



Dr William Bird:

William is a family doctor in Sonning Common as well as Strategic Health Adviser to Natural England, the government's agency responsible for England's countryside and wildlife. In 1994 he devised the concept of prescribing health walks, now a nationally accepted and delivered through local authorities, primary care trusts and the Walking the Way to Health Initiative.

Notes from the podcast interview of William by Andrew Stuck, while walking around St James' Park, London on a bright weekday lunchtime in January: Interviewed January 2009 and published December 2009 on <http://talkingwalking.net>

The *Walking the Way to Health Initiative* came about through a partnership between Natural England (formerly the Countryside Commission) and the British Heart Foundation, and won funding from the Lottery. It has recently changed its name to *Walking for Health*. You can find a walk near you – just enter your post code in the finder on the Walking for Health website.

Walking for Health <http://www.whi.org.uk/>
Natural England <http://www.naturalengland.org.uk/>
British Heart Foundation <http://www.bhf.org.uk/>

Evaluation of the Walking the Way to Health initiative was carried out by researchers from Oxford Brookes University:
<http://www.whi.org.uk/details.asp?key=AX707|1|A31634079836|p|163|0&parentkey=AX707|0|7C124316127|p|124|0>

Find out more about Green Gyms – an initiative led by BTCV: The British Trust for Conservation Volunteers: <http://www2.btcv.org.uk/display/greengym>

Blue Gyms – read a report in the Daily Telegraph:
<http://www.telegraph.co.uk/health/healthnews/4527573/Campaign-encourages-people-to-exercise-in-blue-gym.html>

While at the Met Office, William led the development of a forecast for sufferers of Chronic Bronchitis and Emphysema (COPD):
<http://www.metoffice.gov.uk/health/features/copd.html>

Getting Outdoors – check out the Natural Health Service – launched in July 2009:
http://www.naturalengland.org.uk/about_us/news/2009/220709.aspx
And One Million Children Outdoors:
<http://www.naturalengland.org.uk/gettinginvolved/default.aspx>

William Bird's favourite walk:

The Pack and Prime Lane from Henley to Rotherfield Peppard
<http://henleyonthames.org/locations/details.asp?fldLocationID=59>