

## Health Walk Leaders Quarterly Update

### December 2024



**Better  
Health** North  
Somerset

Wow here we are again at the end of another year and once again the health walks programme has gone from strength to strength during 2024.

A big thank you to all of you for everything you have done for the scheme during 2024, it always amazes us the weekly commitment you all give. This was definitely demonstrated on 23<sup>rd</sup> September, a particularly wet Monday when lots of you went above and beyond and still went out to meet those walkers who fancied an exceedingly wet walk and some did!

We hope you enjoy your Christmas lunches and the break over Christmas and the new year.



Monthly Congar's Café Health Walk that started in September.



Churchill and Cheddar Health Walk that started in February.



Weston 30-minute walk that started in January.



Clevedon in May



Flax Bourton that sadly stopped in July.



Kerry, now a leader, who works for North Somerset People First – supporting people with learning disabilities to have a voice.



Long Ashton on a wet August morning



A beautiful February morning walking with the Nailsea group led by Colin and Roy.

An away day arranged by Portishead group in October



A beautiful evening at Uphill in July with the Wednesday evening group and with two new leaders this year Julie and Nicola



Beautiful skies at Winscombe (left) and autumnal walking with the Weston Group (right)





Yatton group enjoying Christmas get together this week

### **Update on Health Walk Groups/Leaders**

- Nicola has settled in well as a regular leader in Weston with Julie also helping with the summer evening walks, I'm sure the other leaders are grateful for the support given from both of them. Sue and Mike have committed almost a year of leading the 30-minute walk which has proved valuable to walkers who struggle with the hour walk.
  - Sadly, Flax Bourton Walk has ended partly due to not being able to identify another volunteer to support Claire. Those who walked regularly are still meeting on an informal basis.
  - We have two new leaders that attended the training in October that are now actively leading - Eileen from Congresbury and Nigel from Portishead.
  - Attendance figures have been impressive once again as we move from autumn into winter including 80 walkers attending at Portishead.
  - Special thanks to the leaders who have gone along to Congar's Café and supported Eileen with the first few walks there.
  - A particular mention to the Clevedon group who are currently putting on two walks a week and two monthly walks one which is a little brisker than their other walks.
  - Thoughts are with Jenny, a leader from Clevedon who is particularly unwell at the moment.
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Our next **Health Walk Leader training** for new leaders is on **Monday 3 February 2025** at Castlewood from 10am-1pm.



**Health Walk  
Volunteer Training**

**Monday 3 February  
10am – 1pm  
Castlewood, Clevedon**

Volunteer with your local health walk group to lead or assist with walks, help develop new walking routes or provide admin support at walks.

Full training and support is provided.

To book your place, or for more information please call: 01275 882 731 or email: [GetActive@n-somerset.gov.uk](mailto:GetActive@n-somerset.gov.uk)

 [BetterHealthNS](#)  [BetterHealth\\_NS](#)

<https://www.betterhealthns.co.uk/get-active/walking/>

  

Please do encourage anyone who is currently walking with you who might be interested AND who would make an ideal walk leader!

An overview of the training:

- Outline the aim of the Health Walks Scheme in North Somerset.
- Highlight the positive impact exercise can have on health in the widest sense.
- Support those who most need to become active to attend walks on a regular basis.
- Understand the role of a walk leader from completing the paperwork required to making sure safety and enjoyment is a priority on all walks.
- Be clear about the practicalities of running a safe and enjoyable health walk.

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### Other Walking News:

#### **Qualitative Evaluation of North Somerset Health Walking Scheme**

During January, February and March we are planning to carry out some more in-depth evaluation as to why individuals attend our health walks.

Kira will be attending every walking group with the view of asking as many of the walkers as possible to complete the questionnaire. Some of the questions are the same as the anonymous Health Survey that we ask all walkers to complete although we do know that only 137 out of 886 walkers (total number of individual walkers this year) have completed this survey. The evaluation will have an increased focus on individual experiences when attending a health walk.

We know it will really demonstrate the positive effect you are making regarding participants health and wellbeing, we hope you will be willing to support us get as many responses as possible.

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Some health walk visits were made over the last few weeks to catch up with leaders and hear from walkers as to how important your walking groups are for their health and wellbeing.

On 30 September three walkers from the Weston group were happy to be recorded and tell the camera how important the health walks were for them, especially during the winter. This was submitted to the Integrated Care Board and we are hoping to see it being used in the new year.

[Stay active this winter - BNSSG Healthier Together](#)

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## **National Walking Month 2025**

We have been successful in applying for some external funding from Bristol Airport to invest time and resources into National Walking Month during May 2025.

We will start planning more in the new year so once again if you are interested in being part of this work, please get in touch with Catherine.

[catherine.devonshire@n-somerset.gov.uk](mailto:catherine.devonshire@n-somerset.gov.uk)



## **A new walking group in Winscombe:**

**HEY, MUM!**  
**YOU DON'T HAVE TO WALK ALONE**  
**JOIN THE STRAWBERRY LINE**  
**STROLLERS**

**A walking group for mothers on maternity leave and beyond!**

**We organise free walks every Monday from Winscombe along The Strawberry Line. These are pram-friendly paced and a fantastic opportunity to get some fresh air and meet local mums.**

**Everything is organised via WhatsApp so come and join us via the link in the caption. We encourage members to use the group to look for walking buddies at different times of the week.**

The White Flamingo

Link to join the WhatsApp community

<https://chat.whatsapp.com/D0fD2OZx3bE1hGSnUOn2hs>

## National News:

All we need is ten minutes!

[A 10 minute walk a day could add a year to your life – study finds | News | University of Leicester](#)

If you have any tips to share across the walking groups that can be submitted in the next newsletter then please get in touch.

## Postal address:

We have now officially moved to the Town Hall, so please address any letters to us at:

Physical Activity Team, 1 West Post and Print, Town Hall, Walliscote Grove Road  
Weston-super-Mare. BS23 1UJ

And just a reminder that if you would like us to send you some stamps to help cover any postage costs, please let us know.

Our website where all the walking programmes are accessible to the public:

<https://www.betterhealthns.co.uk/information/healthwalks/>

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Finally, here is quote from Hippocrates that summarises what walking can do for anyone's mental health:

***'If you are in a bad mood, go for a walk.  
If you are still in a bad mood, go for another walk.'***

We wish you all a Merry Christmas and Happy New Year!

Kira, Lucy, Catherine and Rebecca.



