

Health Walking

Health walking is for everyone. It's fun, sociable, free and if done regularly it's a great way to get fit and stay in shape. Health walks can be for any duration but generally last no longer than an hour. For some, a five-minute walk to the shops can be a great workout but for others an hours brisk walk around a Sandwell Stride health walk provides a real challenge.

Health walking at any speed will burn calories, improve muscle tone, strengthen bones and make you feel mentally better. To add heart and lung fitness to this list you should aim to:

Feel warm and slightly out of breath but still be able to hold a conversation.

How often should I be active?

You will feel great benefits from doing any health walks. Try to build up to being active for 30 minutes five times a week.

Your health walk should include the following:

Warm up

- Start slowly
- Gradually increase your speed

Brisk walk During this section you should:

- Feel warmer
- Be slightly out of breath
- Still be able to hold a conversation

Cool down

- Gradually reduce your speed
- Bring your breathing and heart rate down slowly

Levels ■ ■ ■

Short walk suitable for everybody, including wheelchair users.



Mainly on flat surfaces, no stiles but may include some steeper inclines. May not be wheelchair accessible.



Longer walk with steeper inclines, stiles and/or steps. Not wheelchair accessible.



This health walk has been classified as a level 3



Health Walk Questionnaire

Before taking up health walking it's a good idea to work through the check list below:

Yes	No	
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Has your doctor ever said that you have a heart condition and that you should only do physical activity recommended by a doctor or specialist?
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Do you feel pain in your chest when you do physical activity?
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	In the past month have you had a pain in your chest when not doing physical activity?
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Do you lose your balance because of dizziness or do you ever lose consciousness?
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Do you have a bone or joint problem that could be made worse by a change in your physical activity?
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Has a doctor ever recommended medication for your blood pressure or a heart condition?
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Do you suffer from any breathing problems?
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Are you or have you recently been pregnant?
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Are you aware, through your own experience or doctors advice, of any other reason why it may not be safe for you to health walk?

If you have answered yes to any of the questions, seek medical advice to check the suitability of health walking as a safe form of exercise for you.



Sandwell NHS Primary Care Trust



Project is supported by the Sandwell Neighbourhood Renewal Fund

Sandwell STRIDE



Health Walk Map

Sot's Hole

Local Nature Reserve, Sandwell Valley

distance: 2 miles (approx)

time: 50 minutes (approx)



Sot's Hole

One of a series of Health Walks to be found in and around Sandwell



Sot's Hole Local Nature Reserve

Level 3



A walk of approximately 2 miles and 50 minutes duration. There are some uphill sections, a flight of steps and paths can get muddy.

Starting with your back to Sandwell Park Farm, turn left, passing between the gate and the farm cottage, then turn immediately right onto the Showground. Bear slightly to the right, walking across the grass, coming shortly to a tarmac path with the mini golf course on the left and a field on the right.

Ignore the path off to the left, continuing straight on past the metal cattle 'crush'. On reaching the track (Salters Lane) turn left and continue uphill between the tall hedgerows.

Nearing the top of the hill, where the hedgerow on the right ends, follow a narrow path off to the right ① which runs between a horse paddock on the left and a low scrubby area on the right. When this path meets a track, turn left and again proceed a short distance uphill.

Where the horse paddock on your right ends, turn right then almost immediately left along a short path which brings you to a kissing gate, emerging on to a small car park adjacent to Eaton Valley School. Turn left across the car park to reach Dagger Lane.

Turn right and walk a short distance along the pavement before turning right into Sot's Hole Local Nature Reserve, through a metal kissing gate.

Continue along the main path for approximately 500 metres and ascend a flight of steps just before the golf course.

Turn left at the top and follow the path along the edge of the woodland. This path soon drops down onto farmland. Ignore the stile in the fence and follow the path to the left ② skirting the edge of the fields, towards the golf course.

Continue along this path round the edge of the field, keeping the fence on your right. Keep straight on past a small wood on the left, and a hedgerow and path leading off to the right.

Continue straight on along this path until you come to a bridge over a stream at the edge of a large field with a post and wire fence ③.

Turn left here along the edge of the field heading towards the motorway, then bearing right at the bottom of the field. Follow the path running parallel to the motorway between a woodland plantation on the left and another field on the right.

On reaching a track (Salters Lane again) turn right for a short distance, and then left onto a tarmac path ④. This path leads back to the Showground where you will shortly see Sandwell Park Farm over to the left, where the walk ends.



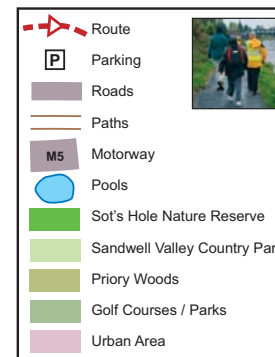
Remember

SAFETY: Make sure you can always be seen by wearing bright coloured clothing.

CLOTHING: Wear comfortable shoes that support your feet and are suitable for the ground you are walking on. Layer your clothing so that you can remove/add items if you become too warm/cold.

SELF: Always let someone know where you are going and what time you plan to be back.

AND: If you haven't done much exercise for a while build up slowly. Your fitness will improve with regular walking so why not make your target a 30 minute walk on 5 days of the week!



For further information on Sandwell Stride Health Walks please call the Health Walks Co-ordinator on **0800 011 4656**