

Active Travel

May News

Cities trigger our imagination': why a walk in town can be just as good for you as a stroll in the countryside

Today, I'd like to share an article from The Guardian. It discusses how city walking can be just as beneficial as walking in nature.

"Wandering among historic buildings, cemeteries and winding back streets can lift your spirits as effectively as communing with nature", according to author Annabel Streets. Annabel Streets, the appropriately named author of a new book "The Walking Cure". In the book, Streets contemplates the powerful impact walking can have on our mood, thoughts and emotions, and how this can differ according to where and how we walk. While most people are aware of the benefits of walking in nature, Streets makes the case for urban environments, known as "brown spaces" by developers. Surprisingly, churches, convents and cemeteries, all of which are found in cities, often offer a superabundance of wildlife. A study in one Berlin cemetery found 604 species, 10 of which were rare or endangered.

Streets believes it is in cities that our collective ingenuity is most obvious. "Urban spaces are often much more stimulating and energising than more remote landscapes," says Streets. "Unless marred by too much noise, pollution and traffic, cities can perk us up, pique our curiosity and trigger our imagination. Yes, you can walk in a park or through mountains and feel wonderfully calm, but there are few signs of human endeavour. Cities relax us as much, if not more, because humans are fascinated by each other and the things we have created. They encourage us to get out of our own heads and distract us from our own ruminating minds."

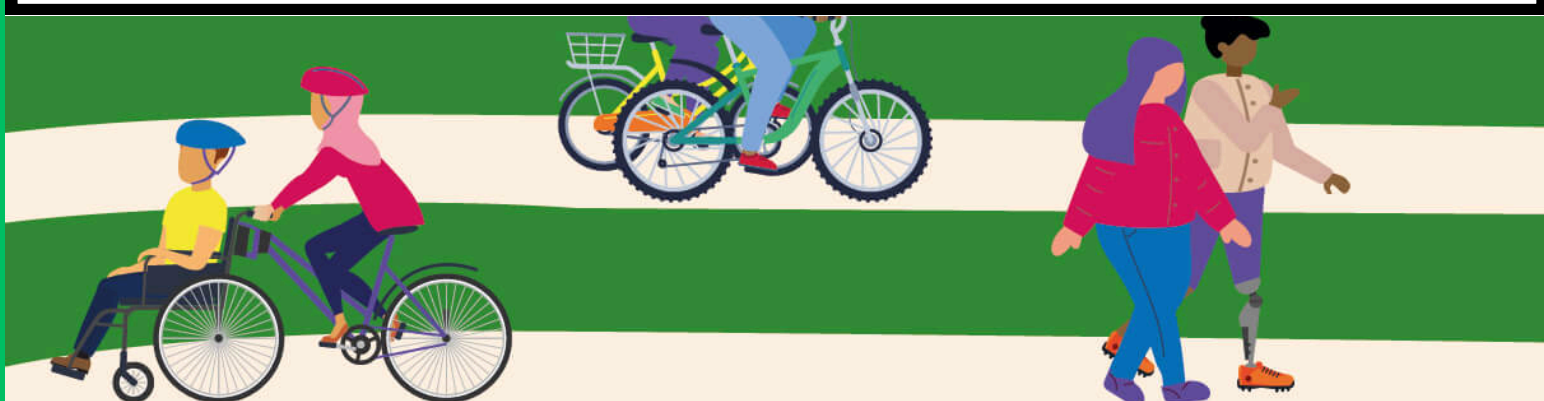
What is it about walking that is so good for us? "Human beings were designed to walk and not just a stroll on a sunny day in a beautiful landscape," Streets says. "When we walk, we produce biochemicals which are so powerfully life-affirming that scientists have described them as 'hope molecules'". You can gain the same effects from any other kind of brisk movement, but the great benefit of walking is you can do it pretty much anywhere and it doesn't usually end in injury.

Streets tells us about a study which found that historical walks are as psychologically restorative and calming as green walks, if not more so. The research focused on the particular benefits of cultural heritage sites and how their aesthetics impact the brain. Sam Cooley, a psychologist at the University of Leicester, co-authored a study which echoed the finding that walks in green spaces do not appear to provide more benefits than urban walks. Rather, these walks provide different benefits at different times. "For example, two people may be wandering through a beautiful and remote nature reserve," writes Cooley, "while not connecting with any of the surrounding wildlife, instead focused on the benefits of their social interaction. At the same time, another person may be walking the busy city streets and experience a connection with a single, resilient weed they spot growing in the concrete."

The good news is that if you are a fair-weather walker or unable to get outside for a stroll for any other reason, indoor walking still has clear benefits. Marily Oppezzo, now a behavioural and learning scientist at the Stanford Prevention Research Center, compared how walking on a treadmill or outdoors affects our creativity. Crucially, her study also compared walking with sitting still both inside and outside. Walking on a treadmill in a small room still achieved good results. In fact, any type of walking boosted people's creativity by an average of 60% compared with not moving, no matter the location.

Find out more about the full article here:

<https://www.theguardian.com/lifeandstyle/2025/apr/13/go-to-town-the-surprise-feelgood-effects-of-walking-in-the-city>



Feeling inspired by this article? Why not take the first step and join us for a walk to explore Nottingham's hidden gems! Travel Well is supporting the Walk Notts Festival, running from 1st to 31st May—come and discover the city's secret places with us!

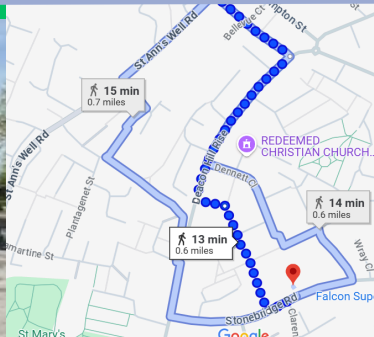
Stonebridge City Farm & Gardens Wellness Social Walk

🕒 1:30 PM – 2:30 PM, Monday, 19th May 2025

📍 Meeting Point: The Chase Neighbourhood Centre, NG3 4EZ

Join us for a stroll to the city farm and sip coffee beside the animals — all in the heart of the city!

The Chase



Bulwell Marketplace Nordic Walking Taster

🕒 11:00 AM – 12:00 PM, Wednesday, 21st May 2025

📍 Meeting Point: Market Place, Bulwell, NG6 8HD (Travel Well Stall)

Try Nordic Walking and discover Bulwell in a whole new way! Explore the bustling Market Place and enjoy a gentle stroll along the beautiful River Leen. There's more to Bulwell than you think!

☀️ Poles available for Nordic Walking tasters.



Step Into History — Walk to Strelley Hall!

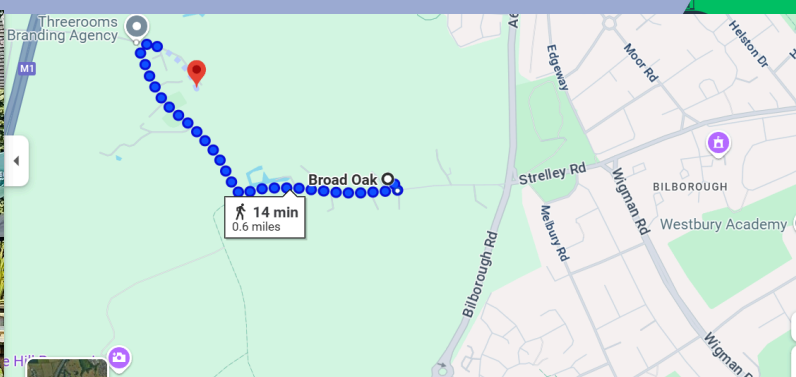
🕒 13:00 PM – 14:00 PM, Wednesday, 28th May 2025

📍 Meeting Point: Broad Oak Pub (Look out for the Runspire Car)

Join us for a scenic walk and discover the fascinating Strelley Hall, a beautiful period building originally built as a castle around 1200 AD.

☕ Enjoy a coffee break in their charming garden café

☀️ Poles available for Nordic Walking tasters



TRAVEL WELL

Upcoming Events

CHERRY LODGE

King Edward Park, Carlton Road, NG3 2AS

Monday 12th May 2025, 11 AM - 1 PM

TESCO BULWELL

35 Jennison St, Bulwell, Nottingham NG6 8EQ

Tuesday 13th & 27th May 2025, 10 AM - 12 PM

The Chase Neighbourhood Centre

Robin Hood Chase, Nottingham NG3 4EZ

Monday 19th May 2025, 11:30 AM - 1:30 PM

Join our walk from Chase to Stonebridge City Farm

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Bulwell Market Place

Wednesday 21st May 2025, 10AM - 1 PM
(Tips for Walking and Cycling Free Bike MOT)

Feel Good Festival

Cherry Lodge and King Edward Park,
Saturday 31st May 2025, 11AM - 3 PM

Come Visit the Travel Well Stall!

🎯 Play fun games 🎁 Win small prizes

Learn the benefits of walking & cycling

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Refer your patients here:
[Active Travel Referral Form](#)



RIDE LEADER TRAINING



RIDE LEADER COURSE ENABLES PEOPLE TO PLAN AND DELIVER
RIDES WITH MIXED ABILITY GROUPS ON, AND OFF-ROAD

22ND MAY 9.30AM - 1.30PM

BRENDON LAWRENCE SPORTS CENTRE



FOR MORE INFORMATION CONTACT -
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