

WHITE CLIFFS WALKING FESTIVAL (2018)



Not just a walk - an experience

Purpose of the Festival

Through a varied programme of walks to suit different ages, abilities, and interest groups, the purpose of the Festival is to attract local people and visitors alike, of varied walking abilities, to develop the love of walking for health, interest, enjoyment and social benefits, and consequently promoting the area, the facilities, the attractions and its friendly communities.

Summary

Another successful Walking Festival! Heavy rain during two days did little to dampen the enjoyment of walking in beautiful country and along the iconic coastline:

- Five days mostly dry with heavy rain during two days (Sunday & Wednesday)
- 44 walks
- 306 miles (490km)
- Walking routes visited all three local Town Council areas, and many parishes in those areas
- Collectively – walkers walked for around 5915 hours
- Collectively - walkers covered 11,363 miles (18,180 km)
- Collectively – walkers burned in the order of one million kilocalories, covering all walks, for all walkers
- 92 volunteers gave up their time in planning, organising and operating the various walks

Introduction

The White Cliffs Walking Festival 2018 was organised by the White Cliffs Ramblers Group, Kent Area, part of the Ramblers organisation, Britain's walking charity. This is the sixth consecutive year White Cliffs Ramblers have organised a walking festival.

The Festival took place from Thursday 23rd August to Wednesday 29th August, covering the Bank Holiday weekend. Forty-four walks were organised. Overall the walks covered over 306 miles (490km) in this beautiful area of the country.

Over the seven days the weather was mostly fine. However, heavy rain occurred on Sunday and Wednesday, but it didn't manage to dampen walker's spirits.



The quality of the walker's experience is fundamental to our planning, organising and operating of the Festival, so feedback is encouraged and is important to us. The cumulative number of walkers in 2018 remained high at 1201, despite the rain, which was 96% of the 2017 number of 1252. This again demonstrates the popularity of the walks and the interest of local people and visitors alike.

Promotional Activity

Promotion starts with raising people's awareness of the event, from exciting their interest, to providing sufficient information for people to make choices as to what walks they wish to participate in. Then to do our very best to make each walk a friendly, enjoyable event, to motivate participants to continue walking as part of their healthy lifestyle. And we also hope they will tell their friends and relatives to come along on the 2019 festival walks.

The promotion of the event is very important and relates to the majority of the expenditure. It is also the part of the organising which takes up a substantial amount of time. The White Cliffs Walking Festival website contained information on all the walks with a simple booking process online. The website itself has attracted much praise because of its ease of use:
<http://www.whitecliffswalkingfestival.org.uk>



To whet appetites, early in the year our media release was sent to a range of organisations, both local and national, which are interested in walking, the environment and history, for inclusion on their websites.



This was followed by distributing over 3000 flyers to Tourist Information Centres, Places of Interest and local events. The flyers outline the diverse range of walks to suit all ages and abilities and provide dates of the Festival and links to the website, Facebook and Twitter.

In addition we emailed and posted details of the walk programme to all senior schools in the Dover District Council area, Parish Councils, health outlets, community outlets, various youth organisations, Guides and Scouts, sea, army and air cadets, camping and caravan sites, various other walking groups around Kent and elsewhere, including Ramblers Groups, other organised groups, and several social walking groups.

This was followed up by distribution of 6000 high quality printed Festival booklets containing the walks programme. These were distributed widely, primarily targeting East Kent, but also to various organisations further afield, and the 12 other Ramblers groups in Kent. Details of the Festival were also featured on the national Ramblers website, and in the national Walk magazine and SE Walker.



The White Cliffs Walking Festival Booklet containing the walks programme

Many Parish Councils were extremely helpful in circulating information within their parishes, including organising posters to be displayed on their notice boards, publishing details on their websites and in their newsletters. We are extremely grateful to Parish Clerks for their support.

We also distributed 300 A4 posters, of which 70 were displayed on local Stagecoach buses.

We continued to work with the goodwill of many volunteers and within the budget which we were able to attract through grants. Those grants were primarily used for printing the Festival Booklets, posters, advertisements and other promotional material and display equipment.

Banners were displayed at various places in Deal, Dover and Sandwich. Social media played an important part with successful campaigns on Twitter and especially Facebook, where targeted advertising was pursued. A YouTube video was also produced which had many viewings.



← A1 poster board to direct walkers to the start of a walk.

A Walking Festival Poster →
as part of a display in an
electronic noticeboard.
*Courtesy Dover Tourist
Information Centre.*



Leading up to the Festival, newspaper advertisements were placed in the Kent Messenger newspapers, and Kent Online. In addition, news articles were published with particular prominence in the Kent Messenger Group. Radio Kent and Dover Community Radio also featured the Festival in four 'talk-ins' with members of our project team.

Variety of Walk



The focal point of the Festival alternates annually between Deal and Dover. This year was Dover's turn and the event was launched with an exciting Opening Ceremony at the Bleriot Memorial (by Ramblers CEO, Vanessa Griffiths: pictured left) with three separate, well supported walks leading off to Dover Castle, the Lighthouse and the Alkham valley.

New walks included: To the Lighthouse; Town to Down; two walks along the River Dour exploring its industrial heritage; Cake and Lighthouse; Foraging on the Foreshore; a Summer Morning Saunter; a Crimean Crime Mystery on the clifftops, as well as nature walks featuring our Ash Trees and a visit to Sandwich Bay Bird Observatory and a related Nature area walk. Some old favourites had new slants such, as the addition of Chalkup 21 and information about Sea Defences, to the White Cliffs 3-Day Trail, and a guided tour featuring the history and restoration of Kearsney and Russell Gardens and a short walk around the Kearsney area.



We continue to maintain the diversity of walks for different sections of the community. For our younger participants, walks were specifically organised for them: firstly, the Ice Cream Walk which concluded with a conducted tour of an ice cream factory and – low and behold – a chance to have a delicious ice cream at its point of production. And let's not forget the exciting Smugglers' Walk with our very own actors in various disguises of pirates and smugglers. Several of the children joined in the fun acting as junior pirates. The Reptile Ramble was also an attraction where young people looked around Samphire Hoe and spotted slowworms this time. The Channel Tales and Samphire Hoe Adventure also attracted many young walkers.

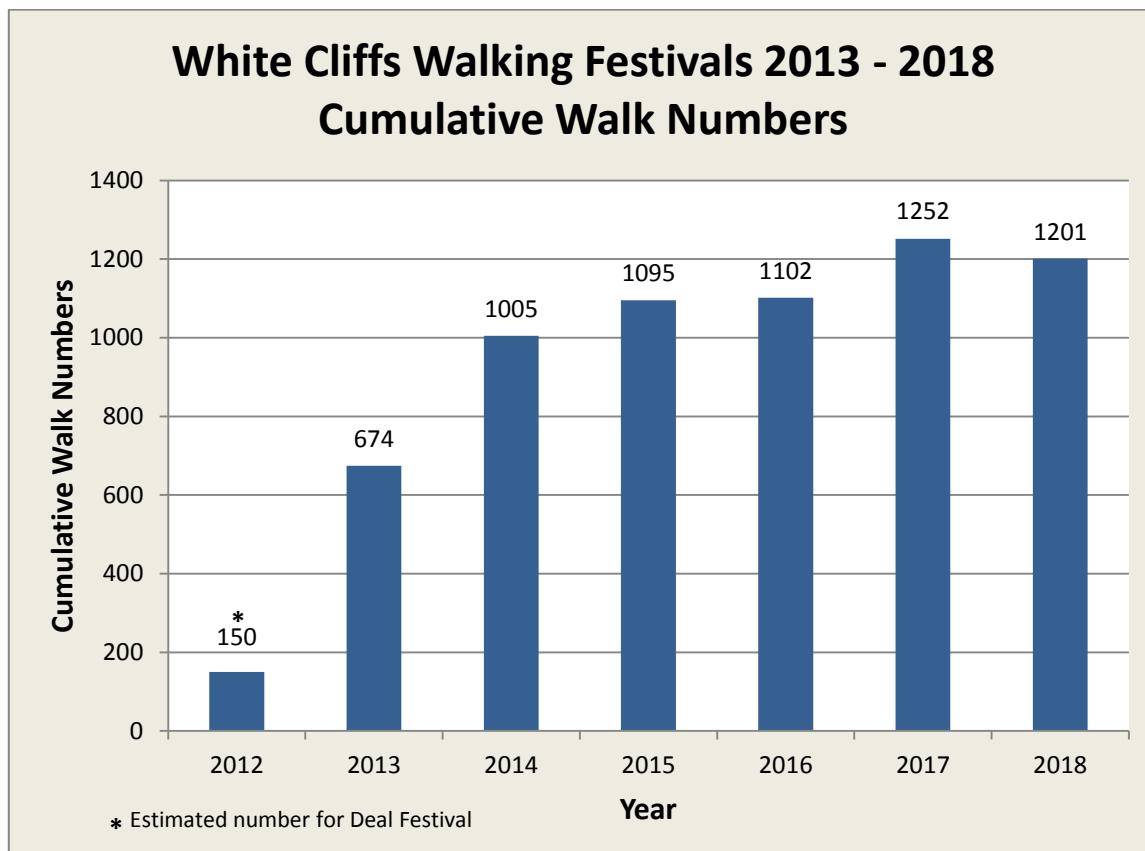


The Carers' Stroll has become a monthly event taking place in various interesting locations throughout East Kent. We were delighted to welcome back one of these walks to our Festival. These are specifically designed for people with a disability and for their carers. Other walkers were also welcomed to join this walk along a picturesque seaside route. Fifty-four people attended and what a joy it was to see so many people join in and enjoy a lovely day. Congratulations to our volunteers for organising this walk. It was a privilege and great fun.



Cumulative number of walkers

The quality of the experience is fundamental to our approach, from first point of contact through to the last point of contact. This includes a warm welcome to walkers and a friendly approach throughout. Whilst it is gratifying to see the numbers being maintained, we believe it is the quality and friendliness of the experience that drives everything we do to make the Festival a success, so the actual number of walkers is just one performance indicator. As can be seen from the bar graph below, the cumulative total for 2018 was **1201**; whilst this was 51 less than in 2017, we believe the poor weather was responsible, indeed our advance bookings of 852 was 6% higher than 802 in 2017.



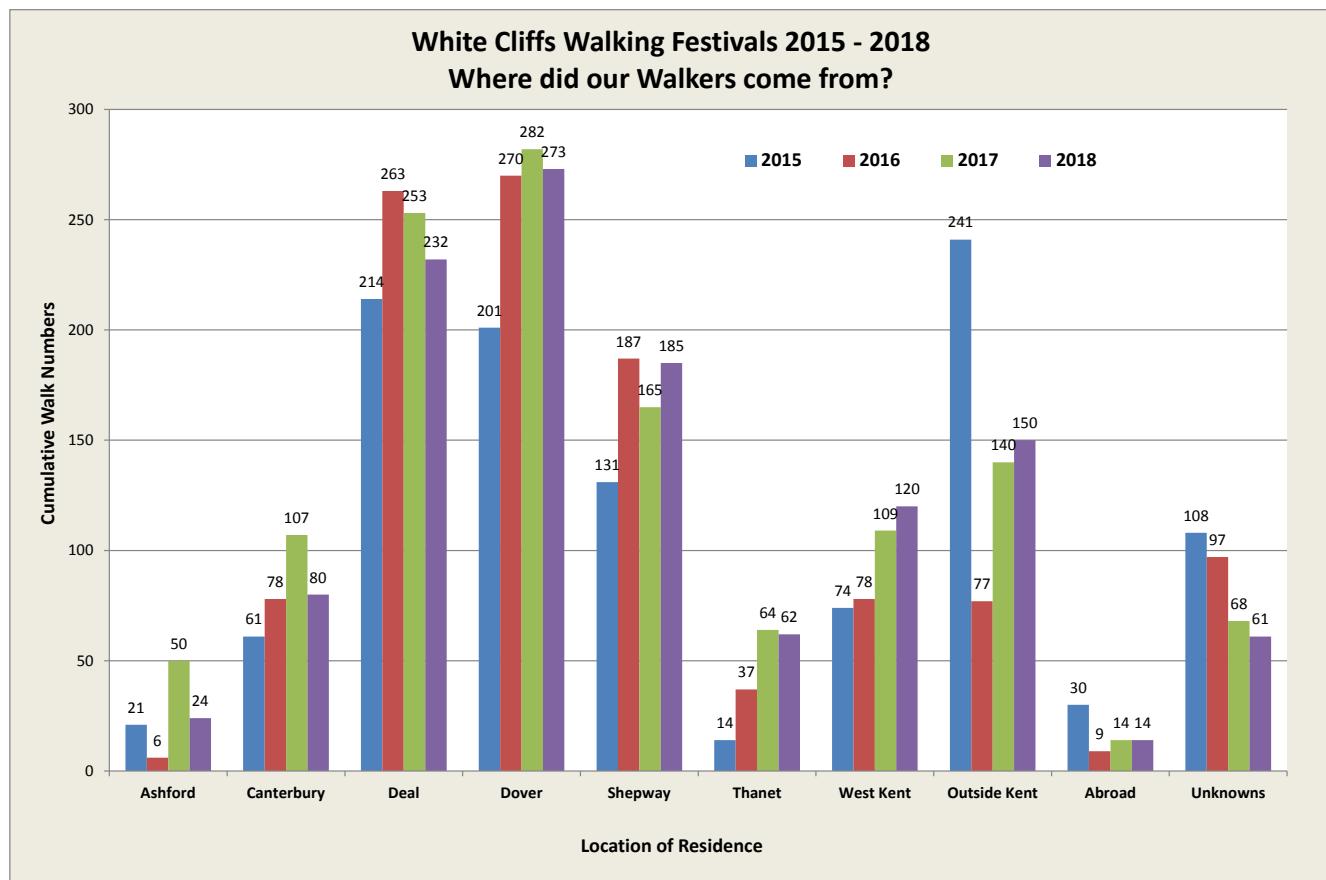
Whether or not the cumulative numbers of walkers has reached a plateau is still unclear, and may only become apparent in future years. We strive to provide walks which are attractive and interesting to our Festival walkers. Themed walks are particularly popular and are the first to become fully booked. Shorter walks of 6 miles or less draw 69% of people taking part in walks.

Whilst Ramblers' members are always supportive of the Festivals, the fact that 67% of attendees were **not** Ramblers' members showed the popularity of the event to less frequent walkers who were attracted to the walks by their variety and suitability to each individual's ability and interests. Hopefully this will lead to many people getting 'out and about' on various walks on a regular basis in the future, which is to be encouraged.

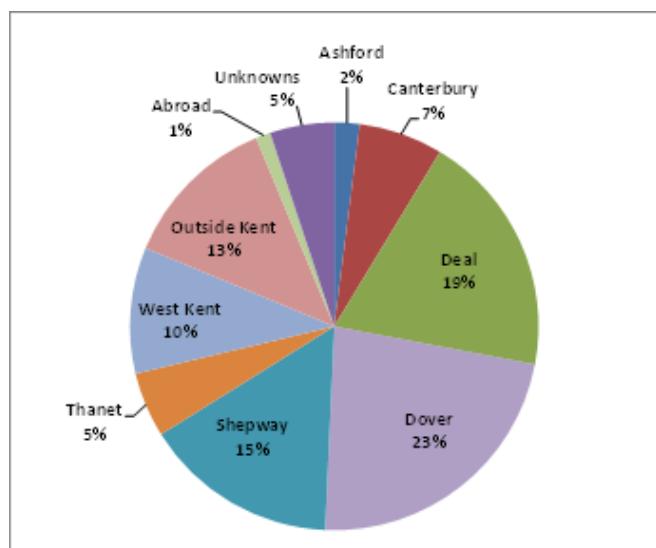
Through conversations on many of the walks, Ramblers' members highlighted various options for the less frequent walkers, to improve health through walking, not just with the Ramblers, but other walking groups, or forming a small group of friends or neighbours to go on walks, or just to leave the car behind for short local journeys and walk instead.

Where did our Walkers come from?

As to be expected, most people came from Dover and Deal. The overall pattern of where Festival walkers reside was very similar to 2017 with some small changes. There have been small drops in the number of people coming from Dover and Deal, which is consistent with the overall total of people being slightly fewer. Larger drops in numbers of people from Canterbury and Ashford have occurred whilst the number of people from Thanet has stayed almost the same. However, the number of people from Shepway has increased this year to match the level of 2016. The number of people from West Kent has steadily risen over the 2015-2018 period.



We are pleased that many of our walkers have returned after enjoying the Festival in previous years.



People from the Dover District Council area represented 42% of the total (compared with 43% in 2017). The Dover District, incorporating Dover, Deal and Sandwich, is where most of the promotion activity took place. People from Kent were 81% of the total (compared with 83% last year); the remaining people came from a wide range of UK towns and abroad (including visitors from the United States, Australia, Switzerland and Belgium).

Recruitment

The Festival plays an important part in enhancing the reputation of the Ramblers organisation, and also an opportunity for recruitment. Of the 67% who were not Ramblers members, all were offered information on the benefits of being a member of Ramblers, and existing members did offer their personal insight into the organisation during the walks.

It is difficult to identify how many attenders actually become new members, as some may well join their local Ramblers Group and some may join White Cliffs Group many months after the Festival.

Long Distance Walkers Association (LDWA)

Each year the Kent branch of the LDWA have organised challenge events covering long distances, always one over 30 miles and another of around 18 miles. The key organiser is also one of the founder members of the White Cliffs Ramblers Group.



109 People took part in the longer walk, with all but 16 completing the whole distance; heavy rain and wind were responsible for the greater than normal drop-out rate. Nevertheless, those who decided not to complete the challenge covered on average 31 miles. A further 25 people took on the 18 mile challenge and all completed it.

This year the LDWA organised a popular 53 mile White Cliffs challenge which attracted very large numbers. The 50+ mile walks are part of the KSS (Kent, Surrey, Sussex) Triple Challenge. There were two Festival walks offered: one of 53 miles and shorter one of 18 miles.



Most LDWA participants were not local: 63% came from outside Kent which is significantly more than the 46% in 2017, and 10% from West Kent which is lower than the 21% in 2017. These walks are a significant attraction, with many seeking challenges to achieve their personal best times over such distances. In fact some people run much of the distance. Not only is this event good for the Festival as a whole, but many stay in local accommodation and it is particularly good for the local economy. We are grateful to the LDWA for their partnership in the White Cliffs Walking Festivals.

Health Benefits



Walking is simple, free and one of the easiest ways to get more active, lose weight and become healthier. It's underrated as a form of exercise, but walking is ideal for people of all ages and fitness levels who want to be more active. Regular walking has been shown to reduce the risk of chronic illnesses, such as heart disease, type 2 diabetes, asthma, stroke and some cancers, as well as having social benefits and helping to have a positive approach to life (source – www.nhs.uk/live-well/exercise/walking-for-health/).

We have estimated that Festival walkers collectively burned around a million kilocalories, which seems an enormous number, but it gives an idea of how active all walkers, covering all the walks in the Festival have been.

The amount of 'Calories burned' has been calculated (fortunately we do not go up in flames, so let us describe it as energy expended). 'Mr. Average', an adult man of average weight expends around 100 kilocalories per mile walked, so if we consider all the miles covered by all walkers on all walks as having been walked by many 'Mr. Averages', we would have an estimate of the total energy expended i.e. $11,363 \times 100 = 1,136,300$ kilocalories, just over one million kilocalories! But what about the women, you say? 'Ms. Average', an adult woman of average weight expends around 65 kilocalories per mile walked. If several 'Ms. Averages' had walked that distance they would have expended $11,363 \times 65 = 738,595$ kilocalories, three-quarters of a million kilocalories! White Cliffs Festival Walkers, like the rest of society come in a diverse range of shapes, sizes and ages, so let us say around one million kilocalories were expended. (See the Appendix for more details).

A Huge Thank You to All Involved

So many people have been involved in the success of the Festival. Firstly, thanks to Kent Community Foundation, Port of Dover Community Fund, Stagecoach, and other organisations who wished anonymity, for providing grants to support this event. This is very much appreciated. Also, thank you to Dover Town Council, Deal Town Council and Dover District Council and their staff for their kind support.

Thank you to the Kent Area Council of the Ramblers and to the twelve other Ramblers groups in Kent for their ongoing support. And especially to the East Kent Walking Group who conducted Walk 15. Also thank you to those at Ramblers' Central Office for their support, especially CEO Vanessa Griffiths for opening the Festival and to her, and her accompanying staff, for supporting us by taking part in the 'To the Lighthouse' walk.

We very much appreciated support from people and organisations outside of the Ramblers, including the Long Distance Walkers Association, DATROWS, the White Cliffs Countryside Partnership, Parish Councils, the Canterbury Archaeological Trust, Dover Castle, Goodnestone Park, Kent Reptile and Amphibian Group, The North Downs Way Trail manager, Dover Tales, the Ash Project, Sandwich Bay Bird Observatory, National Trust and The Land Trust. Several other organisations were supportive in promoting the Festival on their websites. Our Twitter and Facebook campaigns continue to develop and are attracting increasing interest.

And finally to the White Cliffs Ramblers Group themselves. In all, there were 72 volunteers from the White Cliffs Ramblers Group which represents 14% of its membership, plus 20 volunteers from other organisations. Hundreds of hours of volunteer time were required in the planning, organising and operating the festival, for the benefit of the wider community. Without their goodwill, skills, determination and sense of humour, the Festival would never have transformed from an idea to such a successful annual event.

All of your help has been appreciated!

Feedback

We invite walkers to provide feedback on our website. Please view all the feedback on the Comments and Photo pages on <http://www.whitecliffswalkingfestival.org.uk>.

Here are just a few clips from those comments and a few memories of this most enjoyable Festival (comments and adjacent pictures are not always linked).

Jane's Footsteps



This was a brilliant walk and something a little different. I enjoyed the readings and finding out about the house and the area and their connections to Jane Austen. Lunch and tea at the pub were also most welcome!

Fish and Chips Walk



Thank Graham for a great choice of route, fantastic views, wonderful company, all rounded off with tasty fish and chips.

Betteshanger Country Park Walk

Many thanks to Diana and colleagues for leading this walk. The rain made it a bit of an endurance, but it was well worth a visit to this outstanding Park, and in better weather I shall attempt to repeat - but may get lost in the back streets of Deal. Thank you.

Dover Breakfast Walk: Lovely walk. Discovered unexpected places, great views and nice people



Ramparts, Bastions and Batteries of Dover Castle: Really enjoyed the walk with Pat on Thursday. What a walking encyclopaedia he is!



Cake and Lighthouse: Such a wonderful group of walkers. Perfect views of French coast from the Lighthouse. A truly informative and beautifully presented talk from Ruth. We learned so much about the history of the lighthouse and in a perfect setting.

To the Lighthouse: I really enjoyed the walk to the lighthouse today. Vanessa and her team from Ramblers HO accompanied us. A happy band of walkers!



7 Exciting days of the White Cliffs walking Festival 2018 came to an end!



**We hope you enjoyed it
and will be ready to join us for more fun on walks in the
White Cliffs Walking Festival 2019**

Report prepared by: Bev Cussans (Festival Co-ordinator)

On behalf of the Organising Committee:

Rhona Hodges, Margaret Lubbock, Margaret Milsted-Williamson, Les Preston, Graham Smith,
Lesley Stephenson, Helena Trevelyan, Gavin Trevelyan, and Lesley Wheway.

Appendix

How Many Calories Does Walking Burn?

Our weight and the distance we walk determine the energy expended (Calories burned) while walking.

Walking speed matters less than the distance you walk and how much we weigh. A rule of thumb is 100 kilocalories per mile are burned for a 180-pound (82Kg) person and 65 kilocalories per mile for a 120-pound (54Kg) person.

A Table to Show How a Person's Weight and the Speed they Walk Affects Kilocalories Expended

Speed/Pounds	100 lb (45Kg)	120 lb (54Kg)	140 lb (64Kg)	160 lb (73Kg)	180 lb (82 Kg)	200 lb (91 Kg)	220 lb (100 Kg)	250 lb (114Kg)	275 lb (125Kg)	300 lb (136Kg)
2.0 mph	57	68	80	91	102	114	125	142	156	170
2.5 mph	55	65	76	87	98	109	120	136	150	164
3.0 mph	53	64	74	85	95	106	117	133	146	159
3.5 mph	52	62	73	83	94	104	114	130	143	156
4.0 mph	57	68	80	91	102	114	125	142	156	170
4.5 mph	64	76	89	102	115	127	140	159	175	191
5.0 mph	73	87	102	116	131	145	160	182	200	218

If we achieve the speed of walking a mile in 13 minutes or less, we will burn more kilocalories per mile. But for most beginning walkers, it is best to increase the walking distance before working on speed. The calculator and chart of calories burned per mile is based on MET research – metabolic equivalents of various activities. The rate of calories burned was measured while people engaged in these activities.

Walking and Not Losing Weight?

- If we eat more calories than we use each day, we gain weight.
- If we eat fewer calories than we use each day, we lose weight.
- To lose weight we need to eat fewer calories and/or burn more each day.
- 'A pound of fat equals 3500 kilocalories'. To lose 1 pound a week we need to expend 3500 more kilocalories than we eat that week, whether through increased activity or decreased eating - or both

Calories Burned Per Mile by Walking:

(source data: <http://www.verywellfit.com/walking-calories-burned-by-miles-3887154>).

(The scientific definition of a calorie is the amount of heat needed to raise one gram of water one degree Celsius. This is a small quantity of energy, and when dieticians discuss our diet they talk in terms of kilocalories, ie. 1000 x calories.)