

Let's Walk Kangaroo Flat & Long Gully



Hello, as mentioned, my name is Cara and I am the health broker for the City of Greater Bendigo and I will be talking today about a program we ran in Greater Bendigo in 2019 and 20 called Let's Walk. Let's Walk is a program ran by Victoria Walks and, the City of Greater Bendigo and Healthy Heart of Victoria initiative worked in partnership with Victoria Walks to deliver the program.

Healthy Heart of Victoria

Healthy Heart of Victoria (HHV) is a State-funded initiative aimed at improving health outcomes across the Loddon Campaspe region – the 'heart' of Victoria.

The initiative was developed in response to higher than Victorian average rates of obesity, chronic disease and high-risk health behaviours currently seen within the region.

1. **Health is everyone's business** – a workforce of Health Brokers to work with local communities to build knowledge and drive systems change;
2. **Infrastructure and Activation** – improvements to infrastructure or programs to enable more community members to be more active; and
3. **Active Living Census (ALC)** – a survey to enable evidence-based planning for health and recreation services and a better understanding of people's activity levels and preferences.



For those who don't know what HHV is, it is a State Gov initiative aimed at improving health and wellbeing outcomes across six local government areas in the Loddon Campaspe Region.

There are three main parts to the HHV initiative –

First one being a team of what we call 'Health Brokers', one placed in each of the six councils across the region. our role is focused on connecting the dots so to speak – bringing together people, groups, organisations, communities, settings to uncover and help resource new opportunities, to work together on projects, to share ideas, to build capacity.

The next components is the Active Living Census, which some of you may have heard of. The active living census is a health and wellbeing survey that has provided us with a really good level of information on the health status of our community, peoples behaviours, barriers to being active and healthy and what improvements could be made to support people to be healthy and well.

Finally, the third component is funding to deliver local infrastructure and activation solutions. Infrastructure upgrades include outdoor fitness equipment, drinking water fountains, community gardens, play equipment and path extensions and connections

etc. Activation programs could include walking groups, such as this one, learn to ride courses, come and try sessions etc. If you would like to know more about HHV, you follow the Healthy Heart of Victoria Facebook page or make contact with a health broker in each of the local governments.

Let's Walk is an initiative of Victoria Walks and aims to:



Connect women with each other



Increase feelings of safety in neighbourhoods



Increase walking in neighbourhoods



Increasing regular participation in recreational walking



Let's Walk is an initiative of Victoria Walks and aims to connect women with each other in their neighbourhoods, increase feelings of safety in neighbourhoods, increasing walking and participation in recreational walking. Obviously the focus for lets walk in on increasing women's participation in walking but we didn't exclude men from participating and had a couple of regular male walks. This also allowed couples to walk together which was great to see.

How does it work?



- Partnership with Local Government
- Let's Walk coordinator – two days per week
- Link with local community groups
- One neighbourhood walking route mapped in each location, printed and online
- Coloured footpath markers installed along the route
- Facilitated walking groups for 8 weeks, once per week
- A key ring is given to each participant



Victoria Walks approached the City and a MOU was signed. A Let's Walk coordinator from Victoria Walks worked in the City's offices two days per week. I introduced the coordinator to community organisations and groups, and acted as the facilitator or broker to find these connections. We worked with the community to map the walking route, lead by the coordinator. The City funded the decals for the walking route and the design and printing of the maps. The Let's Walk coordinator lead 8 walks, one per week.

A key ring was provided to each participant when they signed up, which gave them a number so their participation was recorded and a survey was completed by participants pre and post program.

Walkers are encouraged to stay for morning tea and a drink after the walk. The evaluation for the program was completed by Bartley Consulting.

Let's Walk Kangaroo Flat



We ran Let's Walk in two Greater Bendigo Communities – Long Gully and Kangaroo Flat.

Walking maps were printed and distributed through community organisations .

Features of the area were outlined on the map as well as a map to follow. As you can see, the 6 points of interest.

Let's Walk Long Gully




About Long Gully

Long Gully is a long, narrow, green valley in the heart of Melbourne.

The area has a long, rich history and has been the heart of the community for many years. It is a place where people have lived, worked, and played for generations. The valley is a beautiful example of what can be achieved when a community works together to create a better place for everyone.

St Matthew's Church offers a Day Library and Program for all ages. The program is designed to provide a safe and supportive environment for children and young people. It is a place where they can learn, play, and grow. The program is run by a dedicated team of volunteers who are passionate about making a difference in the lives of the children in the community.

Just across the road you will find the Long Gully Post Office and a range of other services. It is a convenient location for all your needs. The area is a great example of what can be achieved when a community works together to create a better place for everyone.

Let's Walk Long Gully

Look out for the colourful 'Let's Walk' long gully signs that will guide you along the way on your journey to becoming more active, more often.

Features of the trail






Long Gully Trail Community Centre is a great place to start your walk. It is a beautiful example of what can be achieved when a community works together to create a better place for everyone.

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Let's Walk

LONG GULLY

Explore your local area on foot!

Healthy Heart of Victoria



Let's Walk Long Gully in Karen



In Long Gully we also printed the walking maps in Karen as there is a strong Karen community living in Long Gully

Let's Walk – Results

Program Evaluation by Bartley Consulting



- Why did you join Let's Walk?

'To do some of my walking with other people'

'To meet people and have other walkers to walk with'

10 out of 16 participants joined to meet people

- Walking in the neighbourhood for enjoyment or fitness for 60 minutes or more per week increased from **58%** pre-program to **79%** post program.
- 92% plan to continue walking after the organised walks finish.



Program evaluation was completed by Bartley Consulting.

Participants were surveyed before and after the 8 organised walks.

We saw very different results for the two communities. K.F had 20 individuals participate in the eight walks (min 3 walks and max 8). L.G walk's had 8 individuals participate in the walks, with no Long Gully residents participating. So people travelled from surrounding areas to walk in Long Gully. Walking in the neighbourhood for enjoyment or fitness for 60 minutes or more per week increased from 58% pre program to 79% post program.

On average, participants joined more than four of the walks.

Participants highlighted the benefits to include improved mental health and wellbeing.

92% plan to continue walking regularly after the organised walks finished.

What we saw was the K.F community embracing this opportunity, group of walkers continued to organise walks and walk long after the program finished, even holding a Christmas break up!

Great outcomes for the Kangaroo Flat community.

Let's Walk - Challenges



- Why were the outcomes so different between our communities?
- What did we need to do better in Long Gully?



Let's Walk - Learnings



- **Connection**
 - with complementary programs, community groups and trusted organisations
- **Relationships**
 - with the walking coordinator and between participants
- **Memorandum of Understanding**
 - Between program partners to ensure shared goals, understanding and timelines



Connection – connection with complementary programs such as HHV. If HHV wasn't operating it would have been more challenging for local government to have resourcing to support a program like this.

When working with hard to reach community groups and areas with high disadvantage, connecting with existing and trusted community organisations is essential, even having trusted organisations run programs.

More marketing and advertising just doesn't work.

Relationships - The relationship between the walk organiser and participants is so important to participation, until the connection between participants is developed. MOU. Important to make this program a success.