The background of the entire page is a light, off-white color, densely populated with various animal footprints. These prints are in shades of grey and black, showing different patterns of toes and pads. Some are large and clear, while others are smaller and more faint. They are scattered across the page, creating a sense of movement and natural history.

# Walk the Walk

images by Ian Beesley  
poems by Ian Mcmillan

## Walk the walk

Walking is a natural medicine for the body: it can prevent disease and help us to stay healthy. It can reduce risks for heart disease, such as high blood pressure, and risks for diabetes, such as high blood sugar levels, without the need for drugs. It helps people who are recovering from disease or injury and it can make us feel happier, especially when we are walking in parks and woods. Research has shown that children who are introduced to regular walking continue to do it into adulthood so encouraging children to walk in their everyday life is really important.

At BiB we have been measuring how much time mothers and children spend walking.

We asked BiB mothers when they were pregnant how long they walked for in bouts of 10 or more minutes in the last week. Two thirds had walked for more than 60 minutes, but almost one in ten had not walked at all for more than 10 minutes at a time in the last week. We asked BiB mothers how long their toddlers walked for each day to get from place to place. At aged 2, 40% of children walked for less than 15 minutes and 25% walked for more than 30 minutes a day. At aged 3, 30% walked for less than 15 minutes and 30% walked for more than 30 minutes a day.

In our modern society where vehicles transport us from place to place, where we sit at desks to learn or work, where our leisure time is often spent in front of a screen, it is important to make time to use our legs and walk. BiB researchers are designing and testing new ways to support children and families to be active and walk more.

**Dr Sally Barber**

Principal Research Fellow

[Sally.barber@bthft.nhs.uk](mailto:Sally.barber@bthft.nhs.uk)

Spring walk

Summer walk

Autumn Walk

Winter walk

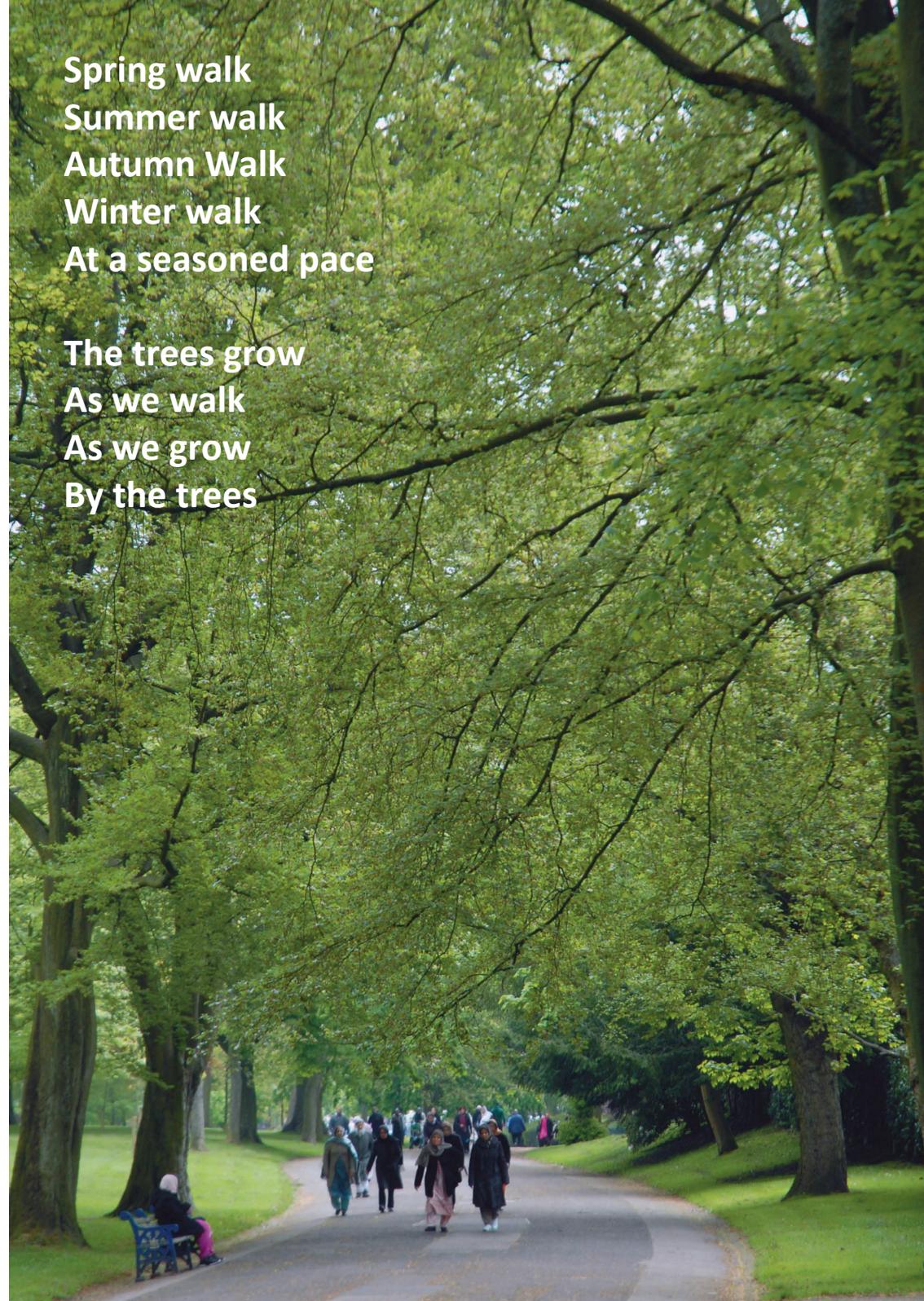
At a seasoned pace

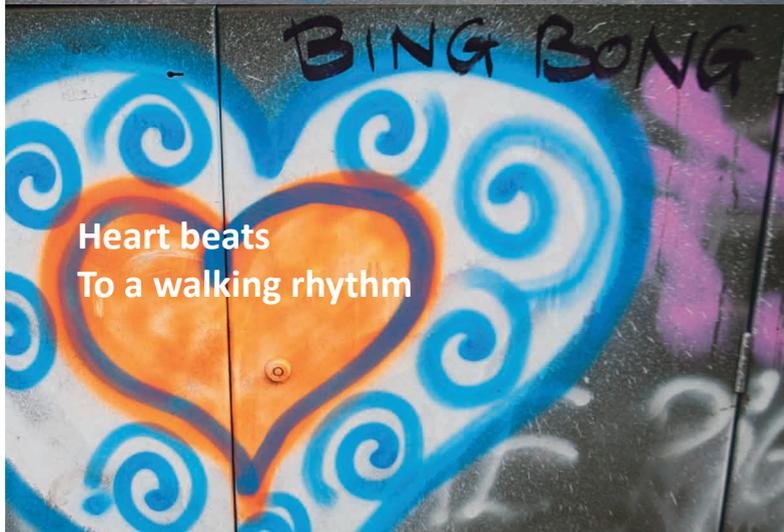
The trees grow

As we walk

As we grow

By the trees





Take a look at the government recommendations for physical activity below and see if you are willing to step up to the challenge and walk more.

### **Guidelines for physical activity are:**

During pregnancy: 30 minutes of moderate physical activity (in bouts of 10 or more minutes) every day of the week (inactive women should start with light to moderate activity and build this up from 15 minutes each day).

Adults: at least 30 minutes of moderate-to-vigorous physical activity (in bouts of 10 or more minutes) on 5 days of the week.

Children aged 5-18 years old: at least 60 minutes of moderate-to-vigorous physical activity every day of the week.

Children aged 0-5 years old: at least 180 minutes (3 hours) of any intensity of physical activity every day of the week.

\* Moderate activity requires a moderate amount of effort, it makes your heart beat a bit faster and you breathe a little harder, like brisk walking.

Vigorous activity requires a large amount of effort; it causes a substantial increase in heart rate and breathing, like running.

My walking boots  
Need help from me  
They will not walk  
On their own

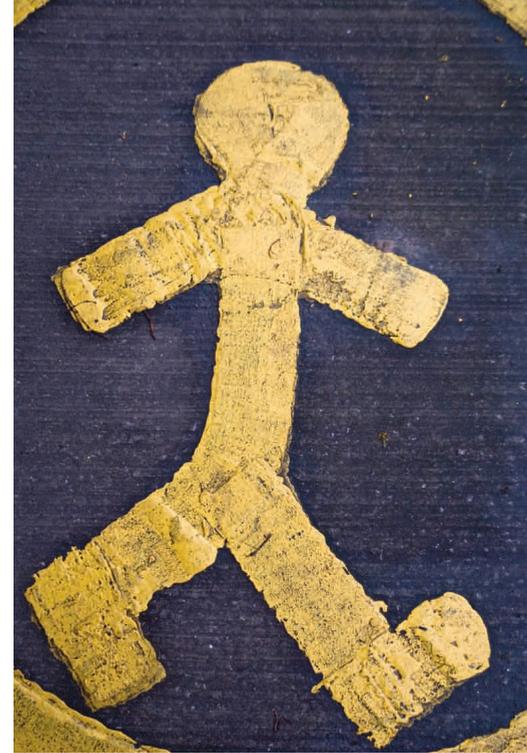




I take  
Every day In my stride



I measure the day in feet.  
Moving feet.



Walking  
Is flying  
On the earth





Rows  
Of  
Toes  
Moving  
On

Walking  
Is swimming  
On the ground





Look at us three:  
Our six legs  
Cover the world



You amble  
I stroll  
We get there  
Together



The day walks into the afternoon at a healing pace



**Walking  
Is thinking  
On your feet**

These ghostly walkers  
Still lift their feet  
And put them down  
Silently



Ghost walkers:  
No pounding sound of feet.  
Just silence.  
And movement  
Always movement.





**First foot forward  
Next foot forward  
Best foot forward**

**I took steps  
To make myself better;  
One foot in front  
Of another  
Slowly at first:  
Then a year's worth.**





**Walking  
Is dancing  
On the map**



I took a walk then I brought it back  
for you to try, because it made me feel well again



The medicine  
is walking  
The medicine  
is working;  
repeat the prescription  
one step  
at a time

**Walking reduces your carbon footprint to shadows like these that fade away**



## Walk the walk.

*“As a single footstep will not make a path on the earth, so a single thought will not make a pathway in the mind. To make a deep physical path, we walk again and again. To make a deep mental path, we must think over and over the kind of thoughts we wish to dominate our lives.”* Henry David Thoreau (1817-62)

In Bradford, like so many other cities, fewer people walk because they are no longer obliged to; cars, bikes, buses and trains all beckon. Walking in urban areas has sometimes been viewed in a negative light; an indication that you can't afford a car or your bus fare. Once a necessity, walking has now become an organised leisure activity, part of a healthy lifestyle.

In 2003, Bradford Council was one of the first to recognise the benefits of walking, encouraging people to use local green spaces.; particularly in Myra Shay, Bowling, Horton and Lister Parks and many self-motivated walkers are now seen there every day. Friends get together to talk as they walk, the lonely find company, new friendships are forged and there is solace for all in the green environment.

Long ago Greek philosophers recognised the deep intuitive connection between walking, thinking and writing. Because it takes very little conscious effort to perform the act of walking, our attention is free to wander, to imagine, to stroll. This is the state of mind necessary for creative and innovative thinking. As American writer, philosopher and poet Henry David Thoreau wrote in his journal: *“Methinks that the moment my legs begin to move, my thoughts begin to flow”*

Many other famous writers, philosophers and scientists have harnessed the power of walking and thinking. Charles Dickens walked twenty miles a night through the streets of London, absorbing the atmosphere and creating his storylines. Wordsworth was a renowned walker; his poetry inspired by daily tramps around his home in the Lake District. Apple creator Steve Jobs conducted walking meetings to help solve tricky problems.

But, of course, one of the greatest joys of walking is stopping to enjoy a view, as Welsh poet and tramp William Henry Davis wrote:

*“What is this life if, full of care,  
We have no time to stand and stare”*

**Ann Barratt & Ian Beesley**





**Born in Bradford** is one of the biggest and most important medical research studies undertaken in the UK. The project started in 2007 and is looking to answer questions about our health by tracking the lives of 13,500 babies and their families and will provide information for studies across the UK and around the world.



@BiBresearch



Born in Bradford

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