

## Walking Workshop 1<sup>st</sup> February 2021

Over 70 people signed up for our first Active Calderdale Walking Workshop. What a response!

Walking, plodding, strolling, stomping or in some cases rolling. Whatever you do and prefer to call it, with your help we want to make it easier for everyone in Calderdale to take that first step out of their doorway.

We all know being physically active is good for us, but 22% of Calderdale residents are falling into the inactive category. This is because conditions that enable people to be active are more challenging for key groups. With your help we want to make it easier.

### Why Walk?

We asked why you love to walk. Helping improve or maintain mental health came through strongly, as did connecting with others, be it friends, family or just a welcome hello from a stranger. Being outside in nature was another favourite. It all helps during this period of uncertainty.



### The Aim

Walking has the highest potential of being built into daily life. Almost everyone can do it, anywhere and at any time. Through the workshop we wanted to start conversations and create mini workshops to help us;

- Develop a Walking Vision for Calderdale
- Gathering Insight – what are the best ways to support people to take a stroll?

Understand what's needed to help people walk and what's already going on;

- Walking groups / Groups who walk

- Mapped walking routes

## COVID

During COVID, walking has become one of the most secure ways to get out and be active, as well as travel short journeys. Responses highlighted many other benefits of walking during the pandemic.



## Vision

What do we want walking in Calderdale to look like? We asked you to share your thoughts – start a conversation. Ideas included;

- The wording of any vision must be accessible to everyone.
- Walking should be a way of combatting loneliness and social isolation, a way to bring people together.
- Walking should include walking meetings/phone calls not just a means of getting from A to B.
- Walking should be a way of promoting shared and respectful use of green and open spaces.
- Walking needs safe, easy and attractive environments.

## Insight

Walking is the most accessible form of physical activity so we asked how together we can support more people to step out. Ideas included;

- Make it fun - Bear/treasure hunts, geocaching, themed walks - local history, nature, music etc.
- Make it easy – link in to bus routes/loo stops.
- Make it accessible - what is the minimum kit needed?  
- visual walking maps for those learning English.
- Make it sociable – walking buddies / friendly groups and events.

- Talk the Walk - sharing your walking story helps others see someone like them getting out and about.

### Walking Together - Groups

Getting started can be the hardest part. We asked what would encourage non walker to join a group?

Responses suggested walking with others should;

- Be social – have a chat/take a sandwich/get a cuppa.
- Include a beginners group
- Be welcoming, friendly and have a feeling of peer support regardless of experience and ability.
- Be flexible; include walking rugby, football and netball or walking meetings.

More traditional walking groups tend to be easier to find but groups who walk can be more difficult. Thanks to the workshop, we now have more details of groups who walk to follow up on.

Do group details need to be collated and shared in a standardised way? What's the best way to do this?

### Routes

There are a wealth of mapped routes in Calderdale that already exist but tend to cater for longer countryside walks. It was great to hear views on what is needed to make strolling more attractive and find out about some of the shorter more accessible routes that have been developed to help people find their feet.

Suggestions of what would help included;

- Collated up to date routes, including difficulty and length with clear instructions. Preferably pictures and be downloadable.
- Short walks attached to bus routes – similar to Upper Valley [Bus walks project](#)
- Themed walks or activities that happen to involve walking eg, lunchtime walks, history walks or Children's Centres events.
- Urban and countryside walks

What is the best way to collate and share routes? What type of information is needed to encourage someone to try a route?

### This is just the start of the conversation...

Join us in developing these areas further. To find out more, or be part of our working groups - email [ActiveCalderdale@calderdale.gov.uk](mailto:ActiveCalderdale@calderdale.gov.uk) and include the workshop heading/s you'd like to be involved in.

- **Vision** - Help us create a walking vision for Calderdale
- **Insight** - Best ways to support people to take a stroll.
- **Groups** – what do you need to know about groups? How can we collate and share this?
- **Routes** – how do we collate and share short and easy leisure or active travel routes?