

A project delivered by Zest Health for Life



# Men Active

**WALKING GROUP**  
1 MILLION STEPS CHALLENGE





# Contents

This took-kit has been produced to provide background information on the Men Active Walking Group, how to get involved, support and resources available. For more information on the project, please contact the Men's Community Development Worker at Zest Health for Life.

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# Welcome



## Men Active Walking Group

Walking has often been described as the 'perfect exercise' because of the mental health and physical benefits it brings. Most people can do it; they can do it from the front door; it can be easily integrated into everyday life; it doesn't cost much and you don't need a lot of gear, just a comfortable pair of shoes.

Men Active is a walking club providing men the opportunity to get out and about in a regular and healthy way while working towards a shared goal (1 million steps). The group is inclusive and has a range of walks for different abilities and levels. You can take part in one of the groups featured walks or contribute to the challenge by walking in your own time and from home. The aim is to allow men to be open and talk to one another while highlighting that *'it's OK for men to not be OK'*. While on the walks we want to find out about each other by learning about each other's experiences that we can use in an end project production.

*'Whatever the time of year, our surroundings, whether urban or rural have so much to offer us. There is history; scenery; opportunities for exploration; places to escape to and places to revisit. Join in the adventure, take part in the challenge.'*

- We walk together for men's mental and physical health.
- We walk together to challenge negative stereotypes and to raise awareness of issues affecting men.
- We walk together to collectively reach our goal of 1 million steps by 2023, that's about 500 miles!
- We walk to promote positive change together whatever your age, circumstance or experience.
- We work together to create an end of year production sharing stories and experiences of the men involved in the challenge.



The Men Active Walking Group and 1 million step challenge is delivered by Zest Health for Life, funded by City Connect & West Yorkshire Combined Authority, and support by Ramblers Wellbeing Walks



# Join Us

## How you can get involved?

You can attend one of our featured group walks, or clock up your steps at home, on the school run or in your free time. Invite your friends and family to take on the challenge to help us reach our 1 million steps goal. Why not promote the 1 million step challenge simply by putting up a poster, share the challenge on your Facebook, Instagram or Twitter and let's work and walk together to raise awareness of issues affecting Men.

*'At an average pace, you'd need to walk for 166.7 hours (almost seven full days of walking) or walk two hours a day for about 83–84 days to achieve one million steps. Now look at that from an all-day pedometer steps point of view: At 5,000 steps per day, it would take you 200 days to walk one million steps'*

## *Why get involved!*

Just a half-hour walk each day can reduce the risk of developing cardiovascular disease, Diabetes, Obesity, Arthritis and some cancers. Just 30 minutes daily walking routine also boosts brain power, increases productivity and promotes alertness and good health.

## What could it do for you?

Through regular activity like walking you are investing in you and in your health, your wellbeing and your longevity? The more you walk you are likely to become:

- Fitter
- More mobile
- Rested through sleeping better
- More connected
- Glowing
- A few pounds lighter
- Better Mental Health
- More toned
- Ready to take on the world
- Less stressed
- Happier and healthier
- Able to spend more time in the moment

[Read more about men's wellbeing in our 'Men and Mental Health section'](#)

# Our Walks

## What you get!

- **Men Active walking tool kit** (*packed full of information and support*)
- **Electronic stepper** – to help you keep count of your steps
- **Men Active t-shirt** (*subject to availability*)
- **Certificate and recognition for reaching set milestones**
- **A chance to be part of the end project production.**

## Local & Featured Walks

Men Active featured walks are a selection of some of the best walks in and around Leeds, from short easy strolls to all day walks, and through beautiful and historic scenery. Our walks run weekly/monthly and follow Open Country trails in South and East Leeds (Wyke Beck Way, Temple Newsam, the River Aire etc).



Check out more walks with Open Country Break Free:  
[www.opencountry.org.uk](http://www.opencountry.org.uk)

### 1. Local Walks

Local walks are on your doorstep and are designed for individuals who face challenges with mobility and underlying health conditions. Local walks are run at a very local level in the East Leeds area, and where participants do not need to travel far to be involved.

### 2. Featured Walks

Featured walks take part once per month and are designed for more able bodied individuals with little to no mobility and health conditions. Featured walks are more challenging than local walks and at times may require participants to meet at a starting location.

Our featured walks follow accessible trails in South and East Leeds and sourced from 'Open Country' and 'City Connect' – visit [opencountry.org.uk](http://opencountry.org.uk) for more information

# Our Walks

AREA	EXAMPLE OF LOCAL WALKS	Distance
<b>Gipton</b>	Wykebeck Valley Trail	4.3 mile (6.9km)
<b>Seacroft</b>	Primrose Valley Park	1.7 mile (2.7km)
<b>Halton Moor</b>	Temple Newsome	6 mile (9.6km)
<b>Richmond Hill</b>	East End Park	1.3 mile (2 km)
<b>Harehills</b>	Bankstead Park, Harehills Park	1 mile (1.6 km)
<b>Chapeltown</b>	The Rec, Potternewton Park, Leeds Carnival route	0.9 mile (1.4 km)
<b>Meanwood</b>	Meanwood Park, Meanwood Valley Trail	7 mile (11.2 km)
<b>Headingley</b>	Woodhouse Moor, Beckett Park	1.6 mile (2.5 km)

AREA	EXAMPLE OF FEATURED WALKS	Distance
<b>South East Leeds</b>	Parlington Wood	4.5 mile (7.2km)
	Thrwate Mills & The River Aire	2 mile (3 km)
	The Lines Way	3.5 mile (5.6 km)
	Aire & Calder Navigation	4.6 mile (7.4 km)
	RSPB St Aidans	6.3 mile (10 km)
	Middleton Park	5.6 mile (9 km)
	Middleton Nature Park	1.3 mile (2 km)
	Churchwell Urban Wood	1 mile (1.6 km)
	Dartmouth Park	1 mile (1.6 km)
	Oakwell Country Park	1 mile (1.6 km)

**In some cases walks have alternative routes that can make the walk shorter or longer. The length of each walk above can be adapted to suite each group or conditions on the day**





## The 1 Million Step Challenge

During each of our local and featured walks, we hope to reach a goal of 1 million steps together. Steppers can be provided at each walk for participants to log how many steps they have completed on the walk. The steps will be added together and logged until we collectively reach our goal of 1 million steps. We hope to have an end of project celebration where we highlight, recognise and thank the participants involvement by awarding Certificates.

*‘We walk together to collectively reach our goal of 1 million steps, that’s about 500 miles’*

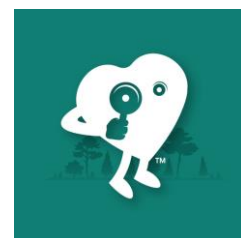
*In your own time!*

Taking part in the 1 million step challenge is not limited to just turning up at Local and Featured Walks. You can continue walking in your own time and contribute towards adding more steps towards our goal. Members may walk their children on the school run or do walking activities with their own families. They could leave the car at home and use public transport to do the weekly chores or the shopping run.

Participants will be provided a **Men Active Took Kit** with a log to keep track of their steps. The tool kit will also include:

- **‘Living Streets’** - Games and activities for young children ([www.livingstreets.org.uk](http://www.livingstreets.org.uk))
- **Points of interest-** Open Country Guilds, Love Exploring App (available from play store)
- **Staying safe** – Walking etiquette
- **Flexi Bus-** A great new service from First Bus for residents of East Leeds
- **Health information-** How is walking helping your feel better

Check out the Resource Section of tool kit for more information on the following:





# MOVEMENT

## MOVEMENT *sharing our experiences*

An end of project book production will be created with contributions made by attendees throughout the campaign. The book (and calendar) will provide attendees a platform to share their experiences as men in the twentieth century, being a father, families, careers and relationships.

Men involved with the Men Active Campaign will have the opportunity to take part in a number of focus groups geared towards helping how the end of campaign production – 'MoveMENT', should look and feel. We want any photos or imagery used to be photos that have been taken from participants, we also want any support information to be relevant and easy to access so participant involvement is key.



WHAT'S  
YOUR  
STORY?

The end of campaign production will be promoted throughout the duration of the campaign and participants will be asked regularly to contribute towards content and material.

### MOVEMENT:

1. a change or development.  
"the **movement towards** greater equality"
2. a group of people working together to advance their shared political, social, or artistic ideas.

1. Capture photos on your mobile device or camera
2. Send photos to Men Active Campaign by WhatsApp or email
  - [lloyd.herah@zestleeds.org.uk](mailto:lloyd.herah@zestleeds.org.uk)
  - [mensinclusionleeds@gmail.com](mailto:mensinclusionleeds@gmail.com)
3. Take part in design focus group
4. Share your story







# Men and Mental Health

*While social isolation and loneliness can affect anyone we know that men living in deprived areas of Leeds have a higher risk of being socially isolated. Living without social networks can have a dramatic and adverse impact on people's mental and physical health. The State of Men's Health in Leeds report shows that men have lower life expectancy, are more likely to suffer from poor, physical and mental health, have a higher risk of being socially isolated & living alone without families and support networks.*

**In England, around one in eight men has a common mental health problem such as depression, anxiety, panic disorder or obsessive-compulsive disorder (OCD)**

As with many mental health statistics, it's hard to know if the figures really represent what is happening. They can only tell us about mental health problems that have been reported – many cases may go undiagnosed. This may be especially true when it comes to men's mental health.

- There are other signs that might give us a better picture of the state of men's mental health:
- Three times as many men as women die by suicide.
- Men aged 40-49 have the highest suicide rates in the UK.
- Men report lower levels of life satisfaction than women according to the Government's national wellbeing survey.
- Men are less likely to access psychological therapies than women: only 36% of referrals to NHS talking therapies are for men.

In addition, men are far more likely than women to go missing, sleep rough, become dependent on alcohol and use drugs frequently.

## **Why don't men talk about mental health?**

Society's expectations and traditional gender roles play a role in why men are less likely to discuss or seek help for their mental health problems. We know that gender stereotypes about women – the idea they should behave or look a certain way, for example – can be damaging to them. But it's important to understand that men can be damaged by stereotypes and expectations too.

Men are often expected to be the breadwinners and to be strong, dominant and in control. While these aren't inherently bad things, they can make it harder for men to reach out for help and open up.

Some research also suggests that men who can't speak openly about their emotions may be less able to recognise symptoms of mental health problems in themselves, and less likely to reach out for support.

Men may also be more likely to use potentially harmful coping methods such as drugs or alcohol and less likely to talk to family or friends about their mental health. However, research suggests men will access help that meets their preferences and is easy to access, meaningful and engaging.

### **Suicide and men**

In 2017, nearly 6000 suicides were recorded in Great Britain. Of these, 75% were men. Suicide is the largest cause of death for men under 50. Higher rates of suicide are also found in minority communities including gay men, war veterans, men from BAME backgrounds, and those with low incomes. Less well-off middle-aged men are particularly likely to die by suicide

### **Is depression different for men?**

While there isn't a different sort of 'male depression', some symptoms are more common in men than women. These include irritability, sudden anger, and increased loss of control, risk-taking and aggression.

Men may also be more likely to use alcohol and drugs to cope with their depression rather than talking about it. They may use escapist behaviour too, such as throwing themselves into

**Mental Health Foundation: [www.mentalhealth.org.uk](http://www.mentalhealth.org.uk)**

**MEN CRY.  
MEN BREAK DOWN.  
MEN GET ANXIETY.  
MEN HAVE EMOTIONS.  
MEN FEEL INSECURE.  
MEN GET ABUSED.  
MEN HAVE MENTAL ILLNESSES.  
IT'S NOT "UNMANLY" TO STRUGGLE.  
LET'S SUPPORT MEN.  
LET'S ENCOURAGE MEN.  
DON'T BELITTLE OR SILENCE MEN.  
MEN STRUGGLE TOO.**

@THATMENTALHEALTHPAGE

### **Don't suffer in silence.**

Please make contact with the Men's Community Development Worker at Zest Leeds if you require further support and advice. Also please refer to the resources section of the tool kit.



# Walking Etiquette

## Walking etiquette

### Walking with Men Active & Zest Leeds - please read carefully

- Everyone is welcome on our walks but children under 16 years need to be accompanied by a parent or immediate adult family member.
- Walkers must have suitable clothing, footwear, food and drink.
- Please make sure that you are fit enough to undertake the walk you intend to join. If you're unsure of your fitness level, try a short and easy walk first: it's much better to find a walk a little too slow and easy than to make yourself miserable and exhausted.
- For your own and others' safety please read and abide by any advice and guidelines issued by the organisers, and the instructions of the walk leader. Though walking is inherently one of the safest outdoor activities, no activity is completely without risk and it is your responsibility to behave sensibly and to minimise the potential for accidents.
- Leaders may refuse to accept participants who in their opinion are inadequately equipped or unfit. When in doubt, contact the organisers or the walk leader in advance.
- When someone has had 2 or 3 walks with the Group and wishes to continue, then they are expected to join the Ramblers' Association.
- Walkers meet at the grid reference given in the programme (the start of the walk). It is each walker's responsibility to be at the start ready to depart at the stated time.
- Walkers are encouraged to share car journeys with other walkers only where this complies with current Government Covid advice. Drivers are asked to accept a voluntary contribution of £4 from each passenger
- In the event of bad weather, walk leaders, at their discretion, may cancel the walk. When possible, this will be displayed on the group's web site the day before the walk. Walkers are therefore advised to check the group's web site in the event of bad weather or phone the leader before setting out to ensure that the walk has not been cancelled.
- ***Dogs, other than Registered Assistance Dogs, are not permitted on walks unless it specifically states so in the programme. When permitted, dogs must be under control at all times, owners must clean up after them and put on a short lead at the request of the walk leader.***
- All those joining a walk do so at their own risk.



## Additional Support

<b>Touchstone Mental Health - Mentally Healthy Leeds</b>	Tel: 0113 2484880 <a href="http://www.touchstonesupport.org.uk">www.touchstonesupport.org.uk</a>
<b>Men's Health Unlocked - Forum Central</b>	<a href="http://www.forumcentral.org.uk/mhu">www.forumcentral.org.uk/mhu</a>
<b>Leeds Survivor Led Crisis</b>	Tel: 0113 2600328 Email: <a href="mailto:survivor.led@slcs.org.uk">survivor.led@slcs.org.uk</a>
<b>Community Links - Linking Leeds</b>	Tel: 0113 3367612 Email: <a href="mailto:linking.leeds.nhs.net">linking.leeds.nhs.net</a>
<b>Andy's Man Club</b>	Email: <a href="mailto:info@andysmanclub.co.uk">info@andysmanclub.co.uk</a>
<b>Leeds Dads</b>	Email: <a href="mailto:leedsdads@gmail.com">leedsdads@gmail.com</a> <a href="http://www.leedsdads.org">www.leedsdads.org</a>
<b>The Salvation Army</b>	Tel: 0113 2445898 Email: <a href="mailto:leeds.central@salvationarmy.org.uk">leeds.central@salvationarmy.org.uk</a>
<b>Respect—Men's Advice Line</b>	Tel: 0808 8010327 Email: <a href="mailto:info@mensadvice.org.uk">info@mensadvice.org.uk</a> <a href="http://www.respect.uk.net">www.respect.uk.net</a>
<b>Men's Health Forum</b>	<a href="http://www.menshealthforum.org.uk">www.menshealthforum.org.uk</a>
<b>Prostate Cancer UK</b>	Tel: 0800 0748383 <a href="http://www.prostatecanceruk.org">www.prostatecanceruk.org</a>
<b>Dad Matters</b>	Tel: 0161 344 0669 <a href="http://www.dadmatters.org.uk/">www.dadmatters.org.uk/</a>

For more information about Zest Leeds and the Men Active Walking Group, please contact **Lloyd Herah** on **0113 2406677** or email [lloyd.herah@zestleeds.org.uk](mailto:lloyd.herah@zestleeds.org.uk)

