

# Mywalks is now live!

**What did you see when you walked outside today?  
Did you notice anything new or different?  
In fact, did you notice anything at all?**

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A team of academics from Northumbria University's Divisions of Geography and Environmental Management within the School of Applied Sciences have been asking just this, as a new website, entitled '*mywalks*' is launched this week.

**Mywalks** is a project designed to encourage people to open their eyes to the '*hidden*', perhaps less glamorous corners of their towns and cities; basically the things around you: the man-hole cover, the tower block, the back lane....

*'Switch off your mp3 players and look around'* is the message – don't rely on '*experts*' to tell you what is worth looking at or appreciating; break away from the tourist trail, which directs people to admire a parade of '*landmarks*' in any city or town, and engage with the less obviously picturesque sights (or in some cases, the downright ugly...).

The original aim of the '*mywalks*' project was to get Northumbria students to view their immediate environments from a different perspective, and to appreciate that geography is everywhere around them. The idea has since grown into the '*mywalks*' website – where everyone can now share '*their walk*' and the experiences they encounter, with others.

Dr Duncan Fuller, '*mywalks*' project leader, said: "*Mywalks*' is about re-engaging with our immediate urban, day-to-day, city, country, local, taken-for-granted environments and geographies. We all too often '*autopilot*' on ipods, get into our cars and turn the stereo up, dash from place to place, and so focus on where we're going, and not where we actually are – and what is there. So as an antidote to this we came up with the idea of '*mywalks*' - to encourage us to pay more attention to the streets, places, and spaces we walk through.

"We want people to think about what makes them look and listen, what they think is interesting, what disgusts them, what makes them smile, what makes them look again, what intrigues them, in fact just whatever comes into their minds when they're out and about – and then we want them to tell us about it on the *mywalks* website through text, pictures, or even via an audio-recording of their thoughts.

"The '*mywalks*' website also ties in with work that Northumbria University has recently been heavily involved in, from exploring graffiti and urban art, to discovering and mapping England's most tranquil areas. We want people to tune into their environments and then tell us how they feel about them. Finding and enjoying the qualities of places which generate excitement, outrage, tranquillity and peace is something that all of us can participate in, not just be told about"

For more information, visit  
<http://nuweb.northumbria.ac.uk/mywalks/intro.php>