

WALKING FOR ALL

Update Report 2021



A PARTNERSHIP APPROACH TO LED-WALKING IN NORTHERN IRELAND

In 2019, Sport NI and the PHA formed a partnership with a view to creating a single coordinated led-walking programme within Northern Ireland. The programme is called Walking For All.

The partnership worked closely with key stakeholders including Outdoor Recreation Northern Ireland, local councils and the health trusts. A Working Group was set up with representatives from each of the stakeholders to progress the project so it was ready to roll out once funding was secured.

Outdoor Recreation NI were tasked with leading on key elements on the project on behalf of the Working Group.

This update report shares the progress to date on the Walking For All project as well as setting out the project background and next steps:

- » The rationale for choosing walking and more specifically a 'led-walking' programme as a focus for government
- » The outputs of the partnership project
- » Predicted outcomes of Walking For All
- » Funding required going forward

Why Led-Walking?

Recreational walking is the number one activity for people in Northern Ireland to participate in, with nearly half of all adults walking for physical recreation.

The Chief Medical Officer guidelines recommends walking as a suitable activity for meeting the minimum requirements of physical activity.

Research has shown that people are more likely to continue with an activity if they join a group which is why led-walking is the most sustainable activity to increase physical activity levels.

Walking can make a major contribution to physical and mental health, as well as delivering wider social benefits such as overcoming isolation and increasing community cohesion.

The benefits of walking are clearly evidenced and align with many outcomes in the new 'Programme for Government, New Decade, New Approach. Walking can also contribute to delivering Governments new Green Growth Strategy. Alongside The Department of Health's Making Life Better strategy.



WHAT DID THE PARTNERSHIP ACHIEVE IN 2019/20 ?

The partnership met eight times. A work programme was created and achieved the following results:-

Area	Outcome
Greenbook Economic Appraisal	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> » All stakeholders and organisations consulted with and financial information collated. » Scheme scope and structure recommended » Final report complete
Research	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> » Extensive research undertaken on best practice walking schemes in Northern Ireland and Great Britain » Study trip to Paths for All in Glasgow delivered for 13 people from a range of organisations including CLOA, Sport NI, and Public Health Agency
Information Sharing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> » Stakeholder meeting held with 34 people attending from a wide range of organisations » The Power of Walking Conference held on the 14th November 2019 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 121 attendees from a wide range of government departments, councils, health trusts, Public Health Agency plus voluntary and community organisations • Opening address from Chief Medical Officer Michael Mc Bride and Chair of Sport NI, George Lucas
Brand	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> » 'Walking For All' name agreed » Brand and logo designed
Scheme Resources	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> » Drafts prepared for Walking For All training materials



HOW WILL WALKING FOR ALL WORK ?

The Scope and Structure of Walking For All

The Greenbook Economic Appraisal clearly details how Walking For All should work and how it should be structured.

The scheme aims to increase the local communities' awareness of, and access to, short, free, friendly, led-walks resulting in increased health and wellbeing.

Walks are usually led by a trained volunteer or community leader. The walks take place in local green spaces such as parks and forests. Local co-ordinators will ensure that there are a team of Walk Leaders to lead a programme of walks in each local area.

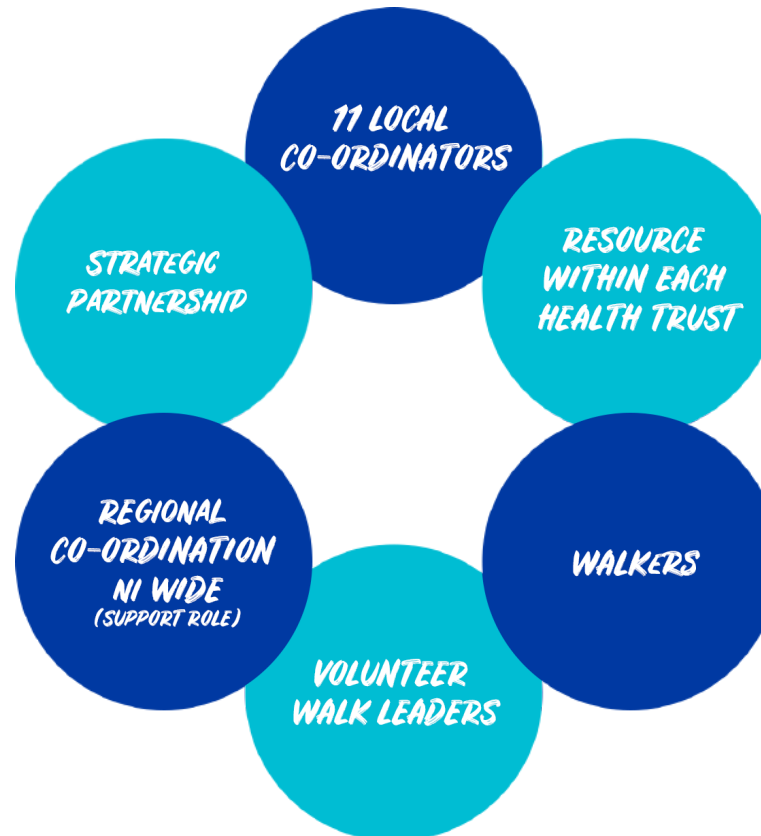
Whilst the scheme is open to everyone in Northern Ireland, it specifically focuses on those who are classed as 'inactive' or with 'low activity levels' as defined within the Chief Medical Officers' guidelines.

The Walking For All scheme aims to ensure walks are available in all local towns and villages across Northern Ireland.

Individual walks should be:

- » On the same day
- » At the same time
- » Weekly
- » From the same starting point

The Walking For All scheme structure will consist of an integrated approach:



WHAT WILL WALKING FOR ALL ACHIEVE?

The Greenbook Economic Appraisal identified the indicators that Walking For All will achieve.

Targeting most in need	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> » WFA will aim to develop new walking projects within all of the most deprived wards across N.I but a minimum of 25% of new walking projects to be established in each council area » 400 'open' Walking Projects by Year 3, building upon an existing baseline of 100
All areas of Northern Ireland	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> » 75% of settlements identified (214 settlements) should have walking projects established by the end of Year 3 » 48 Walk Leaders trained per council area per annum (528 in total)
Improved physical activity levels	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> » A minimum of 60% of inactive (<150 mins MIPA at outset) participants reporting meeting CMO recommended activity levels after 1 year
Improved quality of life Reduced social isolation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> » A minimum of 50% of participants reporting having developed friendships and social connections through the programme
Sustainability	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> » A minimum of 40% of participants to have walked at least 12 times per annum (adherence)
Increased mental health and well-being	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> » A minimum of 60% of participants to have reported at least 1%-point improvement in mental well-being as measured by the World Health Organisation Well-Being Index (WHO-5)
Volunteer time value	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> » A minimum of £250,000 per annum volunteer time



WHAT ARE THE NEXT STEPS FOR WALKING FOR ALL?

Funding Required

The Greenbook Economic Appraisal considered the level of funding required for the preferred option.

Area	Cost
Regional co-ordination role	£361,333
Sub-Regional co-ordination within/aligned to each of the 11 council areas	£1,688,245
Resource within each of the 5 trusts	£216,864
Programme enhancements	£837,123
Grand Total	£3,103,565
Loadings (including above)	£493,022
Costs for Approval (i.e. excl. Loadings)	£2,610,543

Next Steps

The Walking For All project is now fully prepared for roll-out. The Working Group is currently seeking to secure funding and is taking the following actions to progress this:

- » Share project summary with key stakeholders
- » Gain support from government departments
- » Share information with all stakeholders including council, health trusts, Public Health Agency, sport governing bodies, voluntary and local community organisations.

It is vital that walking is embedded into the heart of the Programme for Government moving forward. As a relatively small country, we should be able to effectively build partnerships between government departments, councils, voluntary and third sector organisations and, together create a culture of walking in Northern Ireland.

The evidence and rationale are clear. It is time to collaborate and drive forward walking in Northern Ireland.



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