

Project Name: Gateway Walking Group – You’ll never walk alone!

Why/How the project came about, - what need it responds to

: A local resident attending coffee morning in April, was complaining that there were not enough activities going on at the Centre for those recently retired, who didn’t consider themselves old and felt there was more to life than Bingo! She wanted to get involved with other people and give herself something to do now that she wasn’t working. She was determined not to sit at home doing nothing and she suggested walking or gentle exercise.



Loneliness and isolation lead to many mental health issues among our older members of the community

What you did, your role in making this happen: I spoke to others who were at the coffee morning to find out what they thought and half a dozen people said that they would love to go for a walk with other people. They didn’t like walking around the estate on their own and they would prefer to walk somewhere that was flat



Who else was involved: I spoke to the Gateway Centre Manager, Maureen Holmes, who informed me that there was some funding available for the over 50’s and they were able to contribute to some of the costs.

What happened: I contacted Newlands Community Transport and organised our first walk to Yeadon Tarn. Further trips were organised with Shipley & Bingley Voluntary Services as they were able to accommodate our dates, they were cheaper and the driver stayed with us.

Outputs /Outcomes: The walkers were jubilant. They loved the walk, they loved the company, they enjoyed being out in the fresh air. Many said that they had a good night’s sleep after the walk. One woman looked at the Tarn and said that she would never get around it in a day. She couldn’t believe it when 20 minutes later she was starting her second lap.

I try to plan a walk every other week and assess each walk to ensure that it is suitable for the walkers.

The walk needs to be flat, it must be accessible and it needs facilities for toilets and refreshments.

It also needs to be within a 30 minute driving distance of the centre, or we spend more time travelling than walking.

Any next steps: Look for further suitable walks. As the winter weather becomes more inclement organise an activity that will still bring them together and have some health benefit, such as bowling.



