

Think Nature Health Walks Newsletter

Spring 2022



Welcome to the Spring edition of the Think Nature Health Walk's newsletter!

With the evenings getting lighter and the weather (hopefully) getting warmer, it will be great to get out there and enjoy more walking.

Health Walks Update

As all covid rules and restrictions have now been lifted in Scotland, there is no limit on the numbers participating in Health Walks; actual walker numbers should be determined by the number of volunteers available and the suitability of walking routes. The Scottish Government are encouraging everyone to use 'covid sense' to help protect themselves and others. For more information please visit: www.gov.scot.

Arthritis Walk Events

Through Versus Arthritis, the Let's Get On With It (LGOWIT) group provided funding for Think Nature Health Walks to hold some Arthritis Awareness Health Walks. Events have taken place so far in Lochinver, where the Assynt group were joined by physiotherapist Paul for their walk and talk. Charlie and the walking group from Portree, in partnership with Skye U3A, hosted a workshop in Skeabost Hall, where refreshments were served and everyone enjoyed a choice of three walks led by the group. Charlie delivered a fantastic workshop where he shared his own experiences and talked about the many issues relating to arthritis and other similar conditions, this led to some very interesting discussions.

Further Arthritis Walks are to be held in Lairg, Kyle, Tongue, Wick and Castletown over the next few weeks.

Thank you to LGOWIT for providing the funding and to everyone who was involved in organising the events.



Skeabost Hall was a lovely venue for the workshop and refreshments



Charlie sharing some of the local history with walkers on the fascinating Columba's Isle

Would you like to

Lead the way?

We are always looking out for new volunteer Walk Leaders to join our walking groups across Highland. If you, or someone you know, loves walking and would like to support others in your community to do the same, please get in touch. Full support and Walk Leader Training will be given.

For more information please send me an email:
charlotte@highlandtsi.org.uk

Walk Leader Training

Walk Leader Training is still currently run as a half day online session and are held regularly throughout the year and are free. For future dates please get in touch.

Think Health Think Nature are providing Walk Leader Training for those in the Lochaber area on Tuesday 3rd May, 10 - 1.30

For more information email:
ailsa.villegas@nhs.scot



Registering New Walkers

All new walkers and walk leaders can now register themselves online using a link which can be emailed to them. To access the link, please get in touch and I will email it to you.

However, if a new walker doesn't have access to complete the online form, registration can be done over the telephone or paper copies are still available.

New Walking Groups

We are delighted to introduce a number of new Health Walk groups:

Redcastle, Muir of Ord

Starting early summer

Kinlochleven

Starting early summer

Also our newest Buggy Walk groups:

Milton, Invergordon

Thursdays at 10.30am (once a month)

Torvean, Inverness

Mondays at 10am (weekly)

We are very pleased to be working with Redcastle Estate, Kinlochleven Community Trust, Care & Learning Alliance, Home Start and Action for Children on these new ventures.

To find out dates, times and contact details for all walks in Highland please visit:

www.pathsforall.org.uk/walking-for-health/health-walks



Corran enjoying the muddy puddles on the Milton Woods Buggy Walk

EVENTS

the Big Fit Walk

The Big Fit Walk

national event usually takes place every year in June and aims to inspire communities to

come together and walk to celebrate all the benefits that walking brings.

Although a large national event will not be taking place this year, walking groups can still hold their own walking events.

Please let me know if you would like more information and/or support to hold your own event. I can also help promote your event and share your event stories and photos.



We Want Festival

30th April, 11 - 4, Olrig Street, Thurso

Think Nature Health Walks & Thurso Walking Group will be leading a health walk from the event at 11.30am. Everyone is welcome!

May is National Walking month!

This year, Living Streets are encouraging everyone to #Try20 - and walk for 20 minutes each day during May. Below are some other walking tips:

20 TIPS TO ADD 20 MINUTES OF WALKING TO YOUR DAY

WALK THIS MAY



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| <p>GO FOR A LUNCHTIME WALK #TRY20</p> | <p>TAKE A ONE OR TWO MINUTE WALKING BREAK EACH HOUR #TRY20</p> | <p>WALK TO OR FROM WORK #TRY20</p> | <p>TAKE A ROMANTIC PROMENADE #TRY20</p> |
| <p>TAKE THE FAMILY ON A WALKING ADVENTURE #TRY20</p> | <p>TAKE THE STAIRS #TRY20</p> | <p>GO FOR A WALK ON A RAINY DAY #TRY20</p> | <p>GET SNAP HAPPY ON YOUR WALK #TRY20</p> |
| <p>LUNCH AL FRESCO, NOT AL DESKO #TRY20</p> | <p>MEET A FRIEND HALFWAY #TRY20</p> | <p>WALK TO A GREEN AND TRANQUIL SPACE #TRY20</p> | <p>TAKE THE LONG CUT #TRY20</p> |
| <p>INVITE THE NEIGHBOURS FOR A WALK #TRY20</p> | <p>#TRY20</p> | <p>WALK THE KIDS TO SCHOOL #TRY20</p> | <p>WALK IN YOUR HAPPY SHOES #TRY20</p> |
| <p>HOP OFF AND WALK #TRY20</p> | <p>PARK AND STRIDE #TRY20</p> | <p>GO ON A SCAVENGER HUNT #TRY20</p> | <p>TRY A NEW ROUTE #TRY20</p> |



During Green Health Week the aim is to encourage people who haven't been involved in activities, groups or walks before to give the outdoors a try. You might want invite people in the local community to join your walking group!

Nature Walks



Highlife Highland Countryside Rangers have been visiting our walking groups to lead some very interesting and inspiring nature walks.

Walks have so far taken place in **Golspie and Lairg** and are planned for:

Dornoch Buggy Group - 9th May

Black Isle Buggy Group - 12th May

Wick - 17th May

Castletown - 25th May

With more to follow...

If you would like to find out more about our nature walks, please get in touch: charlotte@highlandtsi.org.uk



Above: The Golspie group learning more about different species of lichen with Ranger Marcia

Right: vibrant Wood Squill



Left: The Tongue group travelled down to join the Lairg group at Ferrycroft for a guided nature walk around the woodland trails

Above: beautiful pink Larch cones

Tongue Walking Group Update



Many thanks to Ruth from the Tongue Walking Group for sending this lovely update on everything that they have been up to recently. Many congratulations to the group for the mention in Scottish Parliament, recognising the work of the group within the community and also for being nominated, as part of North Coast Connections, for a Highland Heroes Award, for all the fantastic work you do.



Recent walk by Lochan Hakon

It's been a busy few months for Tongue Walking Group both locally and further afield. We have continued our weekly walks in a variety of extremes of weather only having to cancel on a couple of occasions. More recently we have enjoyed two outings, one to Lairg and the other to Dornoch. In Lairg we met up with the local walking group and walked with Marcia, the countryside ranger, who guided us on a nature walk from Ferrycroft. Along the way Marcia pointed out a crossbill, a bird many of us had never seen before. One observant Lairg walker spotted and photographed an eagle. We all enjoyed meeting new and interesting fellow walkers and finished our trip with a delicious lunch at The Pier. Thanks to Kirstin, the Lairg walk leader and to the group for making us welcome. We must get together again soon.



Nature walk at Ferrycroft

Our second outing took us to Dornoch to remember one of our founder members who sadly died at the beginning of the first lockdown. We were unable to pay our respects at that time due to the restrictions but attended a ceremony in Dornoch in her memory. This was followed by a walk on Dornoch beach, a fitting tribute.

Beyond our local group, North Coast Connections community based charity of which we are part was recently shortlisted in the Highland Heroes Awards. Two walk leaders attended the ceremony at the Kingsmills Hotel in Inverness. It was an emotional evening, listening to the stories about some very brave children, along with other individuals and organisations that do so much to support people in the community. We were hosted by McGregors, one of the sponsors of the awards, who looked after us really well during the evening. We didn't win the award for our category but it was really good to hear that the walking group and many of the other services North Coast Connections provides are appreciated and valued by our community and others.



Finally, it was a heart warming surprise to learn that Tongue Walking Group was recently mentioned by the MSP Edward Mountain in Holyrood. He was bringing to the attention of other MSPs our efforts to keep in touch with and support our walkers throughout the Pandemic.

We will continue with our weekly walks and periodic outings during the summer and are hoping to organise a community walk in June, on the lines of the Big Fit Walks that we used to enjoy. We would welcome any walking groups to join us for that event and will announce a date shortly.



What a backdrop! The Black Cuillin towers behind the Skye U3A walking group in Glen Sligachan. Photo by Richard Smith.



The Assynt Walking group enjoyed this amazing view from the breakwater in Lochinver on their walk recently

Photo Gallery



The new Milton Buggy Group exploring in Milton Woods



Following their walk, some of the Castletown walkers joined the coffee morning in aid of Ukraine at the Free Church Hall

CONTACT

Please get in touch if you would like any further information or support, or if you would like to feature an article or photo in the summer edition of the newsletter (please email them to me by the end of June). Many thanks,

Charlotte

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