



Slí na Sláinte®



Path to Health



Slí na Sláinte

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Slí na Sláinte



IRISH
HEART
FOUNDATION

Health Benefits of Walking Trails



1. What is Slí na Sláinte
2. Current recommendations for Health Enhancing Physical Activity
3. Why Walking?
4. Why Walking Trails?
5. Health Benefits of Walking/Trails
6. Creating Supportive Environments



The Pill..



Every adult should accumulate at least 30 minutes of moderate intensity physical activity on most, preferably every day of the week.

Source: American College of Sports Medicine and other authoritative organisations.

What is Slí na Sláinte



- Launched in April 1996
 - Irish Heart Foundation initiative
 - Physical Activity Incentive Scheme
 - Established Walks
 - Colourful Signs at KM intervals
 - No Numbers
 - Health Promotion Tool
-
- **Over 150 routes in Ireland in Urban & Rural settings.**
 - **11 International Partners** (*Denmark, Finland, Sweden, Germany, Britain, Norway, N. Ireland, Italy, Canada, Switzerland, USA*)





Urban Signs



Rural Signs





to Cork

to Waterford



Youghal Sli na Sláinte
2km (4km return)

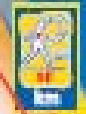
Aura Leisure Centre

Greyhound Track

Strand Church

Quarry Road Roundabout

Millennium Park



5 mile beach



Youghal Golf Club

Old Town Wall

College Gardens

St. Mary's Collegiate Church & Myrtle Grove

Shalom House, Library & Alms House

North Main Street

Tyntes Castle

Clock Gate



Grattan Street

Fox's Lane Museum



Malt House

O'Brien Place

South Abbey Strand

St. The Mall

Garda Station

Lighthouse Rd.

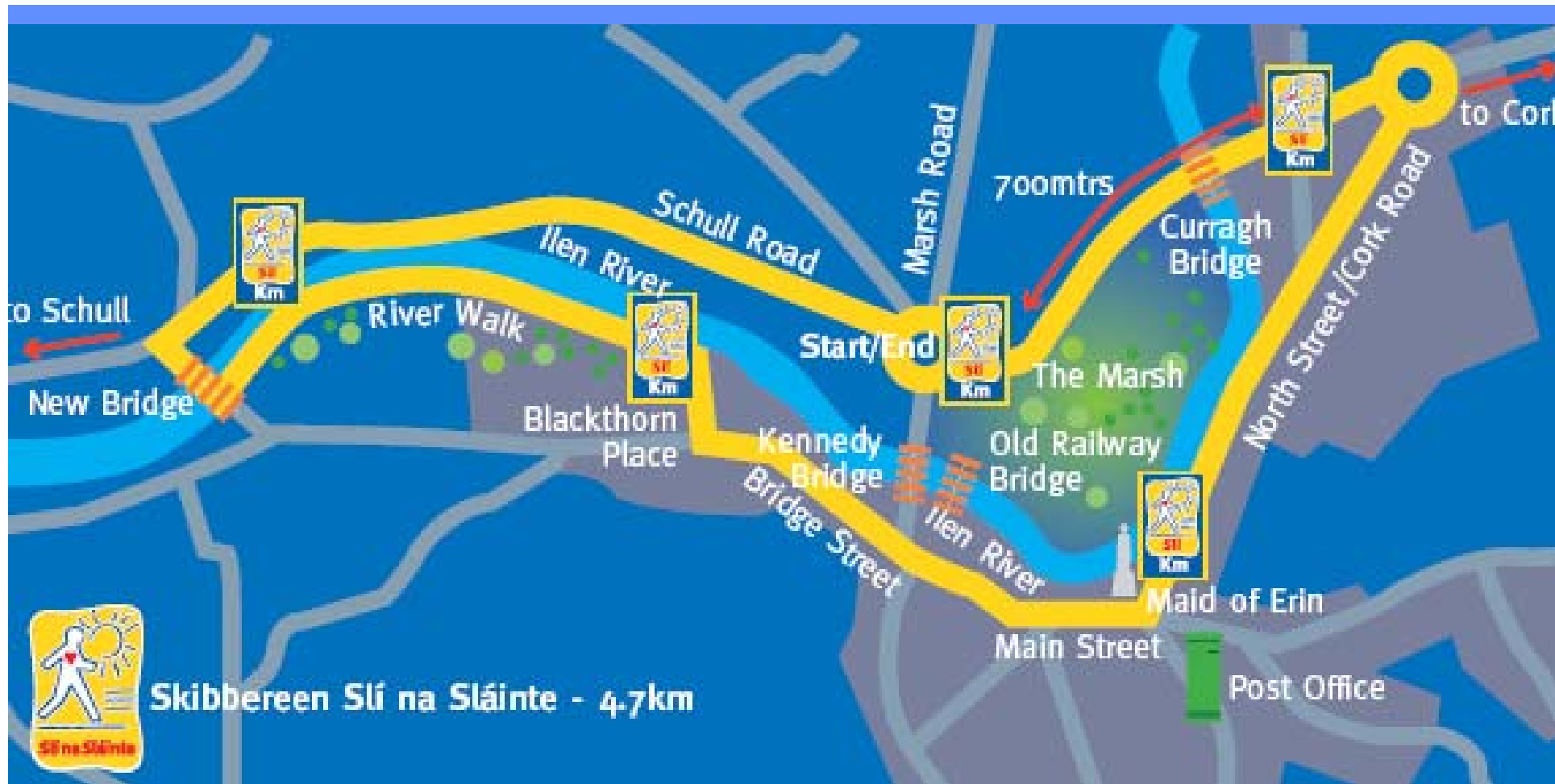
Lighthouse



Blackrock Sli na Slainte - 4 km

-  Blackrock Sli
-  Pedestrian Route to Dundalk - 6.6 km





Why Walking?



- Modest Physical Requirements
 - most are able bodied
 - best means of initiating exercise in the sedentary population
- Minimal personal equipment
- Accessible Infrastructure
- Reasonable cost
- Low personal harm risk
- Low environmental impact
- Abundance of health related outcome data



Why Walking Trails?



- Keeps People Healthier
- Increases Community Fitness Levels

"When communities build walking trails, people exercise more,".

- 55% of those who used the trails said they had increased their walking since beginning to use the trails
- Even the previously inactive find trail walking attractive
(Source: Missouri Trails Study - Brownson et al., 2000a; American Journal of Preventive Medicine)
- In a 2003 study of trails in six Indiana cities, over 70% of trail users reported they participated more in activities, such as walking and biking, as a result of the trail in their community.

(Source:Huston, S.L., Evenson, K.R., Bors, P., & Gizlice, Z. (2003). Neighborhood environment, access to places for activity, and leisure-time physical activity in a diverse North Carolina population. American Journal of Health Promotion, 18 (1), 58-69.)

WELL PROMOTED walking routes WORK



Current research has shown relationships between the environment & levels of physical activity participation

Worksite campaign to promote awareness of an existing local walking path and to increase walking

- Counts observed during the intervention (Rhode Island, USA) were almost triple those at baseline, increasing to three and a half times post-campaign.
- Sign recognition surveys revealed at baseline, 51% to 65% during the campaign.
- Familiarity with physical activity messages around the workplace increased from 64.6% at baseline to 75.5% during the campaign.
- Worksite and communications-based promotion of a local walking path. Melissa A Napolitano; Heather Lerch; George Papandonatos; Bess H Marcus 2006

Physical Activity & Obesity in Ireland

THE FACTS



- Nationally, 50.8% of the population engage in regular physical exercise in a typical week.
- Obesity rates have risen by 3% from 11% in 1998 of men to 14% in 2002 and from 9% of women in 1998 to 12% in 2002.
- 1 in 5 children in Ireland are overweight or obese.
1 in 4 (USA) 1 in 6 (Europe)

* Source: SLÁN Survey The National Health & Lifestyle Surveys 2003





Leading Contributors to Premature Death

Diet/Physical Inactivity	310,000-580,000
Tobacco	260,000-470,000
Alcohol	70,000-110,000
Microbial Agents	90,000
Toxic Agents	60,000-110,000
Firearms	35,000
Sexual Behavior	30,000
Motor Vehicles	25,000
Drug Use	20,000

United States Department of Health and Human Services, JAMA, vol. 270, p. 2207

Health Benefits of Walking



- **Lose Weight**

When walking/hiking a 2mph a person weighing 150lbs will burn 240 calories in 1 hour

- **Reduce CVD risk**

Physical inactivity is a main risk factor for heart disease

- **Reduce Cholesterol**

Walking increases HDL (good) Cholesterol which helps move bad cholesterol from the artery walls

- **Reduce Blood Pressure**

- **Maintenance of cognitive function in the elderly**

- **Improve Arthritis**

- **Relieves Back Pain**



Health Benefits of Walking



- **Improves and Maintains Mental Health**
- **Slows the Ageing Process**
- **Prevent Osteoporosis** – aerobic and weight bearing exercise

- **Improves Sleep**

- **Improve Quality of the Air we breathe**

A family that walks two miles per day instead of driving will, in one year prevent 730lbs of carbon dioxide from entering the atmosphere

- **Prevents and Controls Diabetes**
- **Reduces risk of developing certain Cancers**



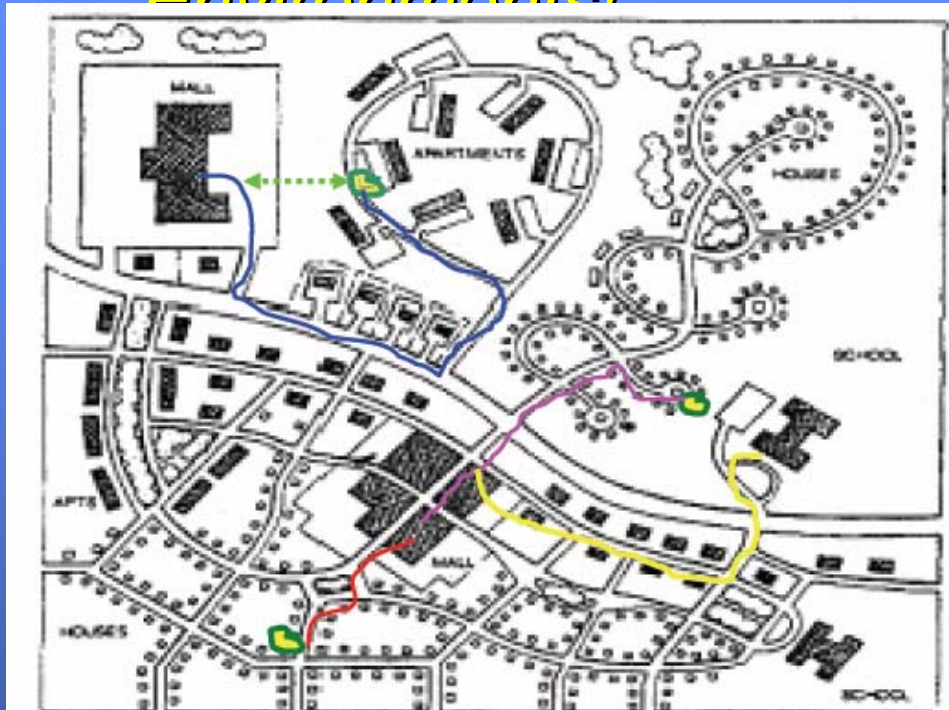
Health Benefits of Walking



- **Physical inactivity and disease risk: sedentary vs. moderately active (2)**
 - **Colon cancer: risk 40-50% higher**
 - **Breast cancer: risk 30% higher (?)**
 - **Osteoporotic fractures: risk 30-50% higher**
 - **Aerobic capacity: rate of decline with age $\leq 50\%$ faster**
 - **risk of loss of independence 10-20 y's earlier**

Source: Ilkka Vuori, Professor, Director of the UKK Institute for Health Promotion Research: European Heart Health Initiative II, National Coordinators' Meeting, Brussels, 7 March, 2001

Need to create Supportive Environments!



Think about....walkability of communities, connectivity, funding, promotion of walking trails, policy influences on physical activity (London congestion charge more than 30% change).

