



Your guide to...

Walking and cycling in Wiltshire



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Wiltshire Council
 Where everybody matters

Walking and cycling
are two great ways to
get out, get active and get
social.

In Wiltshire we are blessed with fantastic countryside, with 6,000 km (4,000 miles) of public rights of way for you to explore. Rights of way are paths and tracks which anyone can use at any time.



You can use rights of way for walking dogs, going for a picnic, looking at views or exercising on foot or bicycle – so why not get out there and explore your local area?

In this guide you will find:

Walking

- Getting started and staying motivated
- Health benefits of walking and some tips before you start
 - Walking groups in Wiltshire

Cycling

- Getting started and staying motivated
- Health benefits of cycling and some tips before you start
 - Cycling in Wiltshire



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Health benefits of walking

Walking is simple, free and one of the easiest ways to get more active, lose weight and become healthier.

Walking is ideal for people of all ages and fitness levels who want to be more active. Regular walking has been shown to reduce the risk of chronic illnesses, such as heart disease, type 2 diabetes, asthma, stroke and some cancers.

Before you start

A pair of shoes is all the equipment you really need. Any shoes or trainers that are comfortable, provide adequate support and don't cause blisters will do.

Wear loose-fitting clothing that allows you to move freely and choose thin layers rather than heavy, chunky clothing.

If you're walking to work, you can just wear your usual work clothes with a comfortable pair of shoes.

For long walks, you may want to take some water, healthy snacks, a spare top, sunscreen and a sunhat in a small backpack.

If you start taking regular, longer walks, you may want to invest in a waterproof jacket and some walking boots for when you try more challenging routes.





Getting started

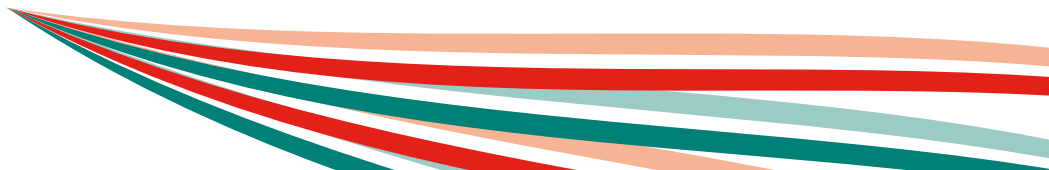
Start slowly and try to build your walking regime gradually. To get the health benefits from walking it needs to be of moderate-intensity. In other words, it needs to be faster than a stroll.

This means you're walking fast enough to raise your heart rate and break into a sweat. One way to tell is that you'll be able to talk, but not sing the words to your favourite song.

Try to walk 10,000 steps a day. Most of us walk between 3,000 and 4,000 steps a day anyway, so reaching 10,000 isn't as daunting as it might sound. If, to begin with, you can only walk fast for a couple of minutes, that's fine. Don't overdo it on your first day.

You can break up your activity into 10-minute chunks, as long as you're doing your activity at a moderate level. Begin every walk slowly and gradually increase your pace. After a few minutes, if you're ready, try walking a little faster. Towards the end of your walk, gradually slow down your pace to cool down. Finish off with a few gentle stretches, which will improve your flexibility and stop you from feeling stiff the next day.

From walking to the shops, walking the dog and organised group walks to walking to work, try to make every step count.





Staying motivated

The easiest way to walk more is to make walking a habit. Think of ways to include walking in your daily routine.

Examples include:

- Walking part of your journey to work
 - Walking to the shops
 - Using the stairs instead of the lift
- Leaving the car behind for short journeys
 - Walking the children to school
 - Doing a regular walk with a friend
 - Going for a stroll with family or friends after dinner



Walking in Wiltshire

One of the best ways to get involved in walking in Wiltshire is to join one of the free Get Wiltshire Walking groups led by trained walk leaders.

Groups meet every week, last approximately one hour and end with a cup of tea and a chat in a local cafe. Walking in a group is a great way to get active and stay motivated. You'll make new friends and discover new places to walk in your neighbourhood.

There is a walking group available in every community area of the county and each walk has its regular starting venue on the same day and time every week. The routes vary each week but standard walks will last around 60 to 75 minutes. Starter walks last around 30 minutes and are on a flat stable terrain. Fit walks last approximately 45 minutes and are at a brisk pace designed to get the heart and lungs working harder.

If you are interested in becoming a volunteer walk leader, we are able to provide you with full training and support.

To find a walk near you, or to find out more about becoming a Volunteer Walk Leader, visit www.wiltshire.gov.uk/getwiltshirewalking

If you are looking for a group that undertakes longer walks contact the Ramblers at www.ramblers.org.uk

There are a variety of walks available in Wiltshire from the long distance treks to afternoon strolls. You can find out more about some of the walks available and download walking routes at www.visitwiltshire.co.uk/site/things-to-do/activities/walking





Health benefits of cycling

Regular cycling can help you lose weight, reduce stress and improve your fitness. Cycling is the third most popular recreational activity in the UK with an estimated 3.1 million people riding a bicycle each month.

Anyone can take part; toddlers, pensioners, the able-bodied or people with disabilities can all enjoy cycling if they have the right equipment.

Cycling is one of the easiest ways to fit exercise into your daily routine because it's also a form of transport. It saves you money, gets you fit and is good for the environment.

It's a low-impact form of exercise, so it's easier on your joints than running or other high-impact aerobic activities but it still helps you get into shape.



Before you start

For most people, cycling is a safe and effective form of exercise. If you have any health concerns or an existing medical problem, see your GP before you start.

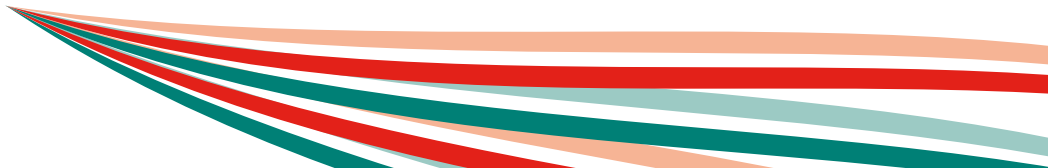
For short journeys, any good working bike will do. You might have an old 10-speed racer, a shopping bike or a bargain mountain bike that you could use.

If you're buying a second-hand bike or you have an old bike that's been gathering dust, consider having it serviced at a specialist bike shop to ensure it's roadworthy.

If you're buying a new bike, there are many models to choose from. Hybrids, road bikes and mountain bikes are the most popular.

A specialist bike shop will advise you on the correct frame size and help you select a bike to suit your budget and the type of cycling you want to do.

Find out if your workplace operates a cycle to work scheme. This is a more affordable way of buying a new bike and safety equipment.





Getting started

Ensure you are safe when on your bike:

- Practice in a safe environment
- Wear a helmet
- Be seen and heard – wear high visibility clothing or accessories and fit front and rear lights. To be heard, fix a bell to your handle bars
- Check your bike – ensure the tyres, chain, handle bars and brakes are all in good working order. You can get your bike serviced at a bicycle shop
- Be alert and plan your route
- Always follow the Highway Code.

If you haven't cycled much before or you're out of the habit of cycling, find yourself a traffic-free area to start off in, such as your local park. Practice riding single-handed so you can make hand signals, and get comfortable looking over both shoulders to improve your visual awareness.

Before you start cycling in traffic, check the Highway Code for up-to-date rules and regulations for cyclists.

A 30-minute ride, where your breathing is quicker and deeper, will count towards your recommended weekly activity target.

If you're just getting started, take it slowly and increase your cycle rides gradually. Any improvement on what you currently do is beneficial.

Staying motivated

The easiest way to cycle more is to make it a habit. Think of ways to include cycling into your daily routine.

Examples include:

- Cycle to work
- Cycle with your family to school
- Cycle short journeys in your neighbourhood
- Doing a regular cycle ride with a friend
- Mix it up – explore the many wonderful places to cycle in Wiltshire's towns, villages and countryside
 - Join a bike ride.



Cycling in Wiltshire

Cycling in Wiltshire's peaceful, timeless countryside will show you rural England at its very best. There are a number of ways you can get involved.

Wiltshire cycleway and route maps

This 160 mile cycle route threads its way through Wiltshire along quiet country lanes and passes many of the county's most attractive places to visit. The route is supplemented by a network of shorter loops offering a wide choice of distance and terrain.

Cycle maps and routes for various towns including Chippenham, Bradford on Avon, Marlborough, Salisbury and Trowbridge can be downloaded from the Connecting Wiltshire website by visiting www.connectingwiltshire.co.uk

Sky Rides

Working in partnership with British Cycling, Wiltshire Council has developed a series of fun, safe community cycle rides, led by trained ride leaders. These leisurely rides take place between June and October in and around each Sky Ride town.

Sky Rides allow people to explore their local area, meet like-minded people and cater for all levels of experience and ability. Rides range from short, traffic-free routes of three to four miles to 20 mile rides lasting up to two and a half hours. Breeze Rides for women only are also available during the summer months. Find out more www.wiltshire.gov.uk/skyrides

NB: Rides for 2016, will not be available until the Spring

Cycling Wiltshire

Cycle Wiltshire weekend is back in 2016 and promises to be bigger and better in its third year. On Saturday 7 May we will once again see the Cycle Wiltshire Sportive take place from the new Five Rivers Health and Wellbeing Centre in Salisbury, with routes available for all levels of ability.

The weekend's fun does not stop there as on the following day (Sunday 8 May) the Cycle Wiltshire Grand Prix returns to Salisbury with the spectacle of an elite race featuring some of Britain's top cyclists. For 2016 the race will start and finish in the city centre with activities taking place in the Market Square as well as in Wilton Market Square for spectators.

For more information on the Cycle Wiltshire weekend visit

www.cyclewiltshire.org.uk

Cycling clubs

There are a variety of cycle clubs and groups across Wiltshire, so whether you are interested in road riding, mountain biking, or just looking for a leisurely ride there is a club for you.

To find a cycling club near you visit
www.cyclewiltshire.org.uk



Useful contacts

Get Wiltshire Walking – please email the walk coordinators on physicalactivity@wiltshire.gov.uk or visit www.wiltshire.gov.uk/getwiltshirewalking

Walking and cycling routes and advice – visit www.connectingwiltshire.co.uk

Ramblers Association – visit www.ramblers.org.uk

Cycling clubs and cycling events in Wiltshire – visit www.cyclewiltshire.org.uk

The NHS offers advice and guidance to staying healthy and has over 100 topics on healthy living – for more information visit www.nhs.uk/livewell/pages/topics.aspx







**A legacy
for Wiltshire**

A legacy for Wiltshire

2012 was a fantastic year for Great Britain; it was also a great year for Wiltshire. Our communities came together and celebrated the Queen's Diamond Jubilee, the Olympic Games and followed the Olympic Torch relay as it travelled through the county.

These events had a huge impact on our communities and the local economy. A Legacy Steering Board was established to make sure we built on the successful relationships that were developed and to ensure that a real legacy for the future was created with the following aims:

- **Bringing communities together to deliver events and activities**
 - **Keeping the economy invigorated**
- **Getting more people more active through sport and leisure**
- **Increasing the access to arts and culture across the county**