

'Step Out Sheffield'

Health Walks accredited by Ramblers: Walking for Health

Information sheet for walkers

Welcome to the Sheffield health walk scheme. We hope you enjoy your walk and will continue to walk with us in the future.

The Sheffield scheme is one of 400 'Ramblers: Walking for Health' schemes across the country. The idea for health walks began in 1998 with an Oxfordshire GP. He had a wonderful green, open-space near to his surgery and thought this would be a great place for his patients to exercise regularly for up to an hour at a time. He and a couple of staff promoted the walks from the surgery and met each week to deliver them. The word spread, the concept of 'health walks' took hold and soon health walks popped up all over the country. Sheffield started their walks in April 1999 with just one walk a week. Now we have 29 weekly walks across the city.

Some information you will need to know:

- Our walks are free and open to everyone
- Most medical conditions benefit from a health walk
- As well as exercising on a health walk you socialise with like-minded people in your local area
- There are trained leaders on all walks. ALL the leaders are volunteers!
- All walks are risk assessed and safe for all
- Health walks differ from rambles as they are limited to one hour, meant for people with a medical condition to manage, and are delivered at a pace that is comfortable for the walkers. The pace is **not** set by the walk leader but by the walkers themselves!

Step Out Sheffield health walks are exclusively led by volunteers. Please bear this in mind. These volunteers completed a training course and regularly give up their time to help deliver your walk. Please treat them with **respect**. Abusive, disruptive and inappropriate behaviour will not be tolerated. Our volunteer walk leaders do a fantastic job and without them there wouldn't be a walk in your area.

When you first come along on a walk you will be asked to complete a Ramblers: Walking for Health registration form. This is a short, one-sided form collecting just your contact details and consent (or not) for Ramblers and for Step Out Sheffield to keep in touch.

Personal information disclosed on your registration form is securely kept on the national database operated by Ramblers:Walking for Health. Step Out Sheffield also holds your contact details. Again, this information is secure.

If your contact details change (because you change your phone, email address or move house) please inform your walk leaders so they can arrange for your details to be updated.

If at any time you feel unwell on a walk, please make it known to a volunteer walk leader and they will look after you.

Start the walks at **your** pace, not that of the walker immediately in front of you, and progress at a pace you are comfortable with! Our walks are meant to be enjoyed, not endured, so do things at a pace that's suitable for you. If you can walk briskly (as if late for a bus) the benefits are tremendous, but *any* walking is better than none. We want you to enjoy the company and Sheffield's lovely green spaces.

Everyone knows their own capabilities so listen to your own body. Please don't expect volunteer leaders to make decisions for you! Look after yourself. If the weather is extreme, e.g., very hot, very cold, icy, windy or snowy, use your common sense and only walk if you feel it is safe for you to do so. Don't expect the leaders to carry water, sun-screen, waterproofs, hats etc. for you and please wear sensible clothing and footwear. We understand not everyone is comfortable in walking-boots but be aware that on some walks you may encounter water, mud and uneven surfaces, so come prepared, and bring along your medication (e.g., inhalers) if required.

Come along and try a walk... We have some great parks, woodlands and green spaces in Sheffield. We are, after-all, the greenest city in Europe! Don't walk on your own, come and feel safe with like-minded people. New friends are waiting to be made and new locations are waiting to be discovered...!

If you have any further questions, please phone our helpline: **07505639524**
For lots more information about all our walks why not visit our website:

www.StepOutSheffield.org

- We are unable to provide one to one support. Under 16's and vulnerable adults must be accompanied at all times.
- Please read our social media policy before taking photographs on our walks.