



Balsam Centre Health Walks April 2021 - September 2021

This brochure is dedicated to Lynn Saffer who sadly passed away in March 2021. A wonderful walk leader and volunteer who worked with many groups both at the Balsam Centre and with other organisations. Always welcoming, always smiling - we will miss you...and the flapjacks!

What is a Health Walk?

Health Walks promote walking as an achievable, non-competitive and enjoyable way to improve health and increase physical activity. There are a variety of walks to accommodate absolute beginners to the more experienced. They are a great way to increase your fitness levels, enjoy local natural spaces and meet new people. The walks are all free of charge, but donations are welcome. Walks are led by Volunteers who are trained Health Walk Leaders.

PLEASE NOTE: Due to Covid19 restrictions, we have new guidelines for the walks in order to keep everyone safe:-

It is VITAL for you to book on to walks - we need to limit the number of walkers so people can maintain social distancing. Call 01963 31842 to book.

If you can maintain social distancing then you don't need to wear a mask but we advise that you bring one, along with hand sanitiser for gates, etc, and a drink.

Walk Leaders will take your name and number for Track and Trace. All information will be destroyed after 3 weeks.

Walkers will need to fill in a new Walkers Registration Form, which outlines the new guidelines.

Walks that start from The Balsam Centre will begin from the ramp outside the door; no walks will start or end in the building for the time being - so sadly, no coffee afterwards.

Which walk is right for me?

There are different types of Health Walks designed to accommodate a range of walking experiences and fitness levels, these are described in more detail below:

Level 1 Short-Short Health Walk from The Balsam Centre

This is a 30 minute walk for people who are new to walking, or can't walk far or for long. This walk can be split into two groups, for slow paced and slightly faster paced walkers. The walks are on pavements and are planned to avoid the hills as much as possible. These walks run every Tuesday at 11.30am, starting and ending outside the The Balsam Centre. **These walks run every week and are highlighted in green italics on the list of walks with a green foot.**

Level 2 Health Walks

For mid-paced walks, please see alternatives that are offered on both our Level 1 and 3 walks.

Level 3 Short Walk for Fitness from the Balsam Centre

These faster paced 1 hour walks are aimed to maintain or increase general fitness. This average walking pace is about 3 miles per hour, we therefore offer walkers the option of veering off after approximately half an hour to walk back with a leader at a slower pace. The walk follows pavements, paths and tracks around Wincanton and the surrounding fields and do include some inclines - because this is Wincanton! These walks run every Tuesday 10am, starting and ending outside The Balsam Centre. **These walks run every and are highlighted in green italics on the list of walks with three green feet.**



Stourhead Buggy & Toddler Walks - Returning soon!

Buggy & Toddler Walks ran every other Thursday, meeting at 10am at the Visitors Centre at Stourhead. **We have no date yet to restart the Buggy**

Walks. If we can restart, the walks take place in the gardens at Stourhead. Entry is free for every adult with a child - extra adults will have to pay the garden entry fee or be National Trust members, (car parking is now also free).

All buggy walkers will need to register and collect a pass at The Balsam Centre before the first walk, passes will only be issued to people living within a 10 mile radius of The Balsam Centre, so please take a proof of address with you to register. The walks last about 45 minutes, with the option of ending in the National Trust Cafe if you wish.

These walks will be highlighted in purple with a blue foot when they are available.

Balsam Walking Group



These are "progression walks" and are aimed at those who have a reasonable level of fitness and are comfortable with walking. The walks start at 10am but the start location and day varies from week to week. To help you decide which walks are suitable for you a description of each walk is provided with the walk length and number of stiles, etc.. There is no charge but you are welcome to make a donation at the end of the walk. You will be given the details of where

the walk will meet when you book to join the walk. **These walks run EVERY WEEK and are highlighted in bold blue print with a signpost.**

How do I join a Walk?

If you would like to participate in any of the Health Walks please drop into the Centre and complete a registration form before attending your first walk. We are not able to accept walkers without registration.

Walks are free of charge and once you have registered you can join any walk in the programme. **Please book a place on the walks you wish to attend.** If no one has pre-booked on to the walk, it will be cancelled; leaders will not travel to the walk to inform walkers so if you don't want to waste your journey, let us know you want to attend. Likewise, if a walk has to be cancelled due to flooding etc, we will only contact those who have pre-booked.

We advise that you only attend walks that are at a level you feel comfortable with. If you have not participated in much exercise recently or are worried about your health, please make sure you check with your doctor before increasing your physical activity levels.

Please wear practical clothing and comfortable footwear which provides support and is waterproof. Please bring a facemask, hand sanitiser and drinking water. You won't need to wear the mask on the walk if you can maintain social distancing.

An adult must supervise any children under the age of 16. If you wish to bring a child please phone and book your place as some walks may not be suitable for very young children.

Dogs are not allowed on the walks, sorry.

If you provide us with your email, we will send out information about the conditions on the walk a few days beforehand - and we won't email you about anything else other than the walks (nor will we pass your email on to anyone else).

Are you interested in becoming a Health Walk leader?

We need more walk leaders and back stops to ensure we can put on these walks. If you enjoy our walks, perhaps you might like to consider becoming a walk leader. We provide offer free training, and you can choose which walks and how many walks you would like to assist with, whether you want to lead or be a back marker for the walks. For full details, contact Annette 01963 31842, email annette@balsamcentre.org.uk

New Brochure Week 1



Monday 12th April, 10am. Leaders Lorraine and Hilary

Mere: 5.6 miles. A level walk with no stiles - but with the option of climbing Castle Hill at the end!

Tuesday 13th April – Health Walks



10:00am - Level 3 - Starting and ending outside the Balsam Centre. Walks are typically 2 to 3 miles and 40 - 60 minutes long. Postcode BA9 9PA. Leaders: Lynda + Owain



11:30am - Level 1 - Starting and ending outside the Balsam Centre. A 30 min walk on pavements. Postcode BA9 9PA. Leader: Lorraine

Week 2



Tuesday 20th April – Health Walks

10:00am - Level 3 - Starting and ending outside the Balsam Centre. Walks are typically 2 to 3 miles and 40 - 60 minutes long. Postcode BA9 9PA. Leaders: Maymie + Pamela



11:30am - Level 1 - Starting and ending outside the Balsam Centre. A 30 min walk on pavements. Postcode BA9 9PA. Leader: Pauline



Thursday 22nd April, 10am. Leaders Peter and Wendy

Hammoon: generally level, 2+ hour walk through fields with some stiles, country lanes, tracks along a section of the railway/abandoned railway and the River Stour.

Week 3



Tuesday 27th April – Health Walks

10:00am - Level 3 - Starting and ending outside the Balsam Centre. Walks are typically 2 to 3 miles and 40 - 60 minutes long. Postcode BA9 9PA. Leaders: Owain + Lorraine



11:30am - Level 1 - Starting and ending outside the Balsam Centre. A 30 min walk on pavements. Postcode BA9 9PA. Leader: Lorraine



Thursday 29th April, 10am. Leader Tim

Peacemarsh - Savage Cat Farm - Milton-on-Stour: 4 miles. A wonderful walk along a drovers' route, following Slod Brook and the Shreen, past a working Archimedes Screw. The walk has no stiles, one moderate descent at the start and a moderate ascent at the end. It can be wet/muddy in places after heavy rain.

Week 4



Tuesday 4th May – Health Walks

10:00am - Level 3 - Starting and ending outside the Balsam Centre. Walks are typically 2 to 3 miles and 40 - 60 minutes long. Postcode BA9 9PA. Leaders: Pamela + Lynda



11:30am - Level 1 - Starting and ending outside the Balsam Centre. A 30 min walk on pavements. Postcode BA9 9PA Leader: Pauline



Friday 7th May, 10am. Leader Mark

LIMITED TO 5 WALKERS.

Castle Cary: 5.5 miles. A moderate walk, starting with a steady descent west along the Macmillan Way, around Alford to pick up the Monarchs Way and head east, via Sutton, and a steady climb back up to Ansford and Castle Cary.

Week 5



Monday 10th May, 10am. Leaders Pamela and Lynda

East Lambrook Apple Orchards : 4.5-5 miles. A walk through fields, and orchards with a small hill.



Tuesday 11th May – Health Walks

10:00am - Level 3 - Starting and ending outside the Balsam Centre. Walks are typically 2 to 3 miles and 40 - 60 minutes long. Postcode BA9 9PA. Leaders: Maymie + Lorraine



11:30am - Level 1 - Starting and ending outside the Balsam Centre. A 30 min walk on pavements. Postcode BA9 9PA Leader: Lorraine

Week 6



Tuesday 18th May – Health Walks

10:00am - Level 3 - Starting and ending outside the Balsam Centre. Walks are typically 2 to 3 miles and 40 - 60 minutes long. Postcode BA9 9PA. Leaders: Lorraine + Maureen



11:30am - Level 1 - Starting and ending outside the Balsam Centre. A 30 min walk on pavements. Postcode BA9 9PA. Leader: Pauline



Thursday 20th May, 10am. Leader Richard

Penselwood, Gasper and around : 5 miles. A walk along tracks and around fields. It is hilly but nothing too strenuous, and less than 5 stiles.

Week 7



Monday 24th May, 10am. Leaders Lorraine and Hilary

Details coming soon



Tuesday 25th May – Health Walks

10:00am - Level 3 - Starting and ending outside the Balsam Centre. Walks are typically 2 to 3 miles and 40 - 60 minutes long. Postcode BA9 9PA. Leaders: Lynda + Maymie



11:30am - Level 1 - Starting and ending outside the Balsam Centre. A 30 min walk on pavements. Postcode BA9 9PA. Leaders: Lorraine

Week 8



Tuesday 1st June – Health Walks

10:00am - Level 3 - Starting and ending outside the Balsam Centre. Walks are typically 2 to 3 miles and 40 - 60 minutes long. Postcode BA9 9PA. Leaders: Maymie + Pamela



11:30am - Level 1 - Starting and ending outside the Balsam Centre. A 30 min walk on pavements. Postcode BA9 9PA. Leader: Pauline



SATURDAY 5th June, 10am. Leader Mark

Horsington: 5.5 miles. A moderate walk, starting with a gentle uphill walk west towards Stowell and Wilkinthroop and pick up the Monarch's Way to return east via South Cheriton and back to Horsington.

Week 9



Tuesday 8th June – Health Walks

10:00am - Level 3 - Starting and ending outside the Balsam Centre. Walks are typically 2 to 3 miles and 40 - 60 minutes long. Postcode BA9 9PA. Leaders: Owain +



11:30am - Level 1 - Starting and ending outside the Balsam Centre. A 30 min walk on pavements. Postcode BA9 9PA. Leader: Lawney



Thursday 10th June, 10am. Leaders Tim

Milton-on-Stour - Wyndham's Oak - Solar Park: 4.2 miles. A dry route, largely flat with one gentle ascent and one gentle descent, and a mixture of quiet lanes, bridal paths and fields. There are 2 stiles but they can be avoided if needed. A chance to see one of the oldest oaks in Britain and wonderful views across the Blackmore Vale.

Week 10



Tuesday 15th June – Health Walks

10:00am - Level 3 - Starting and ending outside the Balsam Centre. Walks are typically 2 to 3 miles and 40 - 60 minutes long. Postcode BA9 9PA. Leaders: Lynda + Pamela



11:30am - Level 1 - Starting and ending outside the Balsam Centre. A 30 min walk on pavements. Postcode BA9 9PA. Leader: Pauline



Wednesday 16th June, 10am. Leaders Tony and Annette

Mells: 4.5 miles. A gentle walk with one moderate climb and 5 stiles.

Week 11



Tuesday 22nd June – Health Walks

10:00am - Level 3 - Starting and ending outside the Balsam Centre. Walks are typically 2 to 3 miles and 40 - 60 minutes long. Postcode BA9 9PA. Leaders: Maymie + Maureen



11:30am - Level 1 - Starting and ending outside the Balsam Centre. A 30 min walk on pavements. Postcode BA9 9PA. Leader: Lawney



Thursday 24th June, 10am. Leaders Peter & Wendy

Stourton Caundle: 5 miles. A gentle ramble in the Dorset countryside.

Week 12



Tuesday 29th June – Health Walks

10:00am - Level 3 - Starting and ending outside the Balsam Centre. Walks are typically 2 to 3 miles and 40 - 60 minutes long. Postcode BA9 9PA. Leaders: Owain +



11:30am - Level 1 - Starting and ending outside the Balsam Centre. A 30 min walk on pavements. Postcode BA9 9PA. Leader: Pauline



Thursday 1st July, 10am. Leader Chris

River Stour Walk - Sturminster Newton: 5 miles. A walk from the Old Mill, following the River Stour North, which is mainly on flat ground,

with some lovely views along the way. Country lanes and a farm track back to crossing the river again, at the Colber Bridge.

Week 13



Monday 5th July, 10am. Leaders Pamela and Lynda

Mere: 4 – 5 miles. A gentle walk, flat, with no stiles, along paths and fields.



Tuesday 6th July – Health Walks

10:00am - Level 3 - Starting and ending outside the Balsam Centre.

Walks are typically 2 to 3 miles and 40 - 60 minutes long. Postcode BA9 9PA. Leaders: Lynda + Pamela



11:30am - Level 1 - Starting and ending outside the Balsam Centre. A 30 min walk on pavements. Postcode BA9 9PA. Leader: Lawney

Week 14



Tuesday 13th July – Health Walks

10:00am - Level 3 - Starting and ending outside the Balsam Centre.

Walks are typically 2 to 3 miles and 40 - 60 minutes long. Postcode BA9 9PA. Leaders: Maymie + Maureen



11:30am - Level 1 - Starting and ending outside the Balsam Centre. A 30 min walk on pavements. Postcode BA9 9PA. Leader: Pauline



Thursday 15th July, 10am. Leaders Annette and Lu

North Cadbury and surrounding area: 5 miles. A level walk through fields and along quiet country roads with a few stiles.

Week 15



Tuesday 20th July – Health Walks

10:00am - Level 3 - Starting and ending outside the Balsam Centre.

Walks are typically 2 to 3 miles and 40 - 60 minutes long. Postcode BA9 9PA. Leaders: Owain + Pamela



11:30am - Level 1 - Starting and ending outside the Balsam Centre. A 30 min walk on pavements. Postcode BA9 9PA. Leader: Lawney



Thursday 22nd July, 10am. Leader Chris

Somerton: 4 miles. The walk is mainly on quiet tarmac roads/lanes, and mainly flat/level ground but we do cross 3 or 4 fields to continue on through Old Somerton. There are 3 gates and one stile to negotiate.

Week 16

Tuesday 27th July – Health Walks



10:00am - Level 3 - Starting and ending outside the Balsam Centre. Walks are typically 2 to 3 miles and 40 - 60 minutes long. Postcode BA9 9PA. Leaders: Lynda +



11:30am - Level 1 - Starting and ending outside the Balsam Centre. A 30 min walk on pavements. Postcode BA9 9PA. Leader: Pauline



Thursday 29th July, 10am. Leaders Peter and Wendy

East Coker: 5 miles. A stimulating walk through fields, paths and lanes, some road walking. Gentle inclines with a few stiles.

Week 17

Tuesday 3rd August – Health Walks



10:00am - Level 3 - Starting and ending outside the Balsam Centre. Walks are typically 2 to 3 miles and 40 - 60 minutes long. Postcode BA9 9PA. Leaders: Maureen +



11:30am - Level 1 - Starting and ending outside the Balsam Centre. A 30 min walk on pavements. Postcode BA9 9PA. Leader: Lawney



Friday 6th August 10am. Leaders Annette

Hambledon Hill Fort: 5 miles. A steep climb to begin with, then a gentle incline up to the fort, with a long gentle descent back along paths and fields.

Week 18

Tuesday 10th August – Health Walks



10:00am - Level 3 - Starting and ending outside the Balsam Centre. Walks are typically 2 to 3 miles and 40 - 60 minutes long. Postcode BA9 9PA. Leaders: Owain + Lorraine



11:30am - Level 1 - Starting and ending outside the Balsam Centre. A 30 min walk on pavements. Postcode BA9 9PA. Leaders: Pauline



Thursday 12th August, 10am. Leaders Annette

Cold Kitchen Hill: 5 miles. A walk with fine views, with a gentle uphill climb around the hill through paths and fields and down the other side. 2 stiles, one of which is rather "homemade"!

Week 19

Tuesday 17th August – Health Walks



10:00am - Level 3 - Starting and ending outside the Balsam Centre. Walks are typically 2 to 3 miles and 40 - 60 minutes long. Postcode BA9 9PA. Leaders: Lynda and Pamela



11:30am - Level 1 - Starting and ending outside the Balsam Centre. A 30 min walk on pavements. Postcode BA9 9PA. Leader: Lawney



Friday 20th August, 10am. Leader Mark

Zeals: 5 miles. A hilly walk from Zeals which explores the footpaths and Coombes along the Stour Valley and Monarch's Way in and around Bourton and Zeals.

Week 20

Tuesday 24th August – Health Walks



10:00am - Level 3 - Starting and ending outside the Balsam Centre. Walks are typically 2 to 3 miles and 40 - 60 minutes long. Postcode BA9 9PA. Leaders: Maymie + Maureen



11:30am - Level 1 - Starting and ending outside the Balsam Centre. A 30 min walk on pavements. Postcode BA9 9PA. Leader: Pauline



Thursday 26th August, 10am. Leaders Peter and Wendy

Evershot: 5.5 miles. A walk from Evershot through Melbury Park to Melbury Osmond. Some stiles, gentle inclines, generally on tracks and lanes.

Week 21

Tuesday 31st August – Health Walks



10:00am - Level 3 - Starting and ending outside the Balsam Centre. Walks are typically 2 to 3 miles and 40 - 60 minutes long. Postcode BA9 9PA. Leaders: Owain + Lorraine



11:30am - Level 1 - Starting and ending outside the Balsam Centre. A 30 min walk on pavements. Postcode BA9 9PA. Leader: Lawney



Thursday 2nd September, 10am. Leader Chris

Yeovil Nine Springs: 4.5 – 5 miles. The walk goes to the end of the old railway line footpath, with only one incline into the woods, then only one decline out of the woods. There is an option to go up & over Wyndham Hill (with great views) but we can decide on the day if the group would like to take that route. There are four gates but no stiles.

Week 22



Monday 6th September, 10am. Leaders Pamela and Lynda

Martock : 4 miles. An easy walk on farm paths, tracks and country roads with views of South Petherton and the River Parrett valley.

Tuesday 7th September – Health Walks



10:00am - Level 3 - Starting and ending outside the Balsam Centre.

Walks are typically 2 to 3 miles and 40 - 60 minutes long. Postcode BA9 9PA. Leaders: Lynda + Pamela



11:30am - Level 1 - Starting and ending outside the Balsam Centre. A 30 min walk on pavements. Postcode BA9 9PA. Leader: Pauline

Week 23

Tuesday 14th September – Health Walks



10:00am - Level 3 - Starting and ending outside the Balsam Centre.

Walks are typically 2 to 3 miles and 40 - 60 minutes long. Postcode BA9 9PA. Leaders: Maymie + Maureen



11:30am - Level 1 - Starting and ending outside the Balsam Centre. A 30 min walk on pavements. Postcode BA9 9PA. Leader: Lawney



Thursday 16th September, 10am. Leader Tim

Gillingham area - details coming soon

Week 24

Tuesday 21st September – Health Walks



10:00am - Level 3 - Starting and ending outside the Balsam Centre.

Walks are typically 2 to 3 miles and 40 - 60 minutes long. Postcode BA9 9PA. Leaders: Owain + Lorraine



11:30am - Level 1 - Starting and ending outside the Balsam Centre. A 30 min walk on pavements. Postcode BA9 9PA. Leader: Pauline



Thursday 23rd September, 10am. Leaders Annette and Lu

Wincanton to Cuttlesham: 4.7 miles. A gentle walk across fields, with lovely views northwards, a short stretch of lane walking before coming back up the hill to Verrington hospital and down into Wincanton. Mud in places if it has rained recently. Cale Park Cafe if anyone wants coffee afterwards.

Week 25

Tuesday 28th September – Health Walks



10:00am - Level 3 - Starting and ending outside the Balsam Centre. Walks are typically 2 to 3 miles and 40 - 60 minutes long. Postcode BA9 9PA. Leaders: Lynda + Pamela



11:30am - Level 1 - Starting and ending outside the Balsam Centre. A 30 min walk on pavements. Postcode BA9 9PA. Leader: Lawney



Friday 1st October, 10am. Leaders Tony & Wendy

West Lydford: 5 miles. A gentle walk through fields and along the river. 8 straightforward stiles, no hills.



A BIG thanks to.....

.... all the volunteer walk leaders; Chris, Daisy, Erica, Hilary, Lorraine, Lu, Lynda, Mark, Maymie, Owain, Pamela, Pauline, Peter, Poppy, Richard, Russell, Sam, Tim, Tony, Victoria, and Wendy, and our new walk leaders David, Maureen, Freya, Lawney and Sharon.

And to Lynn Saffer who sadly passed away in March 2021. An amazing woman who thought everything was possible and volunteered for so many local groups. She was loved and will be missed by so many.

This list of walks can also be found on our website www.balsamcentre.org.uk/adult-activities.html#walking and further updates are posted on our Facebook group

What are the Benefits of Using Walking Poles?



There are several reasons to use walking poles when out walking or trekking. Walking poles help you move across terrain quicker, provide additional support and reduce the amount of effort required thus allowing you to achieve more during your walks.

When used correctly walking poles can significantly increase your pace which has additional health benefits. You will increase your heart rate and oxygen uptake without feeling like you are expending vast amounts more energy. The workload will be spread across different muscle groups, not just your legs!

Walking poles also offer increased support and stability on unfamiliar ground and uneven surfaces. The extra two points of contact with the ground will increase your confidence, especially if you are feeling fatigued towards the end of your walk.

Another great benefit of using walking poles is that they improve posture, especially important if you are carrying a load. Walking poles will make you more conscious of being upright whilst walking. There is a tendency to slump forward whilst going uphill which shifts your centre of gravity and actually increases the chances of slipping or stumbling on uneven terrain. The poles will help you keep your body position more upright so you can use your arms and shoulders to propel yourself up the trail easier.

For more tips about walking poles go to <http://www.ramblers.org.uk/news/walk-magazine/reviews/2012/september/walking-poles-buyers-guide.aspx>

PLEASE READ THE FOLLOWING INFORMATION ON LYME DISEASE.



Carried by ticks, Lyme Disease has become more prevalent in the UK, and we may be walking in areas where these ticks are found. There can be nasty consequences if you are bitten and don't realise it, so read the following information so you know what to look for and what to do if you are bitten.

Lyme disease is a bacterial infection spread to humans by infected ticks. They feed on the blood of birds and mammals, including humans. Lyme disease can often be treated effectively if it's detected early on. But if it's not treated or treatment is delayed, there's a risk you could develop severe and long-lasting symptoms.



The classic bite looks like a bulls-eye rash. If you suspect you have been bitten, visit your doctor. Diagnosing Lyme disease is often difficult as many of the symptoms are similar to other conditions.

A spreading rash some days after a known tick bite should be treated with appropriate antibiotics without waiting for the results of a blood test.

However, around one in three people with Lyme disease won't develop this rash. Flu-like symptoms, extreme tiredness and headaches may occur and if left untreated the disease may spread throughout the body to the nervous system, joints, skin, heart and eyes, causing a range of symptoms eg. Facial palsy and nerve root pain.

Prevention

The best way to prevent the condition is to take sensible precautions.

- **wear appropriate clothing** (a long-sleeved shirt and trousers tucked into your socks)
- **wear light-coloured fabrics** that may help you spot a tick on your clothes
- **use insect repellent** on exposed skin
- **inspect your skin for ticks**, particularly at the end of the day, including your head, neck and skin folds (armpits, groin, and waistband) – remove any ticks you find promptly
- **make sure ticks are not brought home** on your clothes
-



If you find a tick on your skin, remove it by gently gripping it as close to the skin as possible, preferably using fine-toothed tweezers. Pull steadily away from the skin without twisting or crushing the tick. Wash your skin with water and soap afterwards, and apply an antiseptic cream to the skin around the bite. Don't use a lit cigarette end, a match head or substances such as alcohol or petroleum jelly to force the tick out. Some veterinary surgeries and pet shops sell inexpensive tick removal devices. **Awareness is key – don't stop enjoying outdoor activities!**



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