

Health Walk Leaders Update

May 2025



As we move into the warmer months, we are faced with the potential challenge of making sure walkers do not suffer whilst walking in the heat. I don't really need to tell you when it is exceptionally warm to consider shortening your walks, changing the route to get some shade and when a heat wave is forecast to consider cancelling your walk.

It has been lovely to visit you on your walks more often whilst undertaking our evaluation (more about this below) and once again visually see how walkers appreciate what you do on a weekly basis. Thank you!

North Somerset WalkFest

Take part in National Walking Month, for the 5th year running, as part of North Somerset WalkFest. The festival is a celebration of all things walking with most walking activities being offered for free.



Walking is a great way to improve both physical and mental health, and there are lots of opportunities to enjoy walking in North Somerset. Walking is a simple, free way of being more active and is ideal for people of all ages and fitness levels. As well as the health benefits, walking can be a great way to explore your local area, finding out what's on your doorstep – whether that's local nature and environment or shops and businesses.

For more information, visit [our website](#).

Walk Leader Training



Our next training for anyone who is interested in becoming a health walk leader is on Wednesday the 21st of May at Castlewood and will run from 10 till 1 pm.

If you know of anybody who is interested and who would make a great leader, please pass on our details so they can make contact.

Thank you. Kira.thorpe@n-somerset.gov.uk
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ICE/Next of Kin


We wish to tighten up on making sure every walker is given the opportunity to share their

Your Name: _____

Emergency Contact Name: _____

Emergency Contact Telephone Number: _____

Medical Conditions and/or medication needs: _____

The logo for Health Walks features three stylized human figures in blue, green, and yellow, walking in a line. Below the figures, the text "Health Walks" is written in a blue, sans-serif font.

next of kin with walk leaders. Ideally it would make sense for one leader to take on this responsibility so please can each group discuss if this is practical and if so, who would be happy to take on this task.

There are three options;
the walker holds an In
Case of Emergency

(ICE) card or a list is compiled by a leader using the form on the right.

The third option is to ask walkers if they have their next of kin on their emergency mode on their mobile phone which does seem the most straightforward option!

It would be appreciated when you decide which option(s) you would like to adopt to let me know, thank you.

[illegible]

Evaluation Report

Thank you for the support you have given me with this, we have had an overwhelming positive response to walkers completing the evaluation (170 completions)! This will now enable us to document amongst other things the many reasons why individuals come to a health walk. We will have collated the data by the end of May with the main findings and then a full report will be written over the summer. To give you a taste of some feedback I have listed some below:

- Good & friendly walk leaders and lovely people that walk, all round good!
- It is a brilliant scheme - the walk leaders are great at giving their time.
- It encourages those less fit people to come out and walk & talk.
- Meeting others and learning part of the town, gets me out ad helps my health.

Refresher session for Walk Leaders

It was concluded when walk leaders came together last August to have refresher sessions more regularly, so I would like to invite leaders who ideally did not come along last year to get together to discuss various topics. We have some provisional dates; the 8th or the 15th of July in the afternoon so if you did not attend last August, it would be great to hear from you as to which date best suits you.



Some stats for you

We have just submitted these figures to our work achievements in our work plan from last year (April 2024-March 2025):

- Three Volunteer Health Walk Leader training sessions delivered, fifteen trained.
- Currently 92 active leaders, with a quarter of them having been leaders for ten years+
- First Aid training delivered to eight health walk leaders in June 2024
- Walking stats – average of 222 walkers a week, across nine groups. Ninety volunteers leading at least once a week.

Update on Health Walk Groups/Leaders

- The monthly walk from Congar's Café will sadly be stopping due to the café closing. Ian and Sonya who manage the café has worked tirelessly over the years to embed community initiatives into their business, it will be a sad loss to the village.



- Evening walks have started in Weston (Wednesdays) and Clevedon (Mthly on Mondays).
- Diane Heath a walk leader from Clevedon stopped leading in February. Diane volunteered for over ten years and played an integral part when the group first began bringing with her lots of leader experience having led walks with the Ramblers.
- Susan Neville has stepped down from supporting the 30-minute walk in Weston due to granddaughter care duties but other leaders have stepped in which is great.
- Our thoughts are with Jenny Fielding a leader in Clevedon who is undergoing cancer treatment.
- Jean Webb from Nailsea has taken time out as 'chief administrator' for the group due to having hip surgery. Good luck Jean and hope to see you back soon.

- We have a few new leaders from our training in February – Richard now leading in Clevedon, Nigel leading in Portishead and Emma and Helen leading for People First. We do have individuals who attend our training and then go on to not lead which is a shame.

Finally, a few words from one of our walk leaders in Clevedon who as a retired GP sees the real value of health walks in our community.

"I have been a GP in North Somerset for many years and have witnessed first hand the benefits of exercise on both mental and physical wellbeing. We all know we should be exercising but it is sometimes hard to get started.

The health walks are a fantastic way of meeting this goal. The walks are free, open to all levels of fitness and no special equipment is needed other than a comfortable pair of shoes. It has been inspiring to see the improvement in fitness in just a few weeks for those coming along.

Since becoming a walk leader (November 2022), I have also been struck by how much the health walks have been a source of friendship. It can be daunting to move to a new town, be on your own or retire from work and the walks provide an excellent way of chatting to others and finding out about things happening locally. We are really lucky to have so many health walks established across North Somerset and I recommend them to everyone."

If you have any contributions for the next update in August/Sept please get in touch as well as any ideas of how we can celebrate **20 YEARS** of Health Walks next year!

Thank you once again for making Health Walks in North Somerset such a success.

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