



WALKTHISWAY

Why walk? The health benefits

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Swindon Town Centre

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As more cars clog up local roads and petrol prices rise, you can save time and money by making short journeys on foot.

And because walking is ideal natural exercise, if you tweak your habits and fit walking into your daily routine, you'll soon reap the health benefits too.

There are plenty of footpaths to lovely green spaces, like Peatmoor Lagoon or Shaw Forest, as well as shortcuts to shops, offices and leisure centres.

Have a look at some of the easy-to-read walking route maps inside, and discover how you can walk into Swindon town centre in about 30-45 mins.

It's free, enjoyable, easy to do and good for your health and your wallet!

What could be better than walking?





Walking is an easy way to achieve the recommended two and a half hours of moderate exercise a week.

You can do it in your own time, at a pace to suit you, and you don't need special equipment or gym membership. Just put on a pair of comfortable shoes, and you're good to go!



"I've got feet, so I might as well use them"

Sue from Toothill started making local journeys on foot and joined a weekly Walk Fit group at the Link Centre:

"I've lost a stone over the past six months and discovered quiet pathways and wildlife havens I didn't even know existed."

Kevin, Volunteer Walk Leader for the Shaw Health Walk:

"Walking is great exercise and gradually building up to a brisk pace means you'll get the best health benefits. Ideally, you should walk fast enough to increase your heart rate, but still be able to hold a conversation."

How many steps?



Wearing a pedometer is a good way to see how far you're walking every day.

10,000 steps a day is recommended by the NHS, and you can walk 1000 steps in 10 mins.

When and where? Walk everywhere!

Make it a habit and try and walk whenever you can ... to the shops, taking the stairs instead of the lift, doing the school run ...you'll soon clock up your daily steps!



- It can help you lose weight. Walking burns calories which helps you manage your weight. This will vary from person to person, depending on a person's weight and the pace and distance they walk. As a general guide: a 180-pound (12.8 stone) person will burn 100 calories per mile and a 120pound (8.5 stone) person will burn 65 calories per mile, walking at a fairly leisurely 3 mph (covering a mile in 20 mins). Brisk walking will use more calories.
- It's good exercise. You can help reduce your risk of developing serious conditions, like heart disease, strokes, Type 2 diabetes and some cancers.
- It will lift your mood. Walking will reduce anxiety and help you to sleep.
- You'll get stronger. Walking can improve your flexibility, the strength of your muscles, joints and bones, and reduce the risk of osteoporosis for women.
- Walking is enjoyable! Don't take our word for it, go outside and give it a try!

Find out how to join a local walking group. Turn to page 6

Walking links between West Swindon &

EAT WESTERN WAY





☑ Average walk time along this route: 30 - 45 mins



Walking Words...

"I've made some good friends and discovered some lovely green areas in Swindon"

"Our lunchtime walking group is great. It makes me get up from my desk to stretch my legs, and I feel so much better after some fresh air"



"I can't walk far, but I love walking with a group, and we get together over a cup of tea afterwards"

"I feel so much fitter since joining the Heath Walk that I've taken up Zumba as well!"

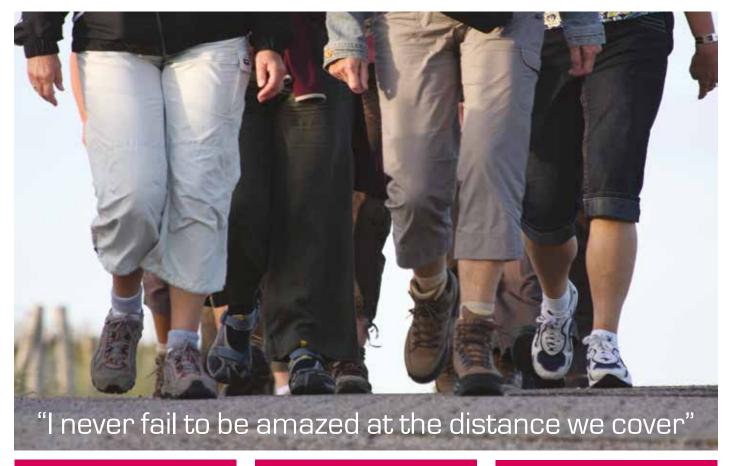
"I walk to work because I can!"



"Footpaths get me away from exhaust fumes"

"I can afford to treat myself because I'm not filling the car up every other week"

You'll Never



SWINDON HEALTH WALKS



These free group walks are short (2- 3 miles/40 - 50 minutes), followed by socialising and refreshments.

They're led by trained volunteers, and you'll be encouraged to walk fairly briskly and steadily for health. The walks shouldn't make you too breathless (you should still be able to hold a conversation), but you'll be encouraged to:

- Breathe a little faster
- Feel somewhat warmer
- Increase your heart rate

Look at the **WEEKLY WALKS DIARY** to find a Health Walk near you.

Train to be a Volunteer Walk Leader for Swindon Health Walks or find out how you can set up your own walking group, call 01793 465413.

GENTLE WALKING GROUP

A group for people who can only walk a very short distance, led by trained volunteers. This group is also suitable for wheelchair users.

UP 'N' WALKING

A beginners group for people with specific health conditions, supervised by an instructor.

WALK FIT

This fitness instructor-led group is suitable for people who want to improve their fitness. Moderate fitness levels needed.

LADIES WALK FIT



A ladies only group, which is led by a fitness instructor. Moderate fitness levels needed.

SWINDON TWIN PEAKS



Weekday evening power walks from various locations, open to men and women of all ages and abilities.

NE WILTSHIRE RAMBLERS



A variety of weekend and evening walks from 3 to 15 miles. The first three walks are free, and then you're encouraged to join the Ramblers.

HIGHWORTH AND SWINDON WALKING GROUP

Weekly walks, Wednesdays and Sundays (distances vary between 5 – 12 miles).





Weekly Walks Diary - what, when and where

When?	What?	Where?	How far?	More information
Monday	Penhill Health Walk	St.Peter's	2 – 3 miles/40 – 50 mins.	Call
10am - 11am		Church Hall	Easy, fairly brisk.	01793 465413
Monday 2pm – 3pm	Covingham Health Walk	St. Paul's Church Hall	2 – 3 miles/40 – 50 mins. Easy, fairly brisk.	Call 01793 465413
Monday 2pm – 3pm	Haydon Gentle Health Walk Led by volunteers. Very slow pace.	Haydon Leisure Centre	Very short distance/ walk for up to 20 mins max.	Call 01793 465413
Monday 2pm	Shaw Health Walk	Lower Shaw Farm	2-3 miles/40 - 50 mins. Easy, fairly brisk.	Call 01793 465413
Tuesday	Walcot Gentle	Buckhurst Park	Very short distance/walk for	Call
10am	Health Walk	Community Centre	up to 20 mins max	01793 465413
Tuesday	Toothill Health Walk	Toothill Community	2–3 miles/40 – 50 mins.	Call
10am		Centre	Easy, fairly brisk.	01793 465413
Tuesday	Central Health Walk	Broadgreen	2–3 miles/40–50 mins.	Call
10am		Community Centre	Easy, fairly brisk.	01793 465413
Tuesday	Sanford Health Walk	Swindon Advice	2 – 3 miles/40 – 50 mins	Call
1pm		and Support Centre	Easy, fairly brisk.	01793 465413
Tuesday	Gorsehill Gentle	Gorsehill	Very short distance/walk for	Call
1pm	Health Walk	Community Centre	up to 20 mins max.	01793 465413
Wednesday	Walcot Health Walk	St. Andrew's	2 – 3 miles/40 – 50 mins	Call
10am		Church	Easy, fairly brisk.	01793 465413
Wednesday	Highworth Gentle	Highworth Town	Very short distance / walk for	Call
2pm	Health Walk	Council Offices	up to 20 mins max.	01793 465413
Thursday	Haydon Health Walk	Haydon Leisure	2 -3 miles/40 – 50 mins	Call
9.45am		Centre	Easy, fairly brisk.	01793 465413
Thursday 10am	Wroughton Health Walk	Ellendune Centre	2 – 3 miles/40 – 50 mins Easy, fairly brisk.	Call 01793 465413
Friday 10am	West Swindon Health Walk	Link Centre	2-3 miles / 40-50 mins. Easy fairly brisk.	Call 01793 465413
Friday	Pinehurst Health Walk	Pinetrees	2 – 3 miles/40 – 50 mins	Call
10am		Community Centre	Easy, fairly brisk.	01793 465413
Friday	Liden Health Walk	Derryck Evans	2 – 3 miles/40 – 50 mins	Call
10.30am		House	Easy, fairly brisk.	01793 465413

DID YOU KNOW... ALL WALKING GROUPS ARE FREE!

Walk... Jog... or Run with the Mad March Hare

Launched in 2008, the Mad March Hare is an annual event in West Swindon every March, which aims to get people more active and raise vital funds for Breakthrough Breast Cancer Wiltshire group.

The fun event is organised by local volunteers, and walkers, joggers and runners of all ages can enjoy either a 5km or 10km route, taking in the lovely Lydiard Park.



If you'd like to take part or get involved, go to: www.madmarchhare.org.uk or call 0845 680 8064 to find out more.



Simple Steps to be Safe

Enjoy all the benefits of walking and keep safe

Just follow a few basic tips...

'Be bright, be seen'.



Wear bright or light clothing, with reflective strips on a jacket or bag so you can be seen when light levels fall.

It's best to choose routes that are well-used and well-lit if you're out and about after dark.



It's a good idea to know where you're headed or to **take a map** if you don't. Go to

www.swindontravelchoices.org.uk



If you're wearing headphones, just make sure you can still hear traffic and be aware of what's

going on around you. You often hear traffic before you can see it!

Take some money in case you need to use public transport.

It sounds like basic advice, but keep looking and listening as you cross the road so you don't get distracted ...and look out for cyclists!



Carry a charged mobile and, if possible, let someone know where you're going if you're going on a long walk.

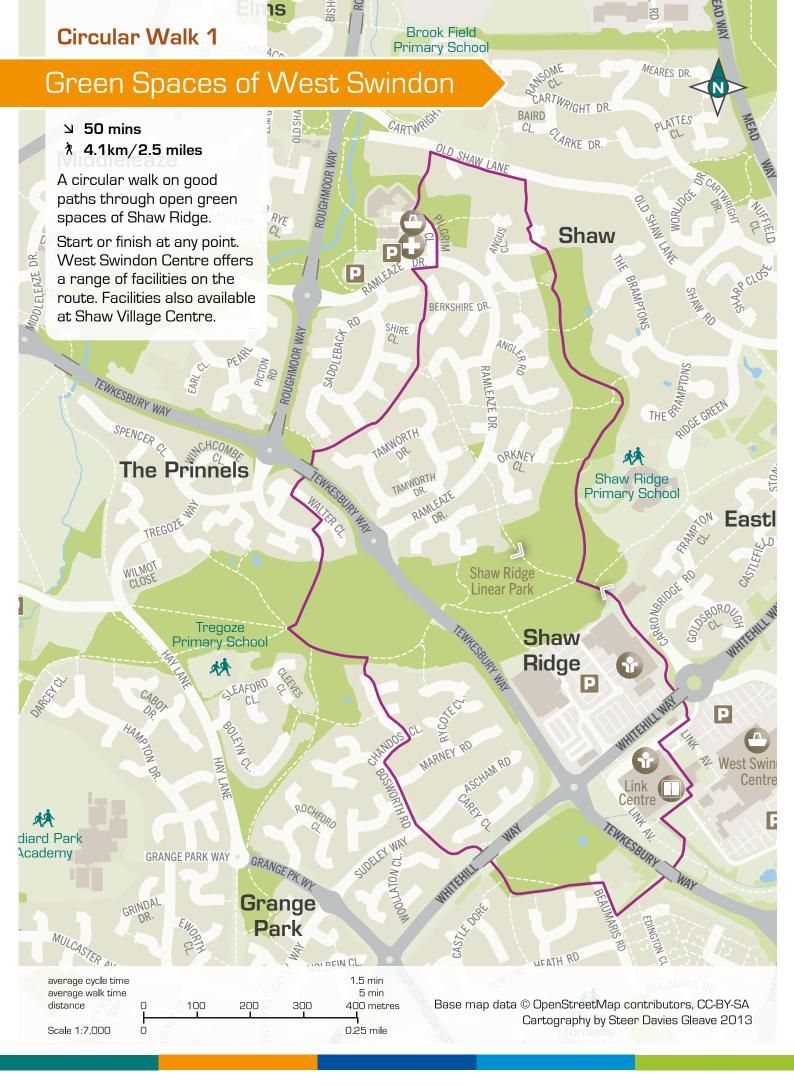
Use crossings where you can, and if you're walking with young children, hold their hand or get them to hold on to pushchair handles.



For more on safe walking routes, go to www.sustrans.org.uk



Read on to find some easy circular walks in West Swindon





GREAT WESTERN WAY

Base map data © OpenStreetMap contributors, CC-BY-SA

Cartography by Steer Davies Gleave 2013

1.5 min

0.25 mile

5 min 400 metres

GREAT WESTERN WAY

300

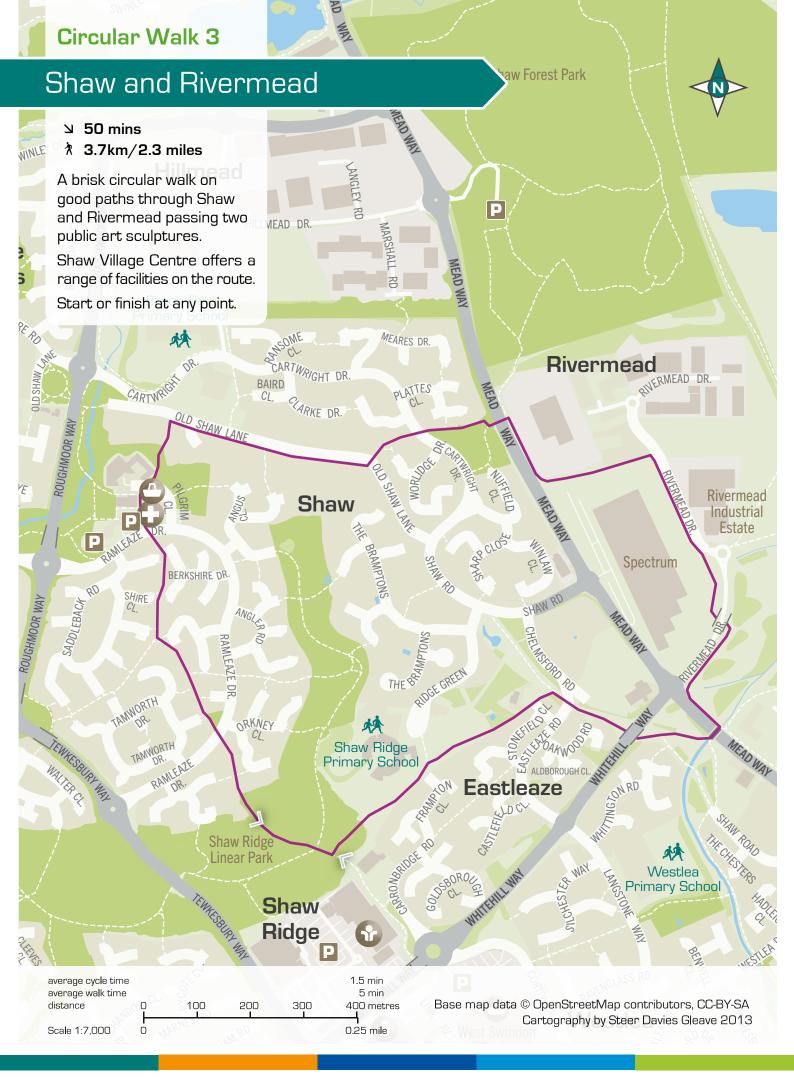
100

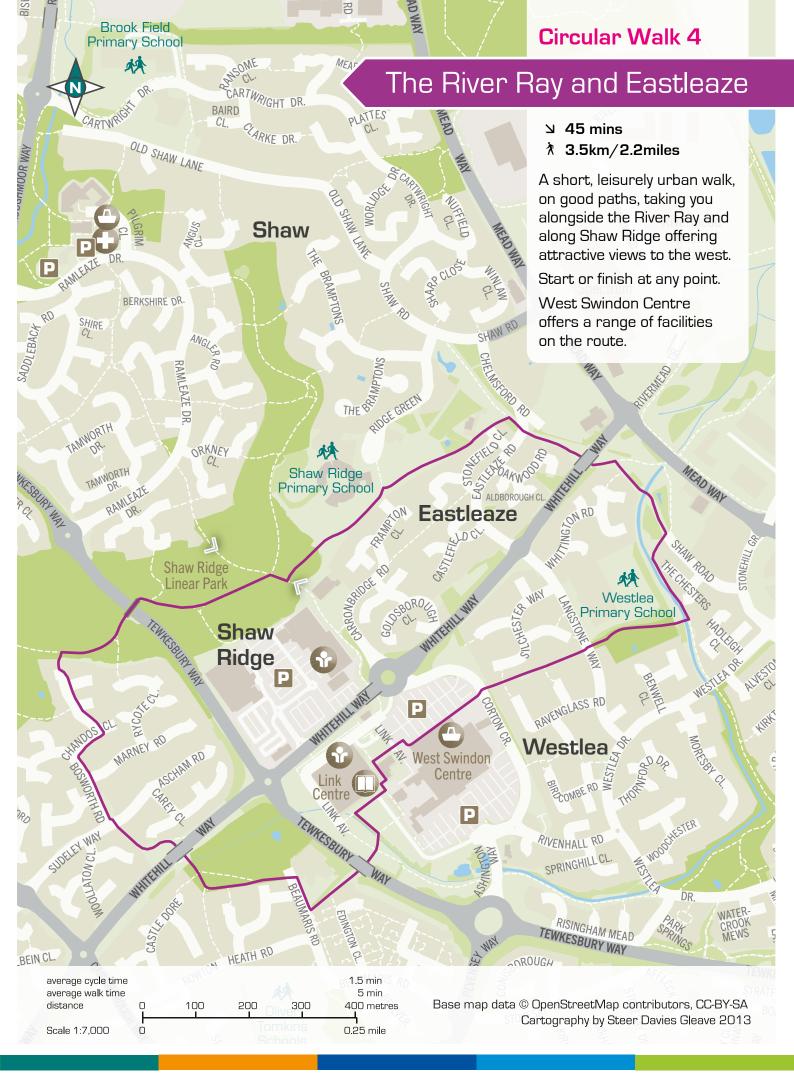
average cycle time

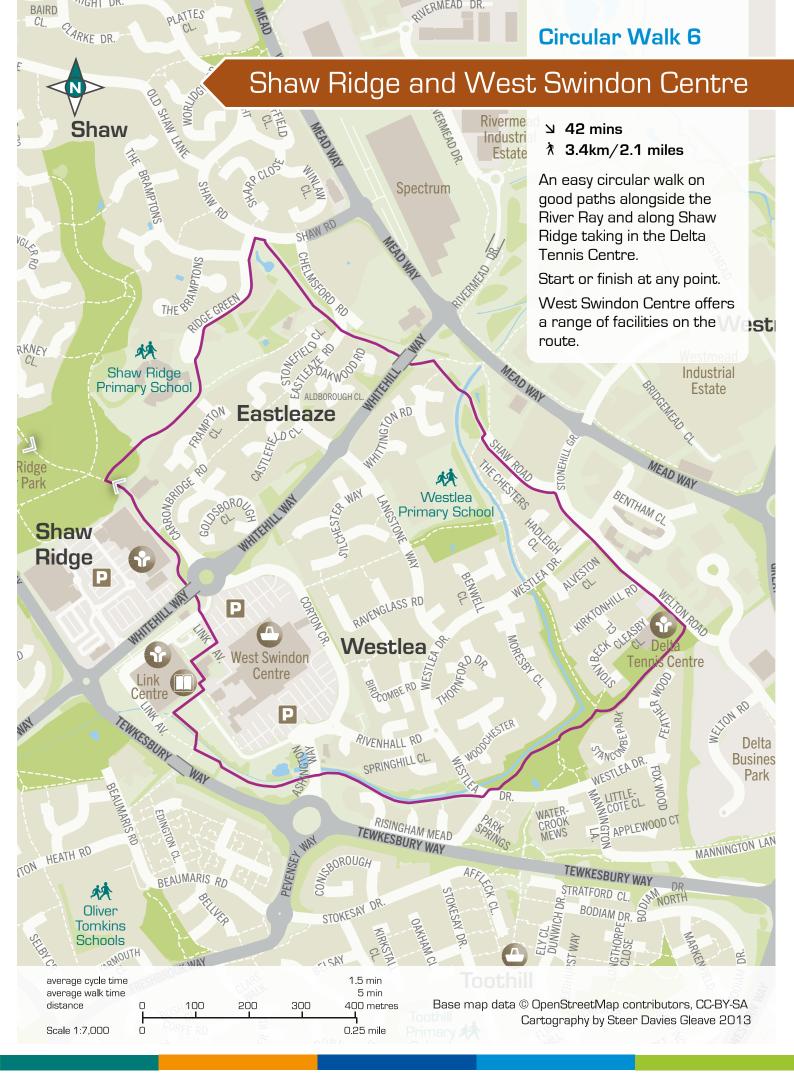
average walk time

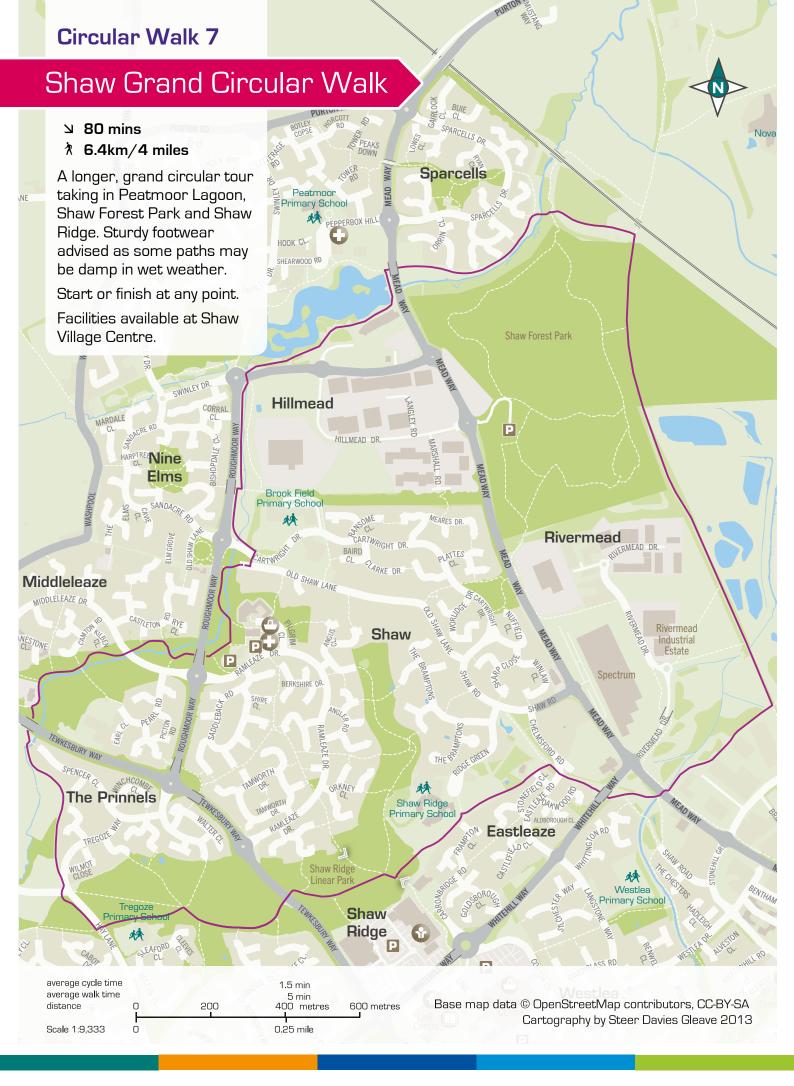
Scale 1:7,000

distance









Find each of these seven public art sculptures in West Swindon - they're all easily accessible on foot!

Will you take the Sculpture Challenge?

There are a number of public art sculptures dotted around West Swindon. They're an important and unique feature of the area's cultural make up.

Can you find them all? ...On foot of course!

To locate the sculptures and find a circular walk taking in all the sites go to www.swindonlink.com/news/ west-swindon-art

Start your walk at the Link Centre with a visit to the murals situated above the library entrance atrium.

Diana Dors - Film Star (John Clinch, 1991)



A flamboyant portrait of the late Swindon actress outside the cinema at Shaw Ridge Leisure Park. Like Diana Dors herself, the statue is larger than life.

How The Mighty Fall

(Tim Sandys-Renton, 1989)



Situated on Shaw Ridge close to Shaw Ridge Primary School, overlooking Ramleaze, this powerful sculpture in cast aluminium and cast iron is a gripping comment on the modern industrial age.

White Horse Pacified (Julie Livesy, 1987)



This imposing concrete and metal structure, situated opposite the junction between Worlidge Drive and Cartwright Drive, is an interpretation of the famous chalk white horses near Swindon.

Nexus



(Hideo Furuta, 1986)

The late Japanese sculptor, Hideo Furuta, spent six months on site at Freshbrook Village Centre, creating 'Nexus'. Huge blocks of blue pennant stone (the same as used at Stonehenge) have been hand carved into three interlocking segments, which are mounted on old railway sleepers. A massive, but often ignored presence at the village centre.

Hey Diddle Diddle

(Vega Bermejo, 1982)



Carved from Portland Stone, this charming lyrical sculpture

sits prominently at the beginning of Spencer Close, The Prinnels.

The Watchers

(Carleton Attwood, 1982)



Toothill Village Centre. The first sculpture in West Swindon, cast in ferro-concrete at Swindon's town hall studios, is one of Carleton's

last works and was largely completed by sculptor Pat Elmore. The work represents guardians of the new community.

Looking to the Future (Jon Buck, 1985)



Three haunting glass fibre figures in bathing suits resting by the lakes at the West Swindon Centre, close to the entrance to Asda and Ashington House Surgery.



The Palladian house, walled garden, parkland and children's play area offer something for everyone, whenever you visit. With a programme of special events and the changing nature of the seasons, there's always something new to enjoy on a visit all year round.

Once the ancestral home of the Viscounts Bolingbroke, there's a wealth of history waiting to be discovered as you tour the beautifully-restored State Rooms of Lydiard House, with its original furnishings, ornate plasterwork and family portraits. Next door, St Mary's Church is packed with intriguing monuments to the St John family, including the unique triptych and Golden Cavalier statue.

The ornamental Walled Garden has been faithfully restored with stunning displays of flowers, fruit trees and topiary. It is open all year round so the changing displays of flowering plants vary with each season. During the summer, we sell a variety of plants grown in the gardens.

The park has 260 acres of lawns, woodlands and pasture for visitors to walk, jog, run or cycle round and there is still lots of evidence of this oncegreat country estate including the 18th century, castellated dam wall and grand avenues. The park also provides different wildlife habitats, including the historic woodlands and the lakes and stream, and is home to a variety of birds, mammals, amphibians and invertebrates.

Walkers welcome

The grounds are open every day and entry is free. Towering Lebanese cedars, the lakes, ancient avenues and carriageways, an ice house and views of the Palladian house reveal the St John's grand designs at Lydiard Park. Rolling lawns and shady trees provide pretty, picnicking areas in the summer or you can hire one of our BBQs. The Forest Café is open daily serving tempting snacks and drinks. Next to the café, the huge children's play area, with modern swinging and climbing equipment, offers lots of active play for children of all ages. Wide, accessible pathways open up this 260 acre site to walkers, joggers, cyclists and wheelchair users.

Lydiard ParkTravel information

Scale 1:9,333

We are keen to reduce our carbon footprint and the impact of our park on surrounding roads and communities. Help us be a responsible visitor attraction and a good neighbour by considering walking or cycling to the park if you are travelling locally from West Swindon.

On foot

There is pedestrian access at both the Hay Lane (near to the Wilmot Close bus stop) and Hook Street entrances to the park. There are also pedestrian/cyclist only entrances from Darcey Close and Gower Close in Grange Park.

Visit www.getwalking.org/swindon to find leisure walking routes close to Lydiard Park.

0.25 mile

By Bus

We have an excellent bus service with a range of connections available at the Link Centre.

The direct services to Lydiard Park from Westlea, West Swindon Centre, Ramleaze, Middleleaze and Grange Park are Thamesdown Transport services 1 and 1A. You should alight at Wilmot Close bus stop and you will see the turning into Lydiard Park.

Buses run frequently, every 10 minutes Monday to Saturday

daytime (every 30 minutes daytime on Sundays and Public Holidays). To access information on when the next bus is due, text the bus stop code (found on the bus stop flag) to 84268.

Cartography by Steer Davies Gleave 2013

Services 1 and 1A also serve the Link Centre bus stop at West Swindon Centre providing connections to services from Toothill, Freshbrook, Sparcells and Peatmoor.

For full information on Lydiard Park, please go to:

w www.lydiardpark.org.uk

Ø lydiardpark@swindon.gov.uk

01793 770401

Search for "Lydiard Park"



...and save money too!

If you only live a couple of miles from work, you can kick-start your day just by walking to work.

Once you've planned your route and know where you're going, you can start enjoying the benefits of striding to work, like knowing how long your journey will take you every morning!





Look at www.walkit.com/swindon to plan your journey to work ...or go to www.swindontravelchoices.co.uk to find out more.

Apart from saving money on petrol, walking can mean...

Avoiding the traffic queues

Never having to worry about hikes in parking charges or those elusive parking spaces

Stretching your legs and eyes after hours at that VDU

Getting to know your local area

Clearing your head so you arrive home feeling much more relaxed

Spotting sales and offers in local shops

Picking up a few groceries
/ your dry cleaning / those
photos on your way home

Having a chance to chat to colleagues or neighbours

An easy way to burn calories and tone up

Saving money on gym fees

Sam works at Windmill Hill in Swindon:

"I'd been feeling guilty about using my car to travel just one mile to work so thought I'd give up my keys for my walking shoes!

It's fantastic – it's such a lovely start to the day that makes me feel energised and refreshed, and it's a great form of exercise. It's good for the environment, good for my car and great for getting rid of stress so all round happiness!!"



Get active... Eat well... Feel better!

The Health Improvement team at Swindon Borough Council offers a variety of programmes to help people of all ages and abilities make lifestyle changes and healthy choices.

So, whether you'd like advice on healthy eating for your child or you've just retired and fancy getting a bit more active, the team can help you to get started and support you.

Some of the Health Improvement programmes include:

HEALTHY STEPS

A free eight-week healthy lifestyle programme for parents of children aged 0 - 5 years.

MEND

(Mind, Exercise, Nutrition ...Do it!)



A selection of free, fun lifestyle programmes for five to sixteen year-olds whose weight is above the healthy range for their height and weight.

Mum to a ten year-old boy who attended MEND:

"It's been so positive, we've really enjoyed it. We've learnt to read food labels, and my son is now much more aware of what he's eating. He used to come home from school and watch telly, but now he enjoys going out on his bike."

Call (01793) 465412 to find out more.

DIETBUSTERS

A free weight management programme, with referral from your GP.



Swindon

"Dietbusters has made such a difference to me and I feel more confident. I'm swimming again and have started doing Aquafit. I'm reaching my goals and the weight is coming off".

Call (01793) 864934 for information.

STEPS TO HEALTH

A free 12-week exercise programme tailored for you, with referral from your GP.

"The combination of education and exercise was the perfect starting point for me. The whole approach was so positive, and in just 12 weeks I feel so much better than I did at the start of the programme."

Call (01793) 465407 for information.

MASTERS CLASSES

A wide range of physical activity sessions for the more mature customer (aged 50+), including Zumba Gold, balance and safety, line dancing, Tai Chi, swimming and circuits.



Call (01793) 864934 for information.

WALKING FOR HEALTH

Choose from a variety of walking groups for all abilities. Many groups are free. Call (01793) 465413.

"I feel so much fitter since joining the walking group that I've taken up Zumba Gold too."

Go to www.leisureinswindon.co.uk to find out more, or speak to your GP to find out if you can be referred to a health improvement programme.



Fancy burning 30% more calories when you walk? Find out more on page 23

Walking to school can be quicker than driving, and it's a great way to spend quality time with your children.

Walking to

makes sense!

If you have to drive to school, why not 'Park and Stride'?

Find a safe place to park a short distance from the school and walk the last few minutes of your journey. This will give you all the benefits of walking and avoid the congestion at the school gate, so it will be safer for everyone.

For more information on walking to school, 5 min walk zones or walking buses, email jdeeley@swindon.gov.uk or visit www.livingstreets.org.uk

Research
shows that children
who walk to school
arrive more alert
and ready to learn
at the start
of the day



Janet from Shaw:

SCHOOL

"We chat so much when we're walking to and from school, more than we do in the car, and the children arrive more alert and ready for the day ahead."

Elaine from Sparcells:

"I love our walk to school past Peatmoor Lagoon.
Come rain or shine, the children spot some amazing wildlife, so we'd miss nature happening if we didn't walk."

Top marks for walking

✓ It saves you money

The average person could save £160 a year by walking, rather than driving to school.

✓ It's sociable

84% of children who walk to school meet up with their friends on the way.

✓ It's educational

Following footpaths to school helps children get to know their way around their local area and to be more independent.

✓ It's better for the planet

Walking cuts
CO2 emissions,
as well as
exhaust fumes
around the
school gate.

✓ It's good for you too!

Striding to school with the kids is good exercise for you too! You don't need expensive gear or special walking boots for everyday walking. The great thing about walking for exercise is that you can just wear your usual clothes and comfortable shoes (unless you normally wear really high heels!).

What to wear

Breathable clothes, which are either loose-fitting or have a bit of 'stretch' tend to be more comfortable, and it's a good idea to wear layers, especially as your body temperature rises when you get walking. Most fabrics are fine, although jeans are more likely to stay damp and cold if they get wet. Tight-fitting denim can also cut in to you over longer distances.





A waterproof jacket with a hood is usually a must, and if you're out and about after dark, wearing light or bright colours, with reflective strips on a jacket or bag means you'll be visible.

Popping a **small bottle of water** into your bag will help to keep you hydrated in warmer weather, and it's worth remembering **sunscreen**, **sunglasses** or a **hat** too.





If you're planning to head 'off-road' and on to rural trails, you could consider wearing **walking shoes** or boots to give you more support.

An **extra pair of socks** will help to cushion your feet, but you may want to avoid breaking in a new pair of walking shoes if you're going for a longer walk!



Walking with Poles

If you enjoy walking, but would like to try something new, why not try **NORDIC WALKING**?

Nordic walkers use two lightweight poles to harness movement in their arms and upper body. They put pressure on the poles as they move along, creating momentum and speed. And because Nordic Walking uses more energy than normal walking, it's a great way to increase your fitness.



Ann Jones recently joined a Nordic Walking group that walks in West Swindon:

"I love Nordic walking, it's great fun and something different. I feel so much fitter since I started, and I've found new walking trails around Shaw Ridge and Lydiard Park."

a: How did it start?

Nordic walking started in Finland in the 1930's, when competitive skiers started training off-season on grass. Today it's become the fastest growing fitness activity in the world.

a: Can anyone do it?

Nordic Walking is easy and most people can do it with a bit of practise.

Q: What do I need?

You need lightweight poles, usually made of aluminium or carbon fibre. The poles come in one-piece with wrist-straps, so you need to find the right length for you. Most instructors will usually offer a free taster session so you can have a go before buying your own.

Q: How do I get started?

Go to www.nordicwalking.co.uk or contact a local instructor below to find a Nordic Walking group:

Sarah Walters: 07909 956563

Sue and Duncan Daniels: 07977 284135

An easier way to plan your journey





www.swindontravelchoices.co.uk



An easier way to plan your journey

- Journey planner allows people to plan and compare routes by bike, on foot or by bus, car and train
- All Swindon travel information in one easy to use website

Visit www.swindontravelchoices.co.uk/jplanner/ or scan the QR code below to plan your local journey.





