



## GO FURTHER

A project to enrich the walking experiences of local community walking groups in Melbourne and to develop an understanding of the barriers to bushwalking.



REPORT & RECOMMENDATIONS  
Gina Mancuso BA (Hons) (Melb)  
July 2008

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## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

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Walking in the bush is a popular recreational activity that is potentially available to everyone. It suits people of all ages and abilities, costs little and provides opportunities for social interaction. Walking is low impact, within the physical capabilities of most people, can be performed at one's own pace, improves fitness and can reduce the risk of developing conditions like heart disease and stroke and help manage other conditions including high blood pressure, high cholesterol, obesity and diabetes.

Research suggests that contact with nature and interaction with other people can improve health and wellbeing, including mental health. A number of studies have shown that the benefits of green exercise and nature-based activities include ongoing social links, increased confidence, stress-reduction, increased motivation, increased interest in life and the development of social, environmental and personal skills.

In 2007 Bushwalking Victoria was funded \$40,000 by Sport and Recreation Victoria, a Victorian Government agency, to implement the Go Further Project. Go Further aimed to increase bushwalking participation in the community by developing and implementing a plan to engage with local community walking groups to provide support and expertise and to encourage them to 'go further'.

Bushwalking Victoria appointed a Project Officer in August 2007 to engage and consult with local community walking groups across Victoria and implement a series of pilot bushwalks with these groups.

Local walking groups across Melbourne took part in consultations and pilot bushwalks aimed to inform Bushwalking Victoria about the issues and barriers preventing local community walking groups from taking up bushwalking and exploring and documenting what works and what could be sustainable.

Data from consultations and evaluations of pilot bushwalks suggest that future sustained participation in bushwalking must take into account the diversity of abilities, information on 'how to' bushwalk including gear, safety and walking in hot weather, transport and walking during the week and within school hours for those with competing priorities to more extensive bushwalks. Findings also strongly revealed the importance of providing supported and diverse walking opportunities based on a continuum starting with local 'green' walks to build people's confidence.

As an outcome of the findings from the project, recommendations are:

- How to: A guide to walking in the bush for local walking groups is required.
- A green walking continuum: Bushwalking Victoria to introduce and promote the concept of 'green walks' for local walking groups.
- Walking sustainability: Bushwalking clubs to be encouraged to mentor and support local walking groups.
- Perceptions of bushwalking: Bushwalking Victoria to address perceptions of bushwalking in its general promotion and communication with the wider community.
- Bushwalking clubs and community engagement: A guide for bushwalking clubs to encourage engagement with local walking groups is required.
- Dissemination of walking programmes: Bushwalking clubs to be encouraged to disseminate their walking programmes widely.

This report documents the context, process, outcomes and recommendations of the 'Go Further' project. The report is particularly useful for organisations and individuals wanting to engage with local community walking groups to improve their walking experiences and deliver a wider range of health benefits.

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# INTRODUCTION

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Bushwalking Victoria aims to promote safe and environmentally responsible recreational bushwalking and to promote its benefits to the community. In addition, it is the peak body representing bushwalkers in Victoria and is constituted to unite all affiliated Victorian Bushwalking Clubs, associate members and individual supporters.

Bushwalking, or just simply walking in the bush and other natural landscapes, is an active recreation that promotes health and wellbeing, provides the potential to educate people about the value of our natural environment and builds social capital through club network interaction.

## Improving health and wellbeing

The World Health Organization has advised that the global burden of chronic disease is increasing and that by 2020 chronic disease will account for almost three quarters of all deaths. According to the National Chronic Disease Strategy (2005), Australia's burden of chronic disease is also increasing with this trend. Chronic diseases, moreover, are particularly widespread in more disadvantaged sectors of the population including older Australians, those experiencing socio-economic disadvantage, people with mental illness and physical and intellectual disabilities (National Chronic Disease Strategy, 2005).

The National Chronic Disease Strategy focuses on asthma, cancer, diabetes, heart, stroke and vascular disease and osteoarthritis, rheumatoid arthritis and osteoporosis. The Strategy observes that the increase in chronic disease is relatively recent and can be attributed to a number of factors including lifestyle changes such as tobacco smoking, risky and high risk alcohol use, physical inactivity, poor diet and nutrition, excess weight, high blood pressure and high cholesterol (National Chronic Disease Strategy, 2005).

A report by the Australian Institute for Health and Welfare, *Australia's Health 2008*, similarly highlighted that cardiovascular disease, cancers and respiratory diseases remain the leading causes of death overall. According to the report, also of concern is the prevalence of diabetes - which has doubled in the past two decades - and obesity with 7.4 million adults being overweight in 2004-05 and 30 percent of those being obese.

According to *Go For Your Life* (2008), physical exercise has been proven to improve health. The benefits of walking as a means of improving health and wellbeing are well established and include:

- Increased cardiovascular and pulmonary (heart and lung) fitness
- Reduced risk of heart disease and stroke
- Improved management of conditions such as hypertension (high blood pressure), high cholesterol, joint and muscular pain or stiffness, and diabetes
- Reduced risk of developing some cancers
- Stronger bones and improved balance
- Increased muscle strength and endurance
- Reduced body fat

As almost a third of the population (6.8 million Australians) are sedentary and don't exercise at all, walking would be an ideal start to improve lifestyles (Exercise, Recreation and Sport Survey, 2006, cited in Bushwalking Australia Inc, 2008).

Research evidence also suggests that contact with nature and interaction with other people can improve health and wellbeing, including mental health. At the 2006 International Land Care Conference, researchers from Deakin University presented a paper about the mental health benefits of nature-based activities. Findings from the research project, 'Feel Blue, Touch Green', suggest that participants experienced benefits including ongoing social links, learning social, environmental and personal development skills, increased confidence, stress-reduction, increased motivation and interest in life, enjoyment and other benefits as a result of 'green exercise' (that is, exercise in the natural environment) and nature-based activities (Ebden and Townsend, 2006).

At the 5<sup>th</sup> Biennial Tracks and Trails Conference held in Queensland in 2008, international research as part of the Irish Trail Strategy found that green exercise has positive effects on mood and self-esteem, can reduce feelings of depression and encourage clear thinking regardless of the level of intensity, duration or type of activity. The Strategy also talks about the use of trails and that those who have access to trails increase their recreational activity on average by 44% (Irish Trails Strategy, undated).

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# GO FURTHER

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## Background

Walking is low impact, within the physical capabilities of most people, can be performed at a leisurely pace, improves fitness and can reduce the risk of developing chronic disease and other conditions. Recreational walking in natural areas, which includes walking in the bush, is a popular activity that is potentially available to everyone. It suits people of all ages and abilities, costs little and provides opportunities for social interaction and has many health benefits.

Bushwalking Victoria also observed that clubs were doing an increasing number of walks in urban parklands. This trend, as a result of aging demographics and rising fuel costs, proved a timely convergence between the aims of the project and bushwalking club developments. So when the Victorian Government announced the *Supporting Grassroots Sport* funding program Bushwalking Victoria identified an opportunity to explore what may be needed to assist more people to walk in natural areas.

A project steering committee comprising two Bushwalking Victoria Board members and a project leader seconded from one of its clubs set about preparing the funding submission including setting out the aims, objectives and monitoring of the project (see Appendix A). The proposal was also discussed with Sport and Recreation Victoria. After securing \$40,000 in funding a part-time project officer was appointed for the 11 month project and joined the steering committee.

Go Further engaged and consulted with existing local community walking groups to understand and trial ways for them to extend their walking to areas of urban parkland and beyond. This was also a way of promoting recreational walking generally and an opportunity for experienced bushwalkers to share the benefits and joy of their activity with others.

## Process

The project officer developed the following process to engage community walking groups in the project:

- Contact walking group coordinator or leader
- Initial meeting with coordinator to explain Go Further
- Coordinator invites walking group to a focus group consultation
- Conduct focus group consultations
- Ascertain whether the walking group would like to participate in a pilot bushwalk
- Discuss needs of the group in relation to pilot bushwalk with coordinator
- Seek volunteer leaders from bushwalking clubs to mentor the walking group during the pilot bushwalk
- Where possible, arrange for volunteer bushwalkers to meet with walking group prior to bushwalk
- Implement pilot bushwalk
- Evaluation of pilot walk conducted either immediately following the walk or as soon as possible

### Case Study

#### Green Walking

In December 2007, Wingate Ave Community Centre's 'Thursday Morning Walking Group' participated in a pilot bushwalk in partnership with Go Further and a volunteer leader from Melbourne Bushwalkers Club.

The walking group went on an extended walk along the Merri Creek Trail and later explored Ceres Environmental Park. This was the first time the group did something different from their usual 30 minute route around the Community Centre's neighbouring streets and the first time most of them had been to Ceres and walked along the Merri Creek path. Many of the participants were amazed to learn that the park and creek are accessible via public transport and that their 'pilot bushwalk' is a green walk they could easily do again.

The walking group deemed their 'green walk' a success and decided to include green walking in their 2008 walking itinerary.



# CONSULTATION METHODOLOGY

## The Consultation Strategy

Fifteen walking groups across Melbourne took part in consultations and pilot bushwalks intended to inform Bushwalking Victoria about the issues and barriers preventing local community walking groups from taking up bushwalking. Walking groups from the Cities of Moonee Valley, Hobson's Bay, Hume, Maribyrnong, Whittlesea, Monash, Brimbank, Moreland, Darebin, Port Phillip and Stonnington were consulted.

Focus groups were specifically constructed to capture individual views and experiences through the interaction and communication between the participants before and after the pilot bushwalks. For those groups not participating in pilot bushwalks, the focus groups were tailored around their usual programme of local walking and questions designed to capture their perceptions of bushwalking.

A total of 3 pilot bushwalks were conducted with another 2 developed and taking place after the end of the funding period.

As well as assisting metropolitan walking groups to extend their walking into the natural environment, the project initially sought to assist regional Victorian walking groups. However, for those groups who responded to approaches seeking consultation and engagement it strongly emerged that they were already walking in natural areas and bushlands. As regional groups were often located close to forests and other natural reserves, it appeared their desire for being in touch with nature was already being met.

Appendix B lists the organisations and walking groups contacted and consulted during the project.

## The Pilot Bushwalks

On Sunday December 2 2007, the Waverley Bushwalking Club in partnership with the New Hope Migrant and Refugee Centre implemented a 'Community Outreach Walk' in Sherbrooke Forest for newly arrived Burmese migrants. The Waverley Bushwalking Club worked closely with the Centre's Planning Officer to gain an understanding of any issues that may arise for this group of participants. There was a total of 22 participants.

On Thursday 13 December 2007, Wingate Ave Community Centre's 'Thursday Morning Walking Group' participated in a pilot bushwalk in partnership with Go Further and a volunteer leader from Melbourne Bushwalkers Club. The Walking Group went on an extended walk along the Merri Creek Trail and later explored Ceres Environmental Park. There was a total of 7 participants.

On Tuesday 1 April 2008, Bushwalking Victoria in partnership with Citylink Creek Connections and

### Case Study

#### Going Bush

In December 2007, the Waverley Bushwalking Club in partnership with the New Hope Migrant and Refugee Centre implemented a 'Community Outreach Walk' in Sherbrooke Forest for newly arrived Burmese refugees. The Waverley Bushwalking Club worked closely with the MRC's Planning Officer to gain an understanding of any issues that may arise for this group of participants. For all 22 of the participants, this was their first experience of bushwalking.

This community bushwalk provided the Go Further project with an opportunity to consult with a culturally and linguistically diverse community and explore any issues and barriers to bushwalking, trial a bushwalk with a group and explore and document what works. Participants said they enjoyed the bushwalk and noted that the forest reminded them of forests in Burma. They said they enjoyed going out into the natural environment and would be keen to explore the Australian landscape further. In fact, the partnership between the Waverley Bushwalking Club and the Burmese community continued in 2008 with a second bushwalk at Churchill National Park.



Waverley Bushwalking Club members and Burmese refugees at their latest activity.

## Refugees go bush

A MONASH walking club has introduced a group of Springsvale refugees to the Australian bush. Waverley Bushwalking Club spokeswoman Catherine Gull said her group had heard about the plight of the Burmese refugees. The club spoke with New Hope Migrant and Refugee Centre worker Heidi Zwick, who helped plan a day in the bush at Sherbrooke Forest in the Dandenongs. "They heard about how these people, many from small villages in the Burmese countryside, were adapting to life in a big city, far from home," Ms Gull said. "We wanted to see if we could reach out to the new Burmese community, show them that they are welcome here, and help them experience a little of Australia's wonderful natural environment." Ms Gull said 22 Burmese refugees spent a day exploring bushland paths, comparing the size of trees in Burma and Australia, feeding the cockatoos and parrots, and looking for lyrebirds. "They learned how to play cricket, how to barbecue sausages, and a few new Aussie phrases," Ms Gull said. "But we learned much more from them, about where they lived, and why they had to leave their homes, the struggle to understand their new country, and hopes for a better life for their children." For details on the Waverley Bushwalking Club, call Tony Walther on 9562 2227.

The Leader (Waverley local paper) January 8 2008,

Moonee Valley City Council supported four multicultural walking groups to pilot a walk in the bush at Woodlands Historical Park. The groups, including a Vietnamese walking group and Horn of Africa women's walking group, walked along the Spiritual Path at Woodlands. A total of 76 participants joined in on the pilot bushwalk.

## **The Sample**

Focus group participants were recruited from local walking groups across Melbourne. Some walking groups were part of a Community Centre or Neighbourhood House walking program while others walked independently. Group size ranged from 4 to 33 participants. The total number of participants consulted as part of focus groups and pilot bushwalk evaluations was 124.

The information gathered from focus group discussions and interviews was analysed according to the principles of theme analysis – an analytic strategy used to organise and interpret the information collected. The project officer looked for the major themes across all the consultations.

## **The Interview Schedule**

The following schedule is an account of the questions asked during consultations and pilot bushwalks.

### **Before the bushwalk**

- What do you imagine bushwalking is really about? What are the benefits of bushwalking in comparison to walking around the block, for example?
- Have you been bushwalking before? If no, why?
- What do you think you might need to do differently to prepare for a bushwalk?
- What do you know about bushwalking clubs?

### **During and after the bushwalk**

- What did you enjoy about today's bushwalk?
- What didn't you enjoy about today's bushwalk?
- What did you learn about bushwalking?
- What do you think are the benefits of bushwalking?
- What kinds of things would you need to bushwalk regularly?
- What kinds of things would prevent you from bushwalking regularly?
- Would you bushwalk again in a group? If no, why? Alone?
- Would you consider joining a bushwalking club?
- Would you consider making bushwalking a part of your walking club's activities?
- What makes bushwalking a positive experience?
- What makes bushwalking a negative experience?
- Would you be confident after today to go bushwalking again? If no, what would you need to feel confident?

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## CONSULTATION FINDINGS

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The following analysis represents the information provided by participants as part of the consultation strategy.

### Never tried it

Most of the people in walking groups consulted have never tried bushwalking. When asked, a common response was that they had never thought of it. A common response included:

*"It's just not something I've thought about before."*

After the pilot bushwalks however, some participants were surprised that they hadn't tried walking in the bush until now:

*"I can't believe we haven't done this kind of walk before. It hasn't been that difficult to organise."*

*"It's such a beautiful place. And not too far from home. I didn't even know it was here."*

### Bushwalking or walking in the bush?

There also appeared to be confusion about the definition of bushwalking. For some people, bushwalking meant travelling out of the city and into countryside. For others, a walk in the local park constituted a bushwalk. For example:

*"I walk in the bush all the time. Of course it depends what you mean by bushwalking. I've never been out of Melbourne – or really out of my local area – to walk."*

*"I imagine bushwalking happens in the wild, where there are no houses, cars or other people."*

### Expert knowledge, expert equipment

The most common perception about bushwalking is that it requires special knowledge and special equipment. Most people in the walking groups consulted felt that they were unable to go out and bushwalk because they didn't have any knowledge of where to go, what to do, how to do it and felt it requires special and expensive equipment and clothing. One woman from a walking group said:

*"I imagine bushwalkers all carry a backpack and a compass and stay overnight. I couldn't do that. I wouldn't know how to do that. I don't own any hiking boots and can only read a simple map. I just wouldn't feel confident enough right now."*

For another it was about the equipment:

*"I don't have the right stuff. I don't have the right shoes and equipment which is too expensive."*

And for others, the idea of having an expert knowledge of the bush was paramount and therefore felt it excluded them from participating:

*"Don't you need to know what to do in the bush? Like what if something goes wrong? I wouldn't know how to get out."*

*"I can't find my way. I'd need to be with someone to show me what to do."*

*"People that go bushwalking have been doing it for years. They know what to do. They know things about the country that I don't."*

After doing a pilot bushwalk, many participants were pleased that they had tried something new and felt it was something they would like to do again. For example:

*"It's a nice, easy way for me to start. I feel like I've done something new."*

*"The walk was really beautiful and it was a good, long walk too. I've had a day out. It'd be nice to do something like this again with the group. Maybe next time we could plan a longer day and go further out still."*

The notion of future bushwalks frequently emerged after the pilot bushwalks. Participants talked about wanting to walk in nature again. However, they also talked about the importance of having support to continue to go further:

*"I'd love to do something like this again. I am still nervous about the whole idea of the bush and getting lost and stuff but I would definitely do it with a group and guidance from real bushwalkers."*

*"It's been great to do this with Bushwalking Victoria's support. We wouldn't have known where to start really. I think we'd need the same kind of assistance to go for a walk like this again. At least for the first few times, anyway."*

One walking group leader revealed exactly what his walking group's needs were:

*"For this group it's about knowing where to go. We are lucky because there's a lot of us but we don't all walk at the same pace or distance. We need the support from experienced bushwalkers to guide us and suggest what would be appropriate walks for the group. We need to know where we could go that would cater for the different paces and distances. The key for us is a little support and lots of information."*

### **The benefits of bushwalking**

All the walking groups consulted were positive about the benefits of bushwalking. They listed a range of health benefits associated with walking and also talked about the specific benefits of both walking in a natural environment and walking socially. For many people the biggest benefit was being in a natural environment. Most participants were keen to get out and try walking in the bush. According to these two participants:

*"It would be great to get some fresh air and get out of here. I feel like it would be like getting out of a rut."*

*"In the bush I think there would be no interruptions. No cars, no pollution. A nice environment and different scenery."*

A common theme that emerged after pilot bushwalks was the effect of the natural environment on mood:

*"It's just so good to get away from the flats for a few hours and see all this green. We haven't even had to travel that much to get here and I already feel lighter and free."*

*"Why haven't we done this before? I feel like I'm in such a different place – even mentally. I feel much calmer. It's good to be in the natural environment."*

*"I feel grounded. And I feel lighter – like some of the stress has gone away."*

### **Case Study**

#### **Walking with diverse communities**

Walkers from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds have expanded their walking experiences and gone further. In April 2008, Bushwalking Victoria in partnership with Citylink Creek Connections and Moonee Valley City Council supported 4 multicultural walking groups to pilot a walk in the bush at Woodlands Historical Park. A total of 76 walkers, including participants from a Vietnamese group and Horn of Africa women's walking group, walked along the Spiritual Path at Woodlands.

The walking groups were positive about the benefits of bushwalking and enjoyed the change from urban to natural environment. Volunteers from various bushwalking clubs joined the bushwalk to provide support and expertise and Victoria Police donated the use of a bus for transport.

According to the coordinator of the Horn of Africa women's walking group, the bushwalk sparked an increased interest and attendance at the following week's usual walking group.



## Walking with diverse communities

For those culturally and linguistically diverse communities consulted, particularly those recently arrived in Australia, participants talked about being fearful of their new environment and limiting their physical activity outside their homes to a minimum. As a consequence, many were suffering from health problems including vitamin D deficiency, diabetes, thyroid dysfunction and obesity and depression as a result of feelings of isolation. Some participants talked about their competing priorities:

*"This [bushwalking] is not something I think of doing when I have so much to think about."*

Many of these participants also talked about lacking the confidence to explore the natural environment:

*"I still don't go out much. I am still scared. I am not sure."*

However, for some participants after the pilot, walking in the bush was particularly significant:

*"This is the first time I've been out into the Australian bush. It's been a good day. It's reminded me of home."*

## Walking locally

The groups talked about the convenience of their local walking groups. They mentioned that it was easy to get to and didn't require much travelling. People said they would prefer to walk in the bush if it was close by and didn't require too much travelling to get to. They said they would like information about local 'green' walks and that they didn't know where to find out about local walks. For example:

*"I would love to walk with this group in a nice environment without having to cross the street or have cars zooming by but it would still have to be local so that I could get to it and then pick up the kids."*

*"I think there are lovely parks and creeks to walk around here but I don't know."*

After the pilot bushwalks, participants talked about the idea of having a continuum of bushwalking where they could start in local parklands, creeks and bushlands and work their way further out once they felt more confident.

## Perceptions of safety

In all groups there was discussion about safety. People commented that if they were in the bush without an expert they would feel unsafe. They feared the heat, snakes and getting lost, in particular. For one participant it was all about the fear of snakes:

*"But what about all the snakes? There are snakes in the park all the time. They would be everywhere in the bush. I don't know what to do."*

## Joining a Bushwalking Club

Most people in walking groups said that they would prefer to stay within their current group and not necessarily join a bushwalking club. They asked about what kind of commitment they would need to make if they joined. Many people didn't know that bushwalking clubs even existed and asked if they were open for anyone to join.

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# RECOMMENDATIONS

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## 1. 'How To'

*It is recommended that Bushwalking Victoria develop a guide to walking in the bush for local walking groups.*

The consultations revealed that participants lacked accurate information about bushwalking. Participants talked about not knowing how to bushwalk, what to wear and that it required expert skills. However, findings revealed people's desire and willingness to walk in natural areas once misperceptions were corrected and appropriate support provided.

Appendix C outlines the information required in such a kit. A complementary kit, without the Melbourne green walks, can be produced for regional and interstate audiences. Both these kits should also be available online.

## 2. A Green Walking Continuum

*It is recommended that the member clubs of Bushwalking Victoria be encouraged to include local 'green' walks in their walking programmes to encourage greater participation and introduce local walking groups to walking in natural environments.*

Participants in the project were aware of the health and well-being benefits of walking and the particular benefits of walking in the natural environment. Findings, however, suggest that a lack of confidence and concerns about safety are two of the major factors stopping people from walking in the bush. It emerged that participants felt more comfortable starting their bush walking experience locally in nearby parklands, creeks and bushlands. Local walks were also seen to be more accessible and allowed participants to maintain commitments around children.

## 3. Walking Sustainability

*It is recommended that Bushwalking Victoria encourage bushwalking clubs to mentor local walking groups and provide information and support to encourage sustainability.*

Findings from the consultations suggest that participants were keen to try walking in the bush and after the pilot walks even talked about going further again. However, they also talked about wanting support and information from experienced bushwalkers in a mentor relationship. Walking groups mainly preferred to remain in their groups rather than joining established bushwalking clubs. However, a relationship with the nearest bushwalking club would promote bushwalking, as well as support walking groups to explore walking in the bush at their own pace and at a suitable time in a safe way.

## 4. Perceptions of Bushwalking

*It is recommended that Bushwalking Victoria address perceptions of bushwalking in its general promotion and communication with the wider community.*

The consultations not only revealed the differing perceptions about bushwalking but many participants also talked about fears for their safety in terms of bushwalking. It is important that Bushwalking Victoria provide accurate information about bushwalking and safety when bushwalking.

## 5. Bushwalking Clubs and Community Engagement

*It is recommended that Bushwalking Victoria develop a guide for bushwalking clubs encouraging engagement with local community walking groups.*

To assist bushwalking clubs to contact, support and mentor local walking groups.

Appendix D outlines the information required in such a kit. This kit should also be available online.

## 6. Dissemination of Walking Programmes

*It is recommended that bushwalking clubs disseminate their walking programmes widely.*

To ensure that existing bushwalking clubs' walking programmes are disseminated widely and are accessible to local walking groups. It is important that programmes contain relevant and useful information for walking groups and individuals. It is also important that these be updated to include information such as; duration of walks, mid-week walks and walks accessible by public transport.

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# APPENDICIES

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## APPENDIX A

## PROJECT STEERING COMMITTEE

Darren McClelland (Essendon Bushwalking Club)	Chairman & Project Manager
David Reid	President, Bushwalking Victoria
Barbara Guerin	Vice President, Bushwalking Victoria
Gina Mancuso	Project Officer, Bushwalking Victoria

## APPENDIX B

## ORGANISATIONS AND GROUPS CONSULTED

### Organisations:

Blind Sports  
City of Moonee Valley  
Citylink Creek Connections  
Council for the Aged  
Department of Planning and Community Development  
Doutta Galla Community Health Centre  
Hobson's Bay City Council  
Kinect  
Local Government Association  
Neighbourhood House Association  
New Hope Migrant and Refugee Centre Oakleigh  
New Hope Refugee Program Footscray  
Spectrum Migrant Resource Centre  
Sport and Recreation Victoria  
The Heart Foundation  
VicsRapid  
Wingate Ave Community Centre

### Walking Groups based in the following local government areas of Melbourne:

Brimbank  
Darebin  
Hobson's Bay  
Hume  
Maribyrnong  
Monash  
Moonee Valley  
Moreland  
Port Phillip  
Stonnington  
Whittlesea

## **APPENDIX C      HOW TO GREEN WALK: A GUIDE FOR WALKING GROUPS**

This guide will address:

### **Defining what is a Green Walk**

#### **Planning a Green Walk**

Where to walk – a continuum of green walking

When to walk

Selecting suitable walks – duration, terrain

Selecting accessible walks – how to get there with public transport

Safety and insurance

Contacting your local Bushwalking Club

Going Further

Walking group registration forms

Walking Route Checklist

#### **Going Green Walking**

Meeting points

Emergency numbers

Are people feeling well?

Route

Select a whip (the person to stay at the end of the group)

Warm up activity

Get walking

Check all walkers have returned

Cool down activity

Next walk

#### **Walking Group Handouts**

The benefits of walking

Green walking

What to wear

What to bring along

Safety tips

Emergency guidelines

Emergency contacts

Bushwalking Victoria contacts

Final checklist

#### **Green Walking Around Melbourne**

A description of 10-20 green walks in and around Melbourne including directions, public transport accessibility, approximate length, terrain, nearby facilities and any landmarks of interest.

## **APPENDIX D      ENGAGING LOCAL WALKING GROUPS: A GUIDE FOR BUSHWALKING CLUBS**

This guide will address:

### **Defining what is a Local Walking Group**

### **The Benefits of Engaging with Local Walking Groups**

### **How to Find and Contact Local Walking Groups**

- Local Councils
- Community Health Centres
- Neighbourhood Houses
- Migrant Resource Centres
- Senior Citizens Groups

### **Planning a Green Walk**

- Meeting the walking group
- Where to walk – a continuum of green walking
- Selecting suitable walks
- Selecting accessible walks
- Safety and insurance
- Walking group registration forms
- Photo consent forms

### **Mentoring a Local Walking Group**

- What is involved
- Assessing people's needs
- Walking with diverse communities
- Leading the walk

### **Walking Group Handouts**

- The benefits of walking
- Green walking
- What to wear
- What to bring along
- Safety tips
- Emergency guidelines
- Emergency contacts
- Bushwalking Victoria contacts
- Final checklist



*At a natural pace      In a natural place*

**Representing the interests of all bushwalkers and recreational walkers since 1934 and still meeting the challenge.**

Bushwalking Victoria promotes bushwalking, engages in activities that add value to the community and proactively represents the interests of all recreational bushwalkers.

### **Key performance areas**

- Value to members and community
- Sphere of influence and representation
- Management and governance.

### **Benefits to members**

- Access to resources and information via a statewide club network
- Strong voice representing walkers' needs and interests direct to land managers and government regarding outdoor recreation policy, preservation of natural areas, management of and access to public land
- Monitors the operating environment to assess impact of changes; eg legislation and regulations to provide advice/guidelines to members
- Organises low cost liability and personal injury insurance for members
- Provides all members with a discount card
- Promotes to the community the benefits of joining a club.

### **Community contributions**

- Promoting bushwalking/recreational walking as an activity that assists health, wellbeing and social interaction
- Helping to keep walking tracks open for all
- Providing a volunteer specialist search and rescue group to assist Victoria Police
- Providing a referral service for members of the public wishing to join a club or get information about walking
- Facilitating the formation of new clubs
- Publishing free information about safe bushwalking and getting started.

PO Box 1007 Templestowe Vic. 3106  
Phone: (03) 8846 4131  
Fax: (03) 9846 7473  
[admin@bushwalkingvictoria.org.au](mailto:admin@bushwalkingvictoria.org.au)  
[www.bushwalkingvictoria.org.au](http://www.bushwalkingvictoria.org.au)