

# Making Walks Sensory

25<sup>th</sup> November 2020

## A free resource supporting people with complex disabilities explore the outdoors and engage with nature

The ‘Making Walks Sensory’ resource, created by Sense Active, is designed to support people with multiple or complex disabilities to connect with their surroundings and have more meaningful walking experiences.

The resource includes an introduction to sensory walks, advice on planning and structuring your walks and tips to ensure your walks are accessible and safe. The resource also comes with seven sensory activities that engage all senses, to be enjoyed all year round.



## Reacting to a new way of being active

During 2020, accessing traditional sports activities has become more difficult. With Covid-19 social distancing restrictions and lockdown closures to gyms, swimming pools and sports clubs, people have turned to activities like walking. Sport England’s recently released Active Lives Adult Survey (May 2020) showed 20.4m people are now choosing to ‘walk for leisure’, as their favoured way to be active.



Walking is a popular activity that can be enjoyed alone, in pairs or as a group. It enables people to be active, outside and to connect with nature. As well as improving physical health, it can also have wider benefits such as improved self-esteem, mood and sleep quality and reduced anxiety and stress.

Therefore, we wanted to ensure people with sensory or complex disabilities have as meaningful walking opportunities too. The Making Walks Sensory resource gives tips on how to make your walks accessible and suggests sensory example activities engaging touch, taste, sight, smell and sound.

**Alissa Ayling, Sense's Head of Sport and Physical Activity, commented:** "Spending time with nature appreciating the sights, smells and sounds of the outdoor world is something that can benefit both our mental and physical health. We're incredibly pleased to launch this new resource and continue to support families, support workers and carers with even more guidance to being active.

Every day can bring something different, particularly as the seasons change and we hope Making Walks Sensory supports year-round engagement in local walks."

**Support Worker, Sense Service commented:** "The resource has helped us plan properly and actively engage everyone we support throughout a walk. We've loved using the suggested activities to make the walks more tactile and generally more exciting, particularly the journey stick – it's a brilliant way to capture positive memories."

## **Get involved: Use, share and promote with #SenseActive**

Please support the use and promotion of Making Walks Sensory by doing either or all of the following:

- **Download:** Making Walks Sensory is now available to download, in either a PDF or accessible word document version. Please click here to download:

<https://www.sense.org.uk/get-support/arts-sport-and-wellbeing/sense-sport/resources/>



- **Printed version:** To request a printed version, please email [sense.active@sense.org.uk](mailto:sense.active@sense.org.uk).
- **Promote:** Please use the accompanying partner pack to promote the new resource with your networks. The partner pack includes the resource, social media graphics and photos. Please share via website articles, newsletters or social media.
- **Social Share:** When sharing the resource on social media, please use our social tag [@SenseCharity](https://www.instagram.com/SenseCharity) and use the hashtag [#SenseActive](https://www.instagram.com/hashtag/SenseActive).

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## Editor Notes

At Sense, we believe everyone, no matter how complex their disabilities, deserves the right to enjoy a physically active life. Sense Sport, currently funded by Sport England to deliver 'Sense, Active Together', aims to increase the range of sport and physical activity opportunities available to children and adults with complex disabilities.

The '[Sense, Active Together](#)' project includes coordinating local activities with Sense services and community groups, focused children and young people delivery, workforce development opportunities, research and the creation of new innovative practices.

**For more information**, please contact Louis Wickett-Padgham, Sport & Physical Activity Development Manager on [louis.wickett-padgham@sense.org.uk](mailto:louis.wickett-padgham@sense.org.uk) or 07970 668825.