

SUNBURY

Step out for health boost

WALKING GROUP TAKES OFF

THOSE looking to become more active, improve their health and wellbeing, and meet new people are increasingly turning to free walking groups in Sunbury.

Heart Foundation area co-ordinator Robyn Grant is based at Sunbury Community Health and provides support to walk organisers.

Ms Grant said co-ordinated walking groups started in a small way about 10 years ago.

At that time, they were part of the physiotherapy department at the community health centre.

She said regulars began attending and they were asked whether they would take over leadership of the groups, acting as volunteers of the centre.

"We had about four people who ... wanted to take on that role," Ms Grant said.

"Then five or six years ago we partnered with the National Heart Foundation because they have a national walking group program."

The idea was to promote physical activity, fitness and socialisation.

"People need to exercise

AT A GLANCE

Sunbury walking groups operate on Mondays at 9.15am at the Village Green fountain, Wednesdays at the same time at the Sunbury Private Hospital car park and Fridays at 8.15am at the corner of Reservoir Road and Elizabeth Drive. To register, visit walking.heartfoundation.org.au

because physical exercise has many and varied health benefits and also mental health benefits," she said.

"It also helps prevent chronic diseases and then there's ... connecting people and the support they get and making friends."

Sunbury operates three walking groups each week and within each group, participants can choose three different paces, although all depart at the same time.

Some members walk for an hour, while others cover the distance in 40 minutes.

A total of 80 people are registered to participate, although not everyone turns up each week.



Robyn Grant and fellow participants of the Sunbury Heart Foundation walking group go for a stroll last week.

Picture: DENNIS MANKTELOW