



Step out Sheffield 2018 Annual Report

The 2017-18 financial year was Step out Sheffield's second full year of operation and, after a very successful first year, the scheme continued to develop and to grow. We remain Walking for Health's biggest volunteer-led scheme with 57 walks at 26 locations each week and approximately 140 active volunteers.

The administration of the scheme remains unchanged from last year. Individual walks continue to be delivered and managed by teams of dedicated and reliable volunteers. Five link workers, themselves volunteer walk leaders, each support four to six different walks. The links are the first point of contact for walk leaders in need of extra paperwork or holiday/sickness cover. A small management committee (9 members) oversees policy, safety, publicity and funding, and the scheme is headed by a volunteer coordinator.

In the past 12 months fourteen people trained and now volunteer regularly, two long-term volunteers took a well-earned retirement (but continue to attend their walk!), two volunteers left to go back to work and three stepped back, hopefully temporarily, due to ill health. Additionally, two of our volunteers, Barbara Morris and Richard Lee sadly died during the year. Making a net gain of just five volunteers. One of the new volunteers, Imelda Bennett, also qualified as a cascade trainer and has already assisted on two training courses.

Most walks continue to be well attended and some walks have grown significantly in the past year. Numbers on the Handsworth walk in particular have increased this year and this is now the biggest walk in Sheffield with a regular attendance of 60 people and on occasion hosts numbers in the mid-70s! 13 volunteer leaders provide a choice of three walks each week catering for all levels of ability and fitness.

A new weekly walk meeting at Bramall Lane was launched in March 2017. This walk is supported each week by a member of Sheffield United Community Foundation staff and the football club also kindly allow us to use a match-day bar for socializing after the walk. A member of Drinkwise Agewell staff, qualified as a walk leader, attends this walk each week to support any of their service users who attend. Service users from St Wilfrid's also attend on a regular basis together with a dedicated volunteer. Representatives from the Chinese Community Centre, Ship Shape and Sheffield City Council's Multi Agency Support Team also sometimes attend. Numbers on this walk are now regularly in the high teens and building nicely. Sheffield United Community Foundation provided tickets allowing walkers to attend a match on two or three occasions across the season. This generosity was very well received.

In September 2017 a pilot walk was launched at Graves Leisure Centre. So far, the attendance has been relatively modest, but the hope is that as the social prescribing

programme develops this walk based as it is at one of the clinical assessment centres, will take off.

Preparations for another new walk are well advanced. As with the Bramall Lane walk this walk will be a partnership. Two members of Drinkwise Agewell staff have completed the training together with two volunteers from the Crookes Forum.

The website is becoming an increasingly important means of promoting our services and whilst the feedback on our current website suggests that it is well laid out and easy to use it is difficult to update and edit. We are beginning to look at up-grading our website. In January 2018 Step out Sheffield was given its own front page on the 'Sheffield, the Outdoor City' website with a direct link to our own website. This was a big break through because the Outdoor City Website gets thousands of hits every month.

Richard Pilgrim, South Yorkshire Passenger Transport Executive's marketing Manager, very generously arranged for the design and printing of 10,000 walk programme leaflets for our use. In addition, SYPTE circulated copies of our leaflet at their own sustainable transport events along with leaflets about Park Runs and Cycling opportunities. Public awareness events are another great way to promote our services, and throughout the year we attended at least one event per month. In addition, two VWLs very kindly spent Friday afternoons this year handing out leaflets in the Moor Market to raise awareness.

Sheffield's version of Social Prescribing is starting to become available under the 'People Keeping Well' banner. The concept of social prescribing is to provide a more holistic approach to health by helping patients access their choices from a wide range of social activities including walking. Through 'People Keeping Well' we are raising our profile and as more health professionals become aware of our service, walker numbers should increase.

2017-18 has been a year of consolidation. We were able to build upon the successes of 2016-17, raise awareness, and improve the sustainability of the scheme. We have a good record for retaining walkers and volunteer walk leaders, the cornerstone of the scheme, have a remarkably good retention rate. This may or may not be due to the continuation of the quarterly networking meetings for leaders. These varied across the year from the AGM, to afternoon tea with the Lord Mayor in her parlour, to a workshop and a walk at Handsworth and a pie & pea luncheon at Hillsborough. The idea being that these meetings provide a socializing opportunity for walk leaders outside their own weekly walks and a chance to meet leaders from other walks too.

In the year ahead, we need to embrace new technology to record data and keep personal records secure. As walker numbers increase we need to train more leaders to maintain safety standards and, in the continued absence of core funding for the scheme, we aim to expand existing partnerships and develop new ones to maximise our sustainability.