

“The best is getting outside in the fresh air”



**Peterhead Fit to Walk** began in March 2021 and is one of the health walks that was started as part of the Live Life Aberdeenshire Health Walks project development. Fit to Walk is a short walk session often incorporating simple strength and balance exercises and is led by trained leisure centre staff and volunteers.

I am Claire Turnbull (Health Walk Coordinator for Aberdeenshire and project coordinator for Live Life Aberdeenshire health walks). It is my role to support Health Walks across Aberdeenshire with set-up, training, promotion, and recruitment of walkers/ volunteers. I am employed by Live Life Aberdeenshire, which is part of Aberdeenshire Council, with funding support from Paths for All who are a national charity championing everyday walking across Scotland.

I visited the Peterhead Fit to Walk in August 2021 and spoke to some of the regular walkers about their experience of being part of the Peterhead Fit to Walk.

**Catherine** (85) pictured left, considers herself a newcomer to Peterhead having only lived in the town for 4 years. She had lived previously in one of the surrounding villages. Catherine heard about the walk through her niece and was encouraged to go along.

“I enjoy it. I am meeting different people and it is good to meet other people and to get out and about.”

Catherine says what she enjoys most about the health walk is the company of others.

“If I am honest (about what I enjoy most) I prefer the company. I fell with walking on my own and I think it gives you confidence when you are with company as you don’t realise how far you are walking and that’s good. Mentally it’s good to be out.”

Catherine enjoys walking and says the walking group has meant she is walking more day to day.

“If I’m out (locally) with relations I say I’m walking home. Sometimes I get a run home, but I prefer (to walk), I say that’s me for the day, that’s my walk.”

Catherine also enjoys the strength and balance exercises that the walk leaders do as part of the walk.

“We have our exercises sometimes, if we are back early, or if we are in the gardens. I like them. I really feel I’m needing something with exercise that’s why I like to walk, I just feel it keeps the body supple.”

Catherine encourages others to come along to the group.

“I’ve told a few (friends), it’s there for them, anybody can join, it’s open. It’s a friendly group, it really is friendly. It’s fine to walk on your own but it’s really better when you’ve company”.

**Greta (77) and Dennis (82), pictured centre and right on picture above.**

Greta joined when the group first started and also heard about it through her niece. Greta has always enjoyed walking and was active before joining the walk. She enjoys the walks for the social benefit.

“We are a cheery bunch, we get a good laugh, you’re walking along discussing things with each other about what kind a week you’ve had. There were a few others I didn’t know that I’ve met just through the walking club”.

Greta talks about the fun of the walking group and the exercises.

“We really get a good laugh; we get fun through it all so it’s not like a chore. Everybody is light-hearted and we just have a bit of fun. The exercises as well going on, that’s fun as well.”

Greta has encouraged a few others to join including her husband, Dennis. Dennis has been walking with the group since May 2021. This is what he had to say about joining the walk group...

“It’s fine, you just meet other people and go along with the flow. I am waiting to get my hip done. I just take my stick with me and plod on at the back.”

Greta says the walk group is encouraging Dennis to walk more.

“He was never a walker before, he didn’t walk, he didn’t like walking but he’s happy to do the little walk.”

Greta talked about how the group has mixed abilities and it meets the needs of everyone.

“There’s older people and younger people, it’s a mixed group. There’s no pressure put on you (to walk further or faster).”

Dennis has this message for any prospective walkers who may have reservations about joining a health walk...

“(You’ll) enjoy it, you get to talk to different people. It’s better than sitting in the house yourself with no one to speak to.”

Health walks take place across Aberdeenshire every week. To find your local walk visit the Paths for All webpage: <https://www.pathsforall.org.uk/health-walks> where you will find more information about individual walks.

If you would like to volunteer to support health walks, or would like to know more about the programme across Aberdeenshire please email: [healthwalks@aberdeenshire.gov.uk](mailto:healthwalks@aberdeenshire.gov.uk)

Or visit the Aberdeenshire health walks webpage: <https://livelifeaberdeenshire.org.uk/live-life-well/health-and-wellbeing-programmes/aberdeenshire-health-walks/>