

St. Austell BDC (Benefit Delivery Centre)

Department for Work and Pensions

DWP Department for
Work and Pensions

250 Staff based at St Austell

The Department of Works and Pensions (DWP) launched a well being at work programme in 2008. Here at the Benefit Delivery Centre (BDC) we took up the challenge in January 2009, by inviting Health Promotion (HP) to work with Health and Social Security Recreation Association (HASSRA) to introduce a wellbeing programme within the office.

We decided to go for the long haul rather than a one off event to introduce staff to a healthier lifestyle. It was very important to get the backing of the Management Team which we did in February. Our launch date was 12 May 2009.

Since then and in partnership with HASSRA and HP we have started the following; pedometer challenge, stop smoking group, lunch time walks, discussions with Polkyth leisure centre for taster sessions. In the autumn we began a weight management group, health awareness days, mental health awareness/mentors and walking to work (mobilise).

All the activities have proved a success and no one event stands out above the rest, but if pushed maybe the pedometer challenge.



"The progress we have made in the short time the programme has been running is remarkable. This has been recognised within the wider community of DWP by visits from officers who are interested in how we have managed the programme. Our plan still remains - gentle progress but in partnership with DWP Well Being programme at some time"

John Nunn, St. Austell BDC

"I am writing to thank you for the organisation of the Well Being group run by the NHS in office time which I have found most beneficial.

It was brilliant knowing that senior management supported this, allowing the staff attending the time to do it but aside from that it was the really worthwhile advice we received from trained professionals in health care which really worked for me.

It was refreshing in that it was not a diet club but a meeting of people who needed to address lifestyle choices for the good of their health. We were given support and guidance to enable us to make the 'healthy choice' for both exercise and food eating habits. Some of us were already dieting or had started exercising but all without exception went away with the knowledge to assist them make the right choice in their way of living.

For example, we were taught how clever marketing can influence your choices and given information to enable us to understand the product labelling on food. We tested some 'diet' biscuits against ordinary biscuits and discovered that there was little difference between the two as one was high in fat and the other high in sugar.

On a personal note I now walk up all the stairs at work to the top and walk down and have lost 5lb in weight whilst attending the club in the past few weeks. Of course this has also helped in my pedometer challenge!! Thank you"