

**Welcome to our Life newsletter.**

Urbanwalks brings you news and information on the walking & physical activity projects and initiatives that the company are involved with, plus to look at the inactivity and health issues in Britain today.

JULY 2007

newsletter **life**

# Urbanwalks reaches Northern Ireland

**Urbanwalks have just completed their first urban walking and cycling project in Northern Ireland. Earlier this year Derry Healthy Cities asked Urbanwalks to submit a tender for a walk active, bike active programme, Derry Healthy Cities wanted to produce walking routes in Derry City, Strabane and Limavady as well as a cycling leaflet for Derry City.**



Urbanwalks submitted a bid and was successful in getting the tender to produce a six walk active booklet for both Limavady Borough Council and Strabane District Council and a nine walk active booklet for Derry City and an A3 tri-fold bike active leaflet for Derry City also.

Urbanwalks worked in partnership with Richard Gillan, Countryside Recreation Officer for Limavady Borough Council, Aiden Lynch, Sports Development Officer for Strabane

District Council and Eamon O'Kane, Director for Derry Healthy Cities, which is a voluntary organisation. All three areas provided Urbanwalks with suggested routes for each of their walk active booklets then Urbanwalks mapped, measured and risk assessed all routes in both urban and rural settings, before writing the route text and designing the booklets.

The aim of the bike active leaflet was to promote the existing cycling routes that have been built by Derry City Council and support the people of Derry to develop a habit of regular physical activity whilst achieving the minimum levels of recommended daily exercise. Urbanwalks worked in partnership with Eamon O'Kane from Derry Healthy Cities and Colin Kennedy from Derry City Council who provided all the cycle pathways knowledge to produce the A3 tri-fold leaflet in a simple and understandable format, while being branded in the same colours as the walking booklets.

**"We had been coordinating an interagency approach on the concept of health walk mapping for some time and were more than pleased to find Urbanwalks. Their approach, understanding, adaptability and mapping format were exactly what we'd been looking for. As a result we now have the most definitive series of mapped walking for health and cycling for health routes in the North West of Ireland." Eamon O'Kane, Director, Derry Healthy Cities.**

The bike active leaflet was launched at Derry City cycling event on 16th June and was very well received. The walk active booklets are being launched independently across the three areas during June and July 2007.

If you would like more information about the above project or how to introduce urban walks in your area then please contact Urbanwalks on **0870 242 7507**

# Urbanwalks - Helping to get Gwynedd walking

In 2005 the Welsh Assembly Government's Integrated Transport Unit commissioned Urbanwalks to deliver an 18 month pilot across four areas in Wales, which included Wrexham, Gwynedd, Carmarthenshire and Cardiff. The aim of the pilot was to deliver a branded format for walking across Wales to encourage local people to walk more in their local environment.

Richard Glynn-Jones who works for Gwynedd Council as their Green Transport and Cycling Development Officer produced a total of four urban walks booklets in Caernarfon, Pwllheli, Blaenau Ffestiniog and Tywyn as part of the pilot.

Urbanwalks was a new concept for Gwynedd Council as they were more use to delivering health walks and led walks rather than independent walking routes. The aim of Urbanwalks is to get people more active, more often within their local environment whether that is urban or rural towns and villages. Once Richard launched his first four booklets he received positive feedback and realised that Urbanwalks could fit into many other agendas that he was involved with such as Walking the Way to Health or as it is now known Let's Walk Cymru.

After the pilot finished in March 2006 the Welsh Assembly Government (WAG) agreed to continue to part fund the Urbanwalks initiative across Wales. This continued funding allows each pilot area the use of the unique Urbanwalks branded product. WAG has also agreed to part fund any new area who wishes to come on board by funding their licensing fee and any additional training needed. Richard took advantage of this funding and has produced an additional two booklets

- one in Barmouth and one in Porthmadog making a total of six bilingual urban walks booklets in Gwynedd alone to date, with an additional two due to be mapped out in Upper & Lower Bangor before September this year.

Richard Glynn-Jones said "I have been working in partnership with Urbanwalks now for the last two years. I consider that the Urbanwalks concept, its products and the professional service provided to be excellent. Since the pilot finished, I have received from Urbanwalks additional and valued support so as to expand and deliver this walking scheme as a part of the strategic development of walking for health across Gwynedd. I foresee that the partnership will further develop reflecting local practice and at all times embracing Welsh culture and language."



If you are a public sector department in Wales and would like to implement urban walking routes in your area and wish to find out more about the funding available from the Welsh Assembly Government then please contact Urbanwalks on **0870 242 7507**

# Make your conference a greener conference with Active Travel Walks

In November 2005 Urbanwalks launched a new concept called the Walking Taxi at the North West Health & Physical Activity Forum (NWHFA) Annual Conference being held at the JJB Stadium in Wigan.

The aim of the Walking Taxi was to design an urban walking route from both train stations in Wigan to the JJB Stadium to encourage conference delegates to use public transport on the day and then walk the short distance to the conference venue. Urbanwalks provided volunteers on the morning of the conference to escort delegates along the route, this provided the delegates the opportunity to meet other delegates whilst getting some of their recommended 30 minutes a day of physical activity.

to use independently. Once again the feedback was very positive and Urbanwalks have continued to deliver Active Travel Walks for a number of conferences around the North West during the last 12 months including:

- Northwest Physical Activity & Health Forum Annual Conference, Ewood Park, Blackburn November 2006
- North West Health Trainer Hub Conference, JJB Stadium, Wigan November 2006
- Sport & Social Housing: Working Together Conference, Manchester City Stadium, Manchester March 2007
- Health & Well-being in the 21st Century, 4th Annual North West Public Health Conference, Hilton Hotel, Blackpool April 2007

**1** Blackpool North Train Station to Hilton Hotel, North Promenade

1. On leaving the platform turn right towards the Customer Service Office, then exit the station to your left and walk up the steps.
2. Walk straight ahead and carefully cross over High Street, then turn right to walk along the left hand side of High Street.
3. At the end of High Street turn left onto Pleasant Street and walk along until you reach the mini roundabout.
4. At the mini roundabout cross over Pleasant Street to the right hand side using the traffic island, then turn right onto Dickson Road.
5. Using the sloped kerbs cross over Dickson Road, bear left and walk towards the Promenade.
6. Turn right onto the Promenade at the Carlton Hotel then continue walking until you reach the Hilton Hotel on your right hand side.

Distance = Three quarters of a mile / 1800 steps  
This walk should take around 10-12 minutes  
A-Z Street Atlas, Page 14, Grid reference B5

**one active travel walk**

Health & Wellbeing in the 21st Century, 4th Annual North West Public Health Conference Hilton Hotel, Blackpool 2007

Urbanwalks is a vehicle to get communities moving again. The company has a simple philosophy to get people enjoying more activity more often in their everyday environment.

The North West Regional Public Health Team have commissioned this active travel walk for their Health & Wellbeing in the 21st Century, 4th Annual North West Public Health Conference.

Urbanwalks have designed this active travel walk to help encourage and support delegates to use active and public transport options when planning their conference journey. This route from the train station takes less than 15 minutes to walk and is just as quick and much healthier than taking a taxi.

The Urbanwalks concept is recognised by the Department for Transport as an example of good practice in walking promotion.

Urbanwalks® is able to offer a wide range of products and services, with over 18 years experience of working with both the public and private sectors. Urbanwalks can help your organisation by providing physical activity solutions for your workforce or community.

Our product range includes: urban walking facilities, activity inclusive parties, awareness events, active travel routes as well as a physical activity consultancy service. All our products have been designed to be like the common barriers to being active and to provide support solutions to get them to 150 minutes of physical activity per week.

For more information about our products, services, activities and pricing please contact us on 0870 242 7507 or visit us at [www.urbanwalks.co.uk](http://www.urbanwalks.co.uk) or come along to our stand to see a demonstration.

The Health & Wellbeing in the 21st Century Conference is managed by the Blackpool Council, NHS North West, and supported by the Blackpool Council, NHS North West, the Department of Health and the North West Regional Development Agency.

The Walking Taxi concept was well received with John Ashton, North West Regional Director of Public Health supporting the concept in his opening speech at the conference. The following year the NWHFA was hosting their annual conference at Ewood Park in Blackburn and Urbanwalks was asked to design a Walking Taxi route from Blackburn train station to Ewood Park, however, this year Urbanwalks decided not to provide the volunteers to walk with the delegates and instead named the walks Active Travel Walks instead of a Walking Taxi.

The route was produced as a printable PDF and was sent out to all delegates before the conference for them

Remember, the Active Travel Walks do not just support health, exercise or the physical activity agenda, they are promoting people to have a greener carbon footprint whenever possible and would also work well with a transport or environmental conference.

Urbanwalks are able to provide Active Travel Walks across the UK for both public and private sector organisations.

If you are hosting or delivering a conference / seminar in the next 12 months and would like to provide your delegates with an Active Travel Walk then please contact Urbanwalks on **0870 242 7507**

# Halton Borough Council get their employees and residents more active

Urbanwalks have been working with Paula Parle, Health & Physical Activity Development Officer for Halton Borough Council for the last two and half years producing a variety of urban walks leaflets and exercise sheets for both employees and the local community.

The first leaflet Urbanwalks produced for Halton Borough Council was a six urban walks leaflet with lunchtime walks for council employees in both Runcorn and Widnes. After the launch of the leaflet the feedback from council employees was very good. Following the success of the first leaflet Paula asked Urbanwalks to produce a two active travel walks leaflet for Halton Stadium to encourage delegates attending a conference that Paula was helping to organise to walk to the stadium from the local train and bus station.

The third leaflet Urbanwalks produced was a six green space walks leaflet, which promoted beautiful green spaces across Runcorn and Widnes with the aim of encouraging employees and their families to visit them at a weekend. The green space walks included Runcorn Hill, Wigg Island, Pickering's Pasture, Victoria Park and The Bongs. This leaflet was also made available to the community.



The final leaflet Urbanwalks produced for Halton Borough Council was a six active travel walks leaflet, which was a follow on from the two active travel walks leaflet produced for Halton Stadium. This leaflet provided six routes from local transport links to council offices across Runcorn and Widnes with an aim to encourage staff to take public transport more often and integrate walking into their daily routine.

As well as producing four leaflets for Halton Borough Council, Paula has also purchased 2,100 Urbanwalks office and home based exercise sheets for employees. The most recent work Urbanwalks delivered for Halton Borough Council in June 2007 was a printable PDF of our At Your Desk exercise sheet, which is going to be displayed on the council's intranet site for all 6,000 staff to access.



## Activity solutions for the community

As part of a promotional community initiative to get local residents more active, more often Urbanwalks have also produced five individual A5 flyers, which provide one urban walking route on each flyer and were launched at various sites in Runcorn and Widnes including health centres, sheltered housing and community centres. Paula also commissioned Urbanwalks to design and produce two new exercise sheets in partnership with the Halton Healthy Living Programme and Halton Strategic Partnership, which included chair based exercises for sheltered housing residents and a dyna band workout for community groups.

**"It has been a positive experience working with Urbanwalks, as anyone in a similar role to myself can imagine the remit is very wide and very busy. One day I can be delivering a school health day, another day is developing activities for people with a disability, another day presenting to community groups and of course not forgetting all those meetings, admin and report writing, which can keep me pinned to my desk for a good while" explains Paula.**

**"Having a professional company I can commission to take the lead on a particular project can help free my time and allow me to work with community members in the knowledge that the outcome will be a quality product / service. I feel confident that when I contact Urbanwalks with an idea, providing a brief around the product or service I want delivered and the outcomes I need to be gained, Urbanwalks can deliver a professional finished product on time and within budget." Paula Parle, Health & Physical Activity Development Officer, Halton Borough Council.**

# Stepping out and getting active at lunchtime

After producing the first urban walks leaflet for Halton Borough Council, it was great to hear that Paula Parle, Health & Physical Activity Development Officer was receiving positive feedback from employees who were taking advantage of the lunchtime urban walks.



Diane Young, an employee of Halton Borough Council started using the first urban walks leaflet during her lunch break. Diane used to be quite active throughout her life until she was diagnosed with arthritis and found her normal mode of exercising too difficult.

**Diane said "Walking as a way to improve general health and lose weight had been in the back of my mind for quite some time. Receiving the urban walks leaflet in May 2005 was my motivation to stop talking about it and do it. The 15-20 minute walk mapped out from my place of work seemed achievable. I started to do the urban walks 2-3 times per week during my lunch break, I also started to eat more sensibly and cut down on my wine consumption."**

This interview with Diane took place just 6 months after the launch of Halton's first urban walks leaflet and these are some changes Diane reported back to Paula Parle the Health & Physical Activity Development Officer.

**"I feel much healthier due to my 10lb weight loss! I do not have a lull period at work anymore around 2.30pm; I feel more alert and progress through my workload with more accuracy and speed. Paula Parle loaned me a heart rate monitor for 1 month; I measured my resting heart rate every morning. When I started using the monitor my resting heart rate was 76bpm, at the end of the month it was down to 62bpm. Paula assures me this is evidence that my heart is now much healthier, I am less likely to take time off work through ill health and 50% less likely to suffer from any major chronic diseases such as coronary heart disease, stroke and Type 2 diabetes." reported Diane.**

**Diane went on to say "I now complete the walk at a much faster pace and I have extended and varied the walk route to take in more of the environment. The walk along the prom is beautiful and helps increase awareness about the natural environment just a stones throw from the office buildings. On the return route I walk past shops and take a look at handbags and shoes."**

Urbanwalks would like to congratulate Diane on her success and hope that many more Halton Borough Council employees are benefiting from stepping out at lunchtime.



If you would like your employees to have tailor made lunchtime walking routes then please contact Urbanwalks on

**0870 242 7507**

# Practical solutions for inactivity...

## Urbanwalks Activity & Exercise Consultancy Service

Urbanwalks are able to offer a wide range of consultancy services. Urbanwalks have over 18 years experience of working within both the public and private sector with extensive knowledge in project management, partnership building and implementing change within the health and physical activity field.

Urbanwalks can also help you develop frameworks to implement a physical activity policy within your work force or community; provide support in reinforcing your message through launch days, promotional events, or one-to-one consultations as well as providing physical activity programmes and solutions.

## Urbanwalks Six Urban Walks Leaflet

The Six Urban Walks leaflet has been specifically designed to fill the gap in promoting local urban walks using a generic template. Each leaflet provides a variety of circular routes of differing length within the local everyday environment for both employees or local communities. The walks are mapped out and displayed on a professionally designed and practical fold-down leaflet or as an intranet based PDF. A bilingual booklet format is also available.

## Urbanwalks Three Urban Walks Leaflet

This shortened version has been designed for individual companies and the 1 or 2 day conference or exhibition market. Three local walks are mapped out and displayed in a leaflet as above or as a PDF file to be accessed via the client's intranet. The routes have been designed to get employees or conference delegates re-energised and refreshed by taking a short walk.

## Urbanwalks Active Travel Walks

The active travel walks have been designed to encourage employees to use walking as a mode of transport or to build in walking as part of their journey to and from work. These routes can be produced in a leaflet format or as a PDF, we also design single active travel routes for conferences in a PDF format, which aims at encouraging delegates to use public transport and the active travel route to and from the conference.

## Urbanwalks Activity Motivator

The aim of the Activity Motivator is to be available for one-to-one consultations to the employees of an organisation as part of their health at work campaign, this could be once a month or 2-3 times a year. During the consultation employees can ask the Activity Motivator any questions they may have about health, diet or fitness. The Activity Motivator will then prescribe a tailor-made programme of activity for them to follow, whether that's during their lunch break, at their local gym or at home. There are no fitness tests or exercises undertaken during this consultation.

The Activity Motivator is a fully qualified fitness specialist with over 18 years experience of working with people of all fitness levels from the already fit and healthy to those with medical conditions such as: Hypertension, Arthritis, Angina, Post MI and Obesity.

## Urbanwalks Home & Office-based Exercise Sheets

The Exercise Sheets are for home and office use and have been designed to give a whole or part body workout through a range of practical exercises. The exercises have been designed so that there is something for everyone, including older people, the young or inactive, and those people who suffer from medical conditions such as: high blood pressure, diabetes, arthritis, asthma, heart attack or stroke and obesity.

For more information about our products, activity solutions and consultancy services, please call us on **0870 242 7507** or visit us at

**[www.urbanwalks.co.uk](http://www.urbanwalks.co.uk)**

