

Living Streets is the national charity that stands up for pedestrians. With our supporters we work to create safe, attractive and enjoyable streets, where people want to walk.

Fitter for Walking in South Yorkshire

Background

Living Streets is the national charity that stands up for pedestrians. With our supporters we work to create safe, attractive and enjoyable streets, where people want to walk.

We work with professionals and politicians to make sure every community can enjoy vibrant streets and public spaces.

Through the Fitter for Walking project, Living Streets works with local communities to improve local environments and get more people out walking. Focused on enabling communities, our work gives people the skills to improve their surroundings and the opportunity to achieve Living Streets awards. In the South Yorkshire region, the project has been delivered successfully for the past four years in partnership with local authorities in Rotherham and Doncaster.

Examples of Living Streets' impact in Rotherham

- Working in partnership with the Wath Community History Group and the Wentworth North Area Assembly, we developed a heritage trail around Wath town centre. The one-mile, figure-of-eight route not only highlights Wath's historical importance, but also encourages walkers to use town centre shops and services. Self-guiding maps, leaflets and a public notice board accompany the walk, and have made it hugely popular.
- The Mayor and Mayoress presented the Living Streets Award to the residents of Maltby for their efforts in improving access to shops and services across Addison Road. We helped the Cliff Hills Action Group deliver a Community Street Audit, which was acted upon by the Council through £35,000 worth of improvements including several pairs of dropped-kerb crossings, path extension, re-surfacing work and bollards to stop pavement parking. The local primary school also played their part, planting Spring bulbs to make the site it more attractive.
- In Flanderwell, an unsightly corner which had become a dumping ground has been transformed into a positive feature on an important walking route to school. A group of local young people helped design an art mural on the wall and stairwell, which is now much better maintained. The project will be finished off this spring with the installation of two raised-bed planters: one for growing plants, the other for growing vegetables.
- Residents in Maltby received the Living Streets Award, as the whole community got involved in improving access and safety around Limetree park, following concerns raised in a Community Street Audit. The Council prevented vehicular access in the park, improved pavement surfaces and installing a much-needed dropped-kerb for disabled users. The S.Y Ambulance Service spent £5,000 improving the rear of their station, residents brightened their streets with hanging baskets and schoolchildren planted ten cherry trees in the park itself.
- In Eastwood, we are working with the Community Partnership team and the Eastwood Village Community Association. We have organised several community activities aimed at bringing

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together different elements of the community, including the Roma population, to deal with local issues such as litter. A recent 'Lantern Walk' was hugely successful in bringing the community out together, and is being repeated due to popular demand on March 20th. Community litter picks have made a big impact to the area, and are being repeated.

Impact of Fitter for Walking in South Yorkshire.

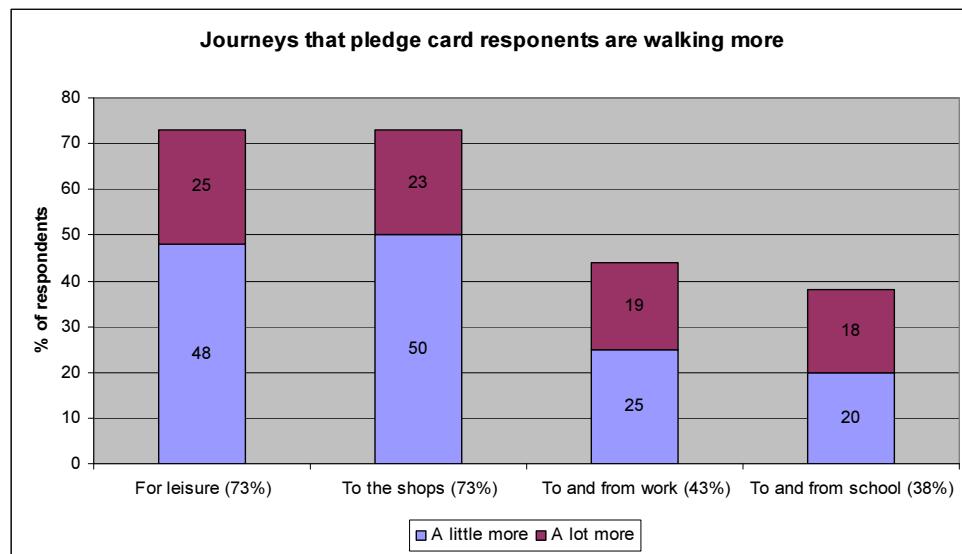
The impact of the Fitter for Walking project in South Yorkshire to date includes:

- Over 6000 people in Rotherham and Doncaster have an increased awareness of opportunities to walk more (of which 2,232 are adults and 3,827 are under 16's) and 1,500 are doing more walking.
- There has been a 5% increase in people walking on the improved route at Addison Road in Maltby, with a quarter saying they have been walking more on the route recently (British Heart Foundation National Centre, Evaluation report, Jan 2012). This has resulted in a benefit to cost ratio of 3.7:1 for decreased mortality (UWE, Feb 2012) due to increased walking.
- Eight neighbourhoods have achieved the Living Streets Award, with more expected in spring.

Impact of Fitter for Walking nationally

Of people signing a walking pledge,

- 87% of respondents have met their pledge
- 78% indicated they are walking more and 66% feel fitter and healthier
- 59% have had more contact with other people in their neighbourhood, and more than half are walking more with family and friends
- Results were maintained over 6 months in a second follow-up survey.
- A wide range of environmental and social barriers to walking were removed, and an increase in number of people walking was observed on all routes evaluated after 16 months. Improvements in social interaction and community cohesion were reported, with many residents reporting an overwhelming impact on the daily lives of local people (BHFNC)
- Projects are likely to result in significant financial savings from decreased mortality as a result in an increased number of people walking (UWE, Evaluation report Feb 2012)
- The increases in walking cover different journey types, as demonstrated in the graph below:



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