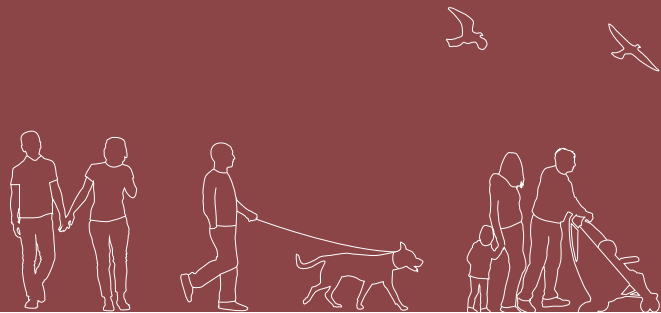


Walking groups



Urban & Civic in partnership with Sustrans have been organising weekly led walks through Middlebeck, Newark with the aim of encouraging an active lifestyle. Our Community Engagement Officer wanted the walks to be a fun and sociable activity for people who want reap the benefits of exercise. During the summer residents attended the events from across the development with each walk lasting up to one hour.

The routes took participants along the National Cycle Network (NCN) 64 Greenway which runs along the eastern edge of the development. Other walking highlights include local areas such as Hawton village, the local Llamas, Christ Church Primary School and Balderton Lake.

Some of the participants reported that they have valued the social aspect of each walk and it has made them feel happy. Walking encourages people to observe the environment in a different way as well as providing an opportunity to explore new areas. Walkers also participated in a reptile survey set up on the NCN and a butterfly survey to investigate the presence of wildlife on the development to further support the aim to retain biodiversity.

Community activities underpin our resident relationships and help to understand how our spaces are enjoyed. Using sessions like these helps to reinforce resident relationships with their surroundings whilst offering educational content delivered through a specialist charity partner. Residents are already keen to continue the walks beyond the development and on days where a led walk is not offered.

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As more residents join the community of Middlebeck, weekly walking groups during the summer have been an excellent opportunity for the community to get to know their local area, meet their neighbours, and learn more about wildlife and ecology – while also getting fitter. Walking groups are a fantastic way to get outdoors during a time when we'd spent long enough in front of a screen.”

KYLE SMITH

**Communities, Communications
and Partnerships, Middlebeck**

