Sheffield Hallam University

istep.org.uk

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iStep Website [istep.org.uk]

Introduction

iStep is an initiative developed by Sheffield Hallam University and the University of Sheffield and is part of a larger European wide research project called Innovage that aims to both promote and enable healthy, active lifestyles towards a reduction in levels of problematic obesity in increasingly aging populations. It was built as part of the primary deliverable for Innovage; WP4 Improving Obesity Related outcomes. iStep stands for 'Intergenerational Support To Encourage Physical Activity'.

At the heart of the iStep concept is the creation of younger and older person partnerships. We are developing ways for people to work together to achieve increased physical activity that is both tangible and rewarding by giving these couples (or dyads) pedometers that track how much physical activity they do, together. Users of the system can then see how much activity they have done, compare their progress with other dyads teams, and work towards a series of collective goals, by logging onto the on-line iStep environment.

This document is to provide a brief overview of the website functionality. The iStep website is currently lave and publicly accessible at istep.org.uk

Using the Website

Using the iStep website is a simple 5 step process as detailed below.

1. Register and login

In order to use the site a user must have an account. Users can create accounts by visiting the website and clicking on "Create an account".

This will take the user to a registration page.

The user must fill in the form and click "Complete Signup" to complete the registration process. They will now be able to login to and use the website.

2. Join a group

Once the user logs in they will be taken to a dashboard. This dashboard will show that the user must join a group challenge. This is illustrated in the "Your Challenge" section of the dashboard. Clicking on "View group challenges" will take the user to a page to allow them to join a group.
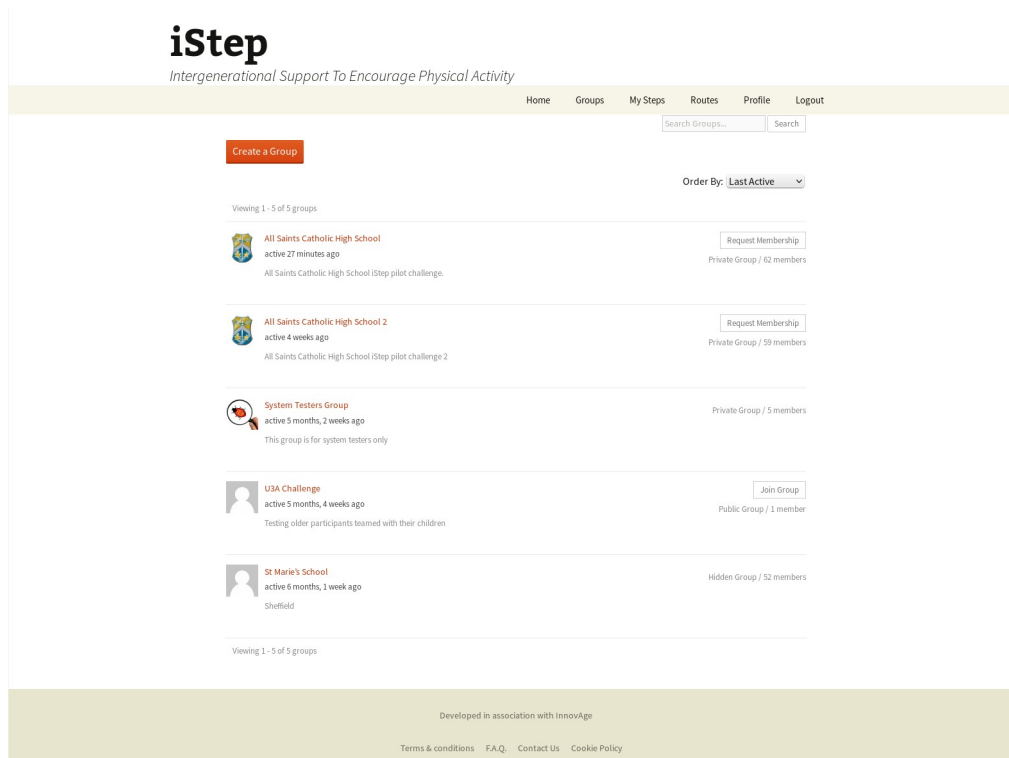
Each group has a button to the left of it. If the group is public the button will say "Join Group". To join the user simply clicks this "Join Group" button and they are instantly joined to the group. Some groups chose to be private. Private groups will have a button that says "Request Membership". If the user wished to join one of these groups they may click on the "Request Membership" button however they must wait for the Group administrator to approve their request.

Each group has a virtual walking challenge affiliated with it. Some initial challenges available on the site were the Sheffield Round walk, the Trans Pennine Trail and a walk from Sheffield To Lourdes. The challenge associated with a group is decided by the group administrator.

If the user does not wish to join an existing group they also have the option of creating a new group from this page via the "Create a group" button on the top left hand side. Creating a group will automatically make this user the administrator for the group.

3. Find a partner

The next stage is to find a partner. Back on the dashboard the user can see that they are now joined to a group but that they do not have a partner.
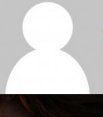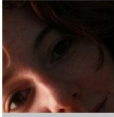
Clicking on "Find/Create Partner" will take the user to a page to choose a partner.

iStep

Intergenerational Support To Encourage Physical Activity

Home   Groups   My Steps   Routes   Profile   Logout

Find a partner:

Choose your partner from the list below. In order to choose a partner they must be registered with iStep and a member of the same group challenge. It is not possible to parter with a member who already has a partner. These members will be marked as unavailable.

Create a special managed user partner account

cherylgrindell joined 5 months, 2 weeks ago   Partner Up

faketest joined 5 months, 2 weeks ago   Partner Up

sinob joined 7 months, 1 week ago   Partner Up

andy joined 11 months, 1 week ago   Partner Up

captain joined 12 months ago

The user simply clicks on the orange "Partner Up" button next to the person they wish to partner with. It is hoped that having a partner in a dyad and being part of a group to complete a challenge will encourage the user to walk more.

4. Get Walking

The user can record their progress on the site via the "My Steps" in the menu bar. This page will allow the user to add steps using a very simple form, view the steps they have taken in the last 30 days and see a graph of their progress in any group challenge they have joined.

5. View your progress

Users can view their progress as an individual within the group as a member of a dyad. As they progress there are graphs showing their steps, their partners steps, how these steps compare with other people in the group and an animated map of their progress along the virtual route.

The image below show the users progress in comparison with other individual members of the group.

The user can also compare the progress of their dyad against the other dyads within the group

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System Testers Group

Private Group   active 5 months, 2 weeks ago

This group is for system testers only

The challenge is: Round Sheffield Walk (Competitive dyad challenge)

The challenge ends: 2014-11-30
The challenge goal is 70000 steps

Group Admins

Individual Steps   Partner Steps   Members 5

Round Sheffield Walk

The table below shows the collective steps walked by each partnership

PARTNERS	TEAM STEPS	
captain (13111 Steps) faketest (0 Steps)	13111	18%
sinob (0 Steps) andy (2 Steps)	2	0%

Group Owner Features

Any one who creates a group challenge becomes the owner of that group challenge. As such they have permission to manage the group challenge. In addition to the standard group management features group one would expect some additional features have been built to make management of the group challenges easier.

To facilitate the fast creation of accounts for a group the group owner has access to a bulk group member creation tool. This allows the owner to create multiple user account and automatically join them to the group in one go.

Group owners can also manage user partnership. They can create or remove partnerships via a group partnership administration page.

The group owner can control the challenge the group is working towards. They may choose from a list of available routes, what type of challenge (collaborative, competitive, dyad or individual) and they may also set the end date.

Route Builder

Routes are managed by the website owner. New routes can only be created and modified by a site administrator user, that is a user with the highest level of access. Regular users and group administrators do not have access to this feature.

Routes can be edited by clicking directly on the map or by updating the points manually in the "Route path" field.
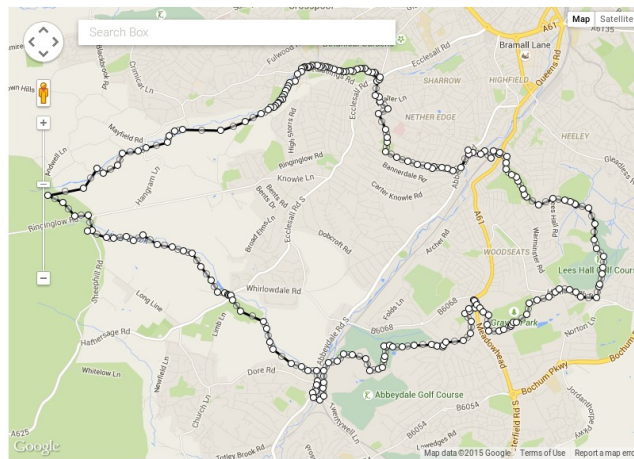
Basic Technical Information

The iStep prototype is being been built on top of the WordPress CMS. WordPress is a free and open source content management system. Currently WordPress is the used for over 22% [http://w3techs.com/technologies/overview/content_management/all] of the websites on the internet, making it the most popular content management software in the world.

WordPress Core

WordPress adheres to a standard LAMP/WAMP architecture. That is to say that it can be hosted on a Windows or Linux system and has three primary software components: Apache, MySQL and PHP. The core system code allows for the management of users, pages, posts and simple media content. In addition WordPress features a plug-in architecture and a theme system.

A large amount of the flexibility of WordPress comes from the wide variety of free high quality plug-ins. Plug-ins are tools that extend the functionality of a basic WordPress site. Each plug-in is a software component designed to perform a single specific task. The iStep platform is composed of a variety of plug-ins and themes from various sources. As well as using existing well known plug-ins such as BuddyPress the site also required the creation of various custom plug-ins, themes and language code.

Custom WordPress plug-ins and themes developed for Innovage are available for download from Bitbucket at   https://bitbucket.org/SinOB

Technical documentation to recreate an instance of iStep can be made available on request.