

Sorry that I missed you all at the Network Meeting on Monday. I do apologise. Cath has let me know a few of the queries that came up, so I've tried to answer these here as well as a couple of other bits of news. I don't want to make this update too long and no doubt there will be news at next week's network meeting which we'll keep everyone abreast of so I've tried to keep this fairly brief. But if you have any questions, do get in touch.

Update to changes of logo and web address

This was announced in the 2nd edition of the Volunteer Health Walk Leaders' e-newsletter, circulated in September (for those of you who received it). We are due to discuss this in further detail and unveil the logo etc. at next week's South East Network Event in London, however, as you have asked I'm happy to share this with you early.

The Walking the Way to Health Initiative WHI - is changing its name to Walking for Health WfH. To go with the new name change we also have a new logo...



As the name has changed the website name is being changed also and, at the same time, is being brought under the Natural England 'family' of websites. This makes the management of the website simpler and more cost effective for us. The new web address will be www.wfh.naturalengland.org.uk. Once the new site is up and running the old web address www.whi.org.uk will redirect to the new site. The new website will not be live for another couple of weeks (exact date TBC - I'll keep you posted).

In keeping with the change of logo there is also a new accreditation logo which you will receive when you renew your accreditation.

Walking through fields with cattle

Reports in the news earlier this year of the deaths of three people trampled by cattle whilst out walking has prompted queries from WfH schemes. As a result advice has been posted on the website regarding walking through fields with cattle. If you do lead walks through fields which occasionally have cattle then please do read this, there are also links to further advice and information from this page:

<http://www.whi.org.uk/details.asp?back=true&key=AX909|0|12186714065|R|18|3187142782009609693429&parentkey=AX909|0|12186714065|p|18|0>

Although it is generally walkers with dogs who need to be aware of the risks when crossing a field of cattle, health walks are designed to cater for people who are frail and unfit and so even cows that are simply curious may be a risk. The best practice is to keep their risk assessments up to date and, where possible, avoid fields with cows in or have an alternative route that can be taken if necessary.

Nordic Walking

As part of our new insurance provision Nordic Walking is covered within Walking for Health insurance cover. This gives maximum flexibility to schemes to allow walkers to exercise in the way that suits them best but with the reassurance that they will be covered should any accidents occur.

Database

Making a person 'inactive' on the database, does not delete all their details, it just hides them from view. You can view the details of the walkers you have made 'inactive' by ticking the 'include inactive' box at the top of the 'View/Edit Walkers' screen. Once your inactive walkers are visible you then have the option to make the 'active' once again.

Sounds like Summer DVD

I haven't had any news about this DVD yet. I will follow it up and let you know when I know more. Depending on length of the DVD perhaps we could play it at one of the next SODC meetings?

Walking for Health expansion plans

We have just completed the recruitment of three new WfH staff in the South East Region. The new staff will be directly working on expanding WfH, working strategically and engaging with PCTs, local authorities and other agencies to promote and increase health walks across the Region. At least one of these posts will be based in the Reading office. We don't have start dates finalised yet but we'll keep you updated and of course introduce you once they join us. Further expansion news will be announced at the South East Network Event next week on training, promotions and resources that are in development to help schemes promote and sustain their walks, so expect to hear more on this.

Quarterly statistics

This quarter was the first in which we collected the stats from the database from schemes who are using it. We were extremely pleased with how well schemes are doing in inputting their registers regularly, this really helps us in generating up to date figures and means you no longer have to look back at your registers/spreadsheets to get these details. Just to let you know the South East Region is the highest inputting region in the country with over 5000 active walkers on the database. That is a lot of data to which you contribute enormously so thank you for all your support.

Finally..

To those of you who are coming I look forward to seeing you at next week's Network Event (Wednesday 21 October, London, 10.30-3.30). There will be more news following that so keep an eye out for the briefing which will be circulated by email.