



## Hello ...

last month we encouraged you to give running a go in the run up to the London Marathon. This month we're taking the pace down a bit and exploring the benefits of walking. Without a doubt, walking is one of the most practical (it gets you from A to B) and cheap (as long as you have comfy shoes) ways of exercising. It's also easily the finest way to explore where you live and what it has to offer. There's only so much you can see from a bus or train window or through the windscreen of a car. Getting outside, getting some exercise, and - if you take advantage of the led-walks we list- getting to meet new people ... What could be better? We're also tackling the serious issue of domestic abuse this month. It's something that can happen to anyone and something that can ruin your wellbeing. There is help available. Hope your May is a fine one.

Mark Brown, editor

## Walking for wellbeing

*Jo Martin looks at walking for health, fitness and company in Hackney's green spaces*



During Get Walking Week (May 4th to 11th), national charity The Ramblers organises short walks all over the UK to introduce people to the benefits of walking. Hackney residents have numerous parks, green spaces and canals providing wonderful opportunities for exploring on foot. Why not join in the Ramblers' free walk, Exploring Stoke Newington, on 11th May (see Listings)? Or take advantage of one of the ten free led health walks that take place throughout the borough every week, for added variety and motivation? Once you've built up some stamina, there are numerous free walking

guides to enable you to explore Hackney and beyond.

### What is a health walk?

A health walk is more than a saunter in pleasant surroundings. It is a purposeful, brisk walk undertaken on a regular basis aimed at improving health. What a brisk pace is varies for everyone because we have different levels of fitness. However, you should breathe a little faster, feel a little warmer and feel your heart beating a little faster.

If you prefer walking in company, need motivation or want to walk for exercise, there >

is an established programme of guided health walks, the Walking Together programme, in Hackney with qualified volunteer walk leaders. They are generally aimed at beginner to intermediate levels.

### Walking together

There are currently seven guided fitness walks in the council's Walking Together programme at parks across Hackney, as well as three partner walks (lead by Agewell and the Hackney Diabetes Centre). These take place in Clissold Park, London Fields, Shoreditch Park, Springfield Park and Victoria Park. There's even a lead walk that sets off from the offices of mental health charity Mind (see Listings).

Walking Together walks are free of charge. Just turn up and take part. You'll need to arrive 5 minutes before the scheduled start time and, if it's your first time, bring along a completed outdoor health questionnaire (download from the [website](http://hackney.gov.uk/Assets/Documents/Outdoor-health-questionnaire.pdf), [hackney.gov.uk/Assets/Documents/Outdoor-health-questionnaire.pdf](http://hackney.gov.uk/Assets/Documents/Outdoor-health-questionnaire.pdf)).

Each walk lasts an hour. The group sets off at a medium pace to raise the heart rate. There will be around 30 minutes of brisk-paced, varied walking activities. The session ends with a short cool-down phase of gentle walking to return the heart rate to normal, followed by stretches.

For details of days, times, meeting points and the walk leader's contact details, see the council's [website](http://hackney.gov.uk/sports-walking-together.htm#) ([hackney.gov.uk/sports-](http://hackney.gov.uk/sports-walking-together.htm#)

[walking-together.htm#](http://hackney.gov.uk/sports-walking-together.htm#)).

You'll even find three inspiring Walking Together case studies there, as well as information on the council's free training scheme to become a volunteer walk leader yourself.

### Walking further afield

Once you've built up some walking stamina, there's a whole world of walks waiting for you in Hackney, across London and further afield. The Hackney Parks Forum has created a series of six leaflets mapping walks through several Hackney parks and open spaces, free to download ([hackney.gov.uk/walking-in-parks.htm#](http://hackney.gov.uk/walking-in-parks.htm#)).

The Ramblers has designed a number of walking routes through Hackney's parks, which can be downloaded free from the Get Walking website ([getwalking.org/walking-routes/london/](http://getwalking.org/walking-routes/london/)). Transport for London's Walk London has some longer routes, including

the Lea Valley walk and the Capital Ring, a 78 mile green route that encircles London. It links together parks and open spaces mostly via pleasant residential roads. In Hackney, the route passes through Clissold Park and Springfield Park. See the Walk London website ([walklondon.org.uk](http://walklondon.org.uk)).

You may even want to look at other forms of exercise. See the January issue (available free to download from the More Hackney website) for information about the Exercise on Prescription scheme, free swimming scheme and reduced rate gym memberships as well as football. And see the April edition (also free on the website) for information on getting started in running.

You can take your first steps to a healthier and happier lifestyle today. See you out and about in Hackney's parks and green spaces! For more tips, advice, helpful links and inspiration, see the More Hackney website.

## Want to learn about writing from personal experience?

Are you someone with experience of mental health difficulties? Are you interested in writing articles for publication based on your personal experiences? Would you like some practice and some tips?

Come and join us for a class on writing from experience. It'll take place on **Wednesday 15th May at 2pm - 3pm at The Centre for Better Health**, 1a Darnley Road, London E9 6QH

The session will be led by Mark Brown, editor of this newsletter and *One in Four* magazine, the national lifestyle magazine for people with mental health difficulties. It'll also give you a chance to meet the rest of the More Hackney team too!

To sign up to attend the session call 020 8521 7956 and speak to David or Mark, or email us at [hello@socialspider.com](mailto:hello@socialspider.com)

# Feeling unsafe at home?

*Catriona Nicholson explores what you might do if your home or relationship isn't the safe place it should be*

Experiencing domestic abuse from a partner in any form – physical, emotional, sexual or financial – can have a devastating impact on your life, health and happiness. It can create an overwhelming number of practical and emotional problems, both during the abuse and afterwards. Your mental health may especially suffer.

Escaping and surviving the aftermath of abuse requires tremendous personal strength and support from others. Reaching out to get help can be hard, but can put you on the track to a safer, happier life for you (and your children). Thankfully there is a range of support available in Hackney.

A good place to start is your GP. You may already be seeing them for health and mental health problems, such as anxiety, depression and post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD), all of which are experienced in much higher numbers by people who have experienced domestic abuse. If you are not already getting help and struggling with your moods – for example feeling extremely depressed or anxious – speak to your GP for help.

Try to talk to your GP about the abuse, and how it has affected you, physically and mentally. Everything you say to your GP is strictly confidential, and you have the right to see a different GP if you don't feel comfortable talking to yours. Many GP

practices in Hackney have become more domestic violence aware thanks to help from the Iris Project, which educates practice staff to respond better and refer you on to further help.

The Iris Project is part of a larger organisation called the Nia Project, which has several services for women who have experienced domestic abuse. This includes refuges, advocacy services, a rape crisis service, a family support service and special services aimed at women who also have substance misuse problems or who are at risk of violent offending. Get in touch on 0207 683 1270 or email [info@niaendingviolence.org.uk](mailto:info@niaendingviolence.org.uk)

Hestia is another charity that operates in Hackney for women who have experienced domestic abuse, offering floating support services, counselling, support groups and refuges, as well as advice on safety, housing, benefits and legal rights. You can contact them on 020 8533 6211 or refer yourself online by emailing [info@hestia.org](mailto:info@hestia.org).

Hackney Council has its own domestic violence support team, which provides a helpline offering non-judgemental, confidential advice, and help in languages other than English. They will provide you with a caseworker, who can offer advice on housing, legal issues and benefits. Call the helpline on 0800 056 0905 (9.30am-5pm, Monday to

Friday) or email [dvhct@hackney.gov.uk](mailto:dvhct@hackney.gov.uk).

The National Domestic Violence Helpline can be contacted 24/7 for emotional and practical support on 0808 2000 247. They can also refer you to specialist services for men and lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgendered people experiencing domestic violence.

## Boxing clever

A new Muay Thai boxing group, open to people who've experienced mental health problems is starting in May in Bethnal Green.

Training will take place at Casa De Caboclo Cultural Centre, 5 Gales Garden, Bethnal Green E2 0EJ on Sunday evening from 5pm. There will also be monthly meetings for people who would like to determine what happens with the organisation of the group.

Muay Thai is a form of kickboxing and a full contact sport. The boxing itself will be taught at your pace, taking into account any mental or physical health problems you may be experiencing. It's a good way of getting fit, building confidence and learning to defend yourself in a physical way. In the near future there will be assertiveness training, to help learn to express feelings in a positive way.

Contact Gohar on 077697916 for more information. The project is supported by the Mayor of Tower Hamlets and Community Options.

# Listings - May 2013

**Thursday 2nd May - Creative Journeys** - A round table discussion with people who use, provide or commission health services such as doctors. Hackney Museum 1 Reading Lane E8 1GQ. Free entry

**Saturday 11th May - Exploring Stoke Newington Ramblers Walk** - Part of Get Walking Week 2013, Britain's biggest short walks festival. Meet Seven Sisters station 10.30AM walk ends Dalston Junction (Overground). Led by David. No need to book, just turn up. Walks usually stop briefly for a snack or drink perhaps at a park café, but don't stop for lunch as most walks finish by 13.30. Bring water and a snack, wear comfortable footwear, dress in case of rain and bring an extra layer of clothing. For more details contact Des: 07816 058810 / des@desdemoor.com

**Tuesdays 2pm - Health Walk** starting from mental health charity City & Hackney Mind's offices at 8-10 Tudor Road, London E9 7SN. Meet at reception. Walks usually take an hour.

**Tuesday 14th May - Creating Emotional Wellbeing** - 6.00pm-7.30pm. **6-week course begins** at Centre for Better Health, 1A Darnley Road, London, E9 6QH. Covering different areas of emotional wellbeing:

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overcoming low mood; breaking old patterns and moving forward; building better relationships; and building self-esteem and self confidence. Costs £20 for full course. 020 8985 3570 / admin@centreforbetterhealth.org.uk for more information or to book.

**Tuesday May 28 - 'Hermet'** (Crack Tango from Finland) headline Katz n Dogs open mic club - open mic from 7-10pm, band play 10-11pm at The Royal Sovereign 64 Northwold Rd E5 Free entry

**Community law shops service** -Free legal advice sessions on a first-come, first-served basis. See a qualified legal advisor about housing, benefits, debt, employment, immigration, etc. Central Library, Reading Lane, Hackney E8 1GQ. Mondays, 2pm to 5pm. Contact: Miranda Grell. - miranda@hclc.org.uk Tel - 020 8985 5236. Website: www.hclc.org.uk

**Send us your listings** - If you have ideas for mental health and wellbeing events, activities or opportunities in Hackney that could be included in More Hackney, email them to hello@socialspider.com

**Deadline for June 2013 issue:** May 15th 2013.

**Would you like to help making this newsletter happen?** More Hackney is produced by a small team of people and we'd like to have more! We need people to write articles, people to help work out how we're going to get the newsletter to people who want it, people who would like to research what Hackney has to offer and even people who'll be able to lay it out (fit all of the words on the printed page). We meet every Wednesday at 2pm-4pm at The Centre for Better Health, 1A Darnley Road, Hackney, E9 6QH. If you have or do experience mental health difficulties and fancy being involved in something to help people who've been - or are going through - similar, we'd love to meet you. Email us at hello@socialspider or call 020 8521 7956 for more information.



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