inspect pets for ticks, too.
- When using trails or paths, stay in the centre of them. Avoid the tall grassy sides.
- Wear light-coloured clothing: this makes it easier to see ticks crawling on you/your clothing.
- Apply an appropriate repellent on exposed skin. Look for a specific reference to ticks on the label. Always read and follow label instructions carefully before use. There are special tick repellents for children.
- Remove any found ticks as quickly as possible. Bathing soon after coming indoors is a good way to find ticks on adults or children.

walk this way



'Twenty Years Ago'

I'd got this yearning passion
To be healthy, fit and slim
Should I go out and buy the Lycra?
Should I join the local gym?

Trotting on a treadmill
Going nowhere on a bike
While my boots were there pulsating
And just waiting for a hike

What were the alternatives?
I could watch the day-time telly
With my feet up eating junk food
Growing flab around my belly

Although there is no guarantee
Walking plays a part
For making me more mobile
Helping keep a healthy heart

So with retirement looming
And planning what to do
With life-style evaluation
I carefully thought it through

Wokingham Health Walkers
Was the Group to fit the bill
I joined them twenty years ago
And walk daily with them still

By Jean Hill
(The Walking Poet)

Thanks

As the year draws to a conclusion, I would like to take this opportunity to thank a host of wonderful people who help make the health walks programmes such a joy to be involved with.

Many thanks to our walk coordinators Keith Shepherd, Sue Barton, Richard Wombwell, David Bentley, Maureen Boyington, Elaine Hayes, Peter Astill for their help and support along with Brian Wooldridge who coordinates the leaders' rota and is a great supporter of the programme.

Thanks to all our walk leaders who go out in all sorts of weather to lead and back mark the walks and make sure all our walkers return back to base camp safely.

Thanks must go to our social committee and the excellent work they do in organising and preparing each of the popular social events and thank you to Brian Hughes and Jean Hill for their content and photos.

Thank you to our fantastic administrative volunteer Janet Stephens for all her hard work and efforts.

Finally, thank you to all our walkers who continue to support the Walking for Health programme in Wokingham.



Next Edition

A special festive edition of this newsletter will be released in mid-December so please feel free to submit any articles, stories and photos to Healthwalks@wokingham.gov.uk by Wednesday 12th December 2018.