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## Media Release

# Staff from the RUH are walking their way to a healthier lifestyle this national Walk to Work Week

**With the latest figures showing that 61% of us are currently overweight or obese and with government figures showing that we jump in the car for over a fifth of journeys shorter than one mile, commuters in Bath are being urged to walk their way to a healthier lifestyle during national Walk to Work Week (26 – 30 April 2010)**

National charity Living Streets run the Walking Works campaign, funded by the Big Lottery Fund, to highlight the role that walking can play in bringing some much-needed activity into our daily lives. The RUH is taking part in this year's event by organising walks to Victoria Park at lunchtime, walks to the hospital from the Bus / Train station, taking in the sights and sounds of early morning Bath, and laps of the neighbouring Lansdown Cricket Pitch.

The benefits of walking, for health, the environment and people's pockets, are well documented. What's often missing is the encouragement to make walking a regular part of people's daily lives. Walking Works, supported by the RUH, aims to change this by encouraging people to incorporate walking into their daily routine and supporting them with tips, advice and motivation.

Walk to Work Week is an annual reminder that walking all or part of the commute is fun, green and healthy and can be slotted in to even the busiest lives. By walking for just 30 minutes a day during the working week, whether that's on the way to, from or during work, means meeting the governments recommended level of daily activity to transform your health. In addition to the known health benefits, regular exercise such as walking is known to boost performance at work and counter lethargy, stress and depression.

Stephen Roberts, Occupational Health Manager at the RUH said: "Incorporating walking into our daily journeys brings great benefits for individuals and for the RUH as a whole. We know many of our staff are active throughout the day, and on their feet for most of it, but we're encouraging more people to get outside into the fresh air, to take a break away from their desks and enjoy both the physical and mental health benefits of walking. We're also keen to reward staff who get involved in Walk to Work Week by giving out goody bags with footcare packs from the Body Shop to relieve those weary feet and energy drinks and bars to re-energise tired bodies!"

Tony Armstrong, Chief Executive of Living Streets said: "Being active doesn't have to mean costly gym sessions, or marathon running attempts - there is a free and easy way to work more exercise into your daily routine, and it is often overlooked - give yourself a daily dose of walking.

“The benefits of walking more are huge and not only for your health, but to give time to plan for the day ahead, or to unwind after it. It can be as simple as stepping outside for a lunchtime walk, or getting off the bus a few stops earlier on your way into the office. That time spent walking, whether on your own or with colleagues, is a chance to take a step back from your inbox, breaking up your day and improving your productivity once you return.

“We are urging everyone to give it a go during Walk to Work Week this year. We think you’ll be amazed at what a difference a short blast of fresh air can do for you, not just to improve your physical health, but for your mental wellbeing as well.”

### **Notes to editors**

For any press enquires about National Walk to Work Week, please contact Anna Powell, Press Officer on 020 7377 4914 or email [anna.powell@livingstreets.org.uk](mailto:anna.powell@livingstreets.org.uk). For any out of hours press enquiries, please call 07545 209865.

Living Streets’ national Walking Works campaign is part of a portfolio of projects being delivered by Travel Actively, a consortium of leading walking, cycling and health organisations committed to providing opportunities for 1.8 million people to become physically active through active travel by 2012.

Funded through the Big Lottery Fund's Wellbeing fund, the consortium partners are British Cycling, CTC, Campaign for Better Transport, Cycling England, Living Streets, London Cycling Campaign, the National Heart Forum, the National Obesity Forum, the Ramblers, Sustrans and Walk England.

The Big Lottery Fund, the largest of the National Lottery good cause distributors, has been rolling out grants to health, education, environment and charitable causes across the UK since its inception in June 2004.



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