



# Walking for health

**Group:** *Dunadry walking club*  
**Council area:** *Antrim Borough Council*

## ▶ Background

The Dunadry walking club was established in May 2007 to provide a weekly evening programme of walks for all age groups. Originally the group was established for members of Dunadry Hotel and Country Club, but soon expanded to include members of the local community. The group meet on Tuesday evenings at the Spa at Dunadry Hotel and have recently added an additional walk on Wednesday mornings.

## ▶ Getting started

Originally staff from the Spa at Dunadry Hotel trained as walk leaders through a course organised by the Northern Partnership for Physical Activity (NPPA). These leaders were supported by NPPA with safety equipment and promotional materials. The first walk attracted over 30 walkers. The group themselves were very keen to ensure the walks continued and the NPPA supported this by training additional leaders.



## Membership

Since the group was first established, over 130 people have registered with the programme. On average 30 attend each week. New members join most weeks and are made very welcome. The evening walks attract all age groups, including many adults who work during the day. The morning group attracts a mixture of retired people and mums and tots.

## Programme

The programme consists of weekly walks lasting approximately 30–90 minutes with no time limit on completion. In the summer months the group walk on local country roads and lanes in the Dunadry area. During the winter the group walk on suitable roads with footpaths and good street lighting in nearby Templepatrick and Antrim town. There are ten trained walk leaders in total in this group with three leaders identified for each planned walk.

# Dunadry walking club

## ▶ Partnerships

The group has been supported by Dunadry Hotel and Country Club and also by the physical activity coordinator for the local health trust.

## ▶ Advertising

The walks are advertised on posters and flyers in the local GP surgery, chemist, schools and grocery outlets. One of the most effective ways to advertise the walking programme is through word of mouth.

## ▶ Cost

All the walks are provided free of charge.

## ▶ Evaluation

Group members are regularly asked to complete questionnaires to review if the service provided meets their expectations. Members are also consulted and asked for feedback on an ongoing basis.

## ▶ Key impacts

The group aims to give local people a meeting place where they can mix with others and achieve a better lifestyle. One of the key impacts has been the interest from all age groups in attending regular walks. The group has expanded to include a daytime walk on Wednesday mornings after consulting with the walkers. Feedback from members has shown that they really benefit from attending regular walks with like minded people.



## ▶ Future developments

The group is providing the opportunity for interested members to participate in the walking section of the Belfast Marathon.

## ▶ Recommendations

- Make new members feel welcome
- Listen to the needs of everyone involved

## ▶ Contacts

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