

Conclusion

Walking has been demonstrated, both through the body of research available and through this evaluation, to be of great benefit to people's health and wellbeing. The benefits expressed by walkers in this evaluation include a range of outcomes including feeling better physically and mentally, keeping well, improving and maintaining fitness, losing weight and making new friends.

Recommendations

- ✓ Seek long term funding to maintain, further develop and extend the walking programme
- ✓ Develop more linkages and referral routes with the NHS for patients with long term health conditions
- ✓ Develop new, shorter walks for people who are most inactive
- ✓ Implement the good suggestions raised through the evaluation
- ✓ Continue to evaluate the walking programme on a regular basis

*For Walk with Braveheart's full Evaluation Report
please visit
www.braveheart.uk.net*

For more information please call: 01324 673706

The Braveheart Association is a Scottish Charitable Incorporated Organisation.
Charity Number. SCO 34617

Walk with Braveheart

Evaluation Summary 2014-2016



*Free guided nature walks designed to
support adults in becoming more active*

Introduction

This evaluation was conducted to analyse and evaluate the effectiveness of the Walk with Braveheart project over a two year period. Funding from Scottish Natural Heritage, NHS Forth Valley and The Robertson Trust was in place during this time.

Following analysis of questionnaires and focus groups, a number of key findings were highlighted:

Why people walk with Braveheart

- ✓ Enjoyment: 79% prefer walking to other forms of exercise
- ✓ Positive Health Impact: 77% feel healthier after walking
- ✓ Social Reasons: 74% enjoy the chance to be sociable and meet new people
- ✓ Positive Impact on Health Conditions: for example, 39% of walkers reported their blood pressure has reduced since joining the walking programme

Significant increase in numbers

- ✓ From 4,764 walkers in 2013/2014 to 5,533 walkers in 2015/2016 (16% increase)
- ✓ 25 new Walk Leaders trained

Walkers expressed satisfaction

- ✓ 79% of walkers would highly recommend Braveheart to family/friends

“Braveheart is a very welcoming organisation. The Walk Leaders are terrific and the company makes you feel safe which you often don’t feel walking on your own. Hard work goes into planning, organising and ensuring safety on our Monthly walks” Stenhousemuir walker.

Walk Leaders feel supported and consulted

“It has been great to see many friendships develop over the years until now it feels that we are now one big Braveheart family” Ian, Walk Leader.

“Every experience I’ve had with Braveheart has been positive- there aren’t any downsides at all!” Robert, Walk Leader.

Key benefits of the walks

- ✓ Physical- “Braveheart walks give people of all ages and fitness the opportunity to mix together and to improve their health. I think many of our walkers would really miss Braveheart if they did not have it in their lives“ Jean, Walk Leader.
- ✓ Social- “The social aspect is so important to combat loneliness- walking by yourself is not the same, and unless weather is truly atrocious, it gives us fresh air and exercise on a regular basis“ Moira, Dawson walker.

Continuity of funding

Having continuity of funding helped build the walking programme, supporting volunteer and staff development and retention.

“With volunteering with Braveheart for many years, I enjoy seeing the walks going from strength to strength” Stanley, Walk Leader.