

# Let's Get Scotland Walking

## The National Walking Strategy

# Action Plan Overview

## 2016 – 2026





**The benefits of walking are well established. They are set out in the National Walking Strategy and are supported by a wide range of organisations across Scotland. We want to build on the progress that has already been made towards the vision where we have a Scotland where everyone walks as part of their everyday journeys, places are well designed to for walking and everyone enjoys walking in the outdoors. Responsibility for this lies with many people and organisations. All can make a difference.**

**That is why this action plan has been published. It will do three things. Firstly, it will champion walking and highlight its benefits to anyone who has an interest or a role to play in supporting it. Secondly, it will help to coordinate action across organisations, sectors and disciplines to ensure that activities are complementary and mutually supportive. And thirdly, the action plan gives us an opportunity to reflect on what has been done, to measure progress and to assess the impact made. It will not be a static document, but reviewed as and when we see what is – and what isn't – working.**

**The National Walking Strategy Delivery Forum has been established to take this forward. I am delighted that we have a broad group of people who are committed to act as 'walking champions' and use their knowledge, ideas and networks to ensure that walking is embedded into how we think and what we do. Given this, I believe that the action plan and the delivery forum give us a fantastic opportunity to work together to make the step change we want on walking in Scotland.**

**Craig McLaren  
Chair, National Walking Strategy Delivery Forum.**

## Introduction

This Action Plan is a high level plan that has been developed to assist in the delivery of [Let's Get Scotland Walking - the National Walking Strategy \(NWS\)](#) and its vision:

*A Scotland where everyone walks as part of their everyday journeys, places are well designed for walking and everyone enjoys walking in the outdoors.*

We know that there are significant health and economic gains from getting inactive people to become active, and the easiest way for individuals to achieve this is by increasing walking. Walking should be as pleasant, safe and convenient as possible.

Improving conditions for walking can bring a range of benefits to everyday lives; to health, safety, access to services and social contact, including a sense of community whether in an urban or rural area.

Walking, along with cycling, is the most sustainable means of daily travel for short journeys. Walking requires only a fraction of the space needed for a car, is more economical, both for the individual and in terms of investment in public infrastructure, and causes no noise or air pollution. For longer journeys, it is the most carbon-friendly link to and from public transport. It is affordable for everyone and therefore is the most financially equitable of all transport modes. The NWS sits within the context of the [Active Scotland Outcomes Framework](#), [National Planning Framework](#) and the [Long-term Vision for Active Travel in Scotland 2030](#)

We want people to walk more on a daily basis – from their early years across their life course into active ageing

There are a number of principles which underpin the NWS. They include:

- **Access and availability** – there must be equal opportunity for all people to participate in activities regardless of their gender, age, disability or cultural background; and to access infrastructure, programmes and services;
- **Quality** – the highest possible quality environment, with a focus on supportive infrastructure and continuous improvement, should be provided and supported;
- **Adaptability** – provide for flexibility and adaptability to suit changing community needs. This is to be achieved through a commitment to integrated and collaborative approaches to the planning and provision.

***N.B. Walking in this context includes the use of wheelchairs, buggies and similar mobility aids with the aim of ensuring easy and convenient independent mobility for all.***

## Delivering the Strategy

With the delivery of the NWS we aim to raise the status of walking across urban and rural areas of Scotland. This will include focusing more on the needs of pedestrians and walkers in policy, planning and implementation. We aspire to achieve levels of walking on a par with the best performing countries such as Norway, the Netherlands and Switzerland. A Delivery Forum has been established to oversee the development and implementation of the NWS Action Plan.

### What will make a difference?

In order to achieve a change in people's behaviour through walking, as well as modal shift and improved levels of physical activity and wellbeing, there are a number of 'game changers' that we believe will have a significant impact.

The **game changers** are:

- **Climate Change:** more people choosing to walk for everyday short journeys will help reduce emissions from road transport and improve air quality
- **Healthy Environments:** champion places where walking is easy, attractive and encourages healthy living choices, helping to prevent and treat disease, enhance wellbeing and reduce health inequalities.
- **Local government:** support safe, pleasant environments that encourage walking will contribute to achieving local priorities, including increased neighbourhood satisfaction, supported local economies and inward investment.
- **Planning:** promote multi-use development where people live in walkable proximity to employment and retail; and support for the Town Centre First principle
- **Transport:** implement the transport hierarchy to prioritise the movement of people on foot so that local walking routes are connected, convenient, conspicuous, convivial and comfortable.
- **Community Planning:** recognition of the multiple benefits of walking and prioritising improvement of the local walking environment.
- **Education:** support for "walk to school" initiatives and ensure walking is included as an important activity during the nursery, school, college and university day.
- **Green infrastructure:** ensure everyone can enjoy the health benefits of walking through the provision of good quality, well-connected and accessible path networks and greenspaces.
- **Sport:** Walking initiatives should be supported within and linked to Community Sports Hubs
- **Resourcing:** long-term resourcing of walking, at a national and local level, will be essential if the current health and wellbeing patterns of the population are to be addressed

## Strategic Aims and Objectives

The NWS Action Plan sets out high level objectives associated with the 3 Strategic Aims identified within the Strategy. The overview of the Action Plan is contained within the following 2 tables:

**Table 1** provides the Strategic Aims

**Table 2** provides the high level objectives associated with each of the Strategic aims.

**Table 1: Strategic Aims**

1	<p><b>To deliver on creating a culture of walking where everyone walks more often as part of their everyday travel and for recreation and well-being</b></p> <p>A walking culture where Scotland's communities are empowered to develop community-based approaches to walking development and the value of social capital (e.g. through volunteering) can be harnessed.</p>
2	<p><b>To achieve better quality walking environments with attractive, well designed and managed built and natural spaces and places for everyone</b></p> <p>By developing and managing attractive, well designed communities, towns, cities and places and by promoting opportunities, e.g. signed routes close to where people live and work, we will encourage people to use them on a regular basis for active travel, health, recreation and sport</p>
3	<p><b>To enable easy, convenient and safe independent mobility for everyone</b></p> <p>By promoting conditions that make it easier and more attractive for people of all ages and abilities to walk, rather than a situation where people do not have the opportunity to walk or walk only if there is no alternative.</p>

**Table 2: Objectives**

S - Short (1-3 years); M - medium (within 5 years); L - Long (within 10 years)

1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To increase the awareness and availability of the opportunities and benefits of walking to residents and visitors to Scotland ( including everyday walking for pleasure, for health, to school, to the park, playing golf, hillwalking etc)</li> <li>• Walking opportunities increase within Health and Care Service delivery programmes e.g. health walk referral, walking routes at hospitals</li> <li>• Develop and mainstream initiatives that support mode shift from driven to walking journeys e.g. walking as part of every journey.</li> <li>• Enable workplaces across Scotland to support staff to walk more every day e.g. by active travel planning, walking meetings, lunch time walks.</li> <li>• Support and enable schools, colleges, universities and youth organisations to get young people to walk as part of their everyday commuting and learning activity</li> <li>• Support walking sports to widen participation base, particularly in</li> </ul>	<p>S/M</p> <p>S/M</p> <p>S/M</p> <p>S/M</p> <p>S/M</p> <p>M/L</p>
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	<p>older adults e.g. walking football, rambling, hill walking, golf, foot-golf, bowls etc.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Increase the number of visitors walking (urban, rural, mountain, playing golf etc) as part of their holiday / visit</li> </ul>	L
2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Develop high-quality, well maintained walking (and cycling) networks in every local authority area, particularly in lowest 15% SIMD areas; ensure existing routes are maintained and promoted effectively</li> <li>• Promote everyday walking for short journeys to help reduce greenhouse gas emissions and pollutants</li> <li>• Prioritise and support good quality walking environments, including green infrastructure, through planning and development (land use, transport, housing etc.) at national and local authority levels in both urban and rural areas</li> <li>• Ensure all households in Scotland's urban areas are no more than 5 minutes' walk from promoted, publicly accessible and attractive greenspace, parks or local path networks</li> <li>• Ensure all future planning policies / developments prioritise walking</li> <li>• Identify and monitor the level of funding available for small scale high impact improvements to the walking environment including new or upgraded controlled crossings drop kerbs, tactiles etc</li> </ul>	<p>M/L</p> <p>M/L</p> <p>M/L</p> <p>M/L</p> <p>M/L</p> <p>M/L</p>
3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Prioritise the protection of vulnerable road users to ensure that pedestrians of all abilities and other users are safer on Scotland's roads</li> <li>• Ensure designs for public and private developments deliver secure connectivity within communities for pedestrians</li> <li>• Ensure existing or developing walking / cycling / active travel plans assist with delivery of NWS and AP</li> <li>• Develop the capacity of locally based organisations, including community planning partnerships, to identify the scope for large and small improvements to the walking environment</li> <li>• Ensure all local authorities, national park authorities and other land managers adopt the Path Grading System across Scotland</li> <li>• Increase the percentage of footways (by authority and nationally) deemed in good condition</li> <li>• Promote safe, courteous and responsible shared use practices on footpaths, recreational and urban paths/trails</li> </ul>	<p>M</p> <p>M/L</p> <p>S/M</p> <p>M/L</p> <p>M/L</p> <p>S/M</p> <p>S/M</p>

## Who will help to deliver this?

*Everyone* has a role to play in championing walking and helping to deliver on this action plan. There are already a wide range of stakeholders involved and they include: Scottish Government, Community Planning Partnerships, Regional Transport Partnerships, local authorities, national park authorities, other public bodies, third sector organisations, workplaces and community groups.

## How will we know this has worked?

The National Walking Strategy is a key step in achieving the delivery of the [National Physical Activity Implementation Plan](#) (NPAIP): Building a Legacy from the Commonwealth Games and sits within the context of the **Active Scotland Outcomes Framework** which describes the key outcomes desired for sport and physical activity in Scotland over the next ten years. Success will rely on the collective efforts of a wide range of stakeholders.

**Vision: A More Active Scotland**

Physical activity is about getting people moving. Daily walking, playing in a park, going to a gym, training with a team or aspiring to win a gold medal- it doesn't really matter how people get active, it just matters that we do.

Being physically active contributes to our personal, community and national wellbeing.

Our vision is of a Scotland where more people are more active, more often.

**National Outcomes**

Business	Employment	Research and Innovation	Young People	Early Years	Healthier	Inequalities Tackled	Life Chances
Safe from Crime	Sustainable Places	Resilient Communities	Environment Valued	National Identity	Impact on Environment	Older People Supported	Public Services

**Active Scotland Outcomes**

<b>We encourage and enable the inactive to be more active</b>	<b>We encourage and enable the active to stay active throughout life</b>	<b>We develop physical confidence and competence from the earliest age</b>
<b>We improve our active infrastructure – people and places</b>	<b>We support wellbeing and resilience in communities through physical activity and sport</b>	<b>We improve opportunities to participate, progress and achieve in sport</b>

**Equality – Our commitment to equality underpins everything we do**

For further information and the summary of evidence for each of the Outcomes above go to: [Active Scotland Outcomes Framework](#)

## Core National Walking Strategy Outcomes and Indicators

Clear outcomes, with appropriate and relevant indicators, have an important role to play in measuring and monitoring progress. The NWS acknowledges the benefits in setting Scotland-wide outcomes. These will provide guidance and direction for all involved in delivering the NWS and the Action Plan. The following outcomes are proposed:

### Outcome 1: More people in Scotland choose walking for everyday journeys

Indicator – Frequency of walking as a means of transport, [Scottish Transport Statistics](#)

### Outcome 2: More people in Scotland walk for recreation

Indicator – Walking for recreation at least once in last 4 weeks, [Scottish Household Survey](#)

### Outcome 3: More children in Scotland walk to school

Indicator – Proportion of children in full time education who walk to school – [Scottish Transport Statistics](#)

The NWS Delivery Forum will monitor the delivery of the NWS Action Plan using the expertise of its members. Lead organisations will have responsibility to report twice a year against action items outlined in the NWS Action Plan.

Delivery agencies will be expected to develop more detailed delivery and monitoring plans to enable progress to be measured. However standard national datasets will also be used – see **table 3**

**Table 3: National Datasets**

	Monitoring	What will success look like by 2026
1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Walkers database</li> <li>Annual Hands Up Scotland Survey</li> <li>WOW programme</li> <li>Scottish Transport Statistics</li> <li>Scottish Household Survey</li> <li>Scottish Health Survey</li> <li>Day visitor survey/Great Britain Tourism Survey and/or International Passenger Survey</li> <li>Scotland's People and Nature Survey (SPANS)</li> </ul>	People of all ages will see walking as a normal part of their everyday journeys, for recreation and for wellbeing.
2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>No. of authorities fully implementing Designing Streets and using Place Standard Tool</li> <li>Number of national campaigns per year (functional and recreational)</li> <li>Number of promoted routes in each local authority</li> </ul>	<p>Authorities, at national and local level, will have prioritised walking within all policy planning and delivery</p> <p>All communities within Scotland will have well managed and maintained walking opportunities within and between them for everyday use.</p>

3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>No. of authorities implementing 20mph zones</li> <li>No. of pedestrian deaths reported per year</li> </ul>	Pedestrians will have been prioritised and everyone will be safer on Scotland's roads
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We will also encourage national and local measurement of walking to use the [‘International Walking Data Standard - Treatment of Walking in Travel Surveys: Towards internationally standardised monitoring methods of walking and public space’](#) (Oct 2015)

## Delivery Forum

The National Walking Strategy Delivery Forum will oversee the development and delivery of the NWS Action Plan.

The group is chaired by Craig McLaren (RTPI Scotland) who has been appointed by Shona Robison, the Cabinet Secretary for Health, Wellbeing and Sport. The Chair will sit on the Planning Group for the National Strategic Group for Sport & Physical Activity, which is in turn responsible for setting the priorities for discussion and endorsement from National Strategic Group members. Progress on the NWS will be reported through this mechanism.

The Delivery Forum will comprise senior representatives from the key organisations who are involved in delivery of the Action Plan. Paths for All will provide the Secretariat for the NWS Delivery Forum.

A communication plan will be agreed to ensure that all those with an interest in the Action Plan are kept in touch with progress made. This is likely to include a web enabled update, social media and an annual event.

More Information on the NWS Delivery Forum and NWS Action Plan can be found at:

[www.stepchangescot.scot](http://www.stepchangescot.scot)

# A Step Change for Scotland

**TRAVEL**  
Encourage walking for short journeys and as a key part of multi-mode trips

**AIR QUALITY**  
More people walking and cycling will help reduce air pollution.  
*It's not far, leave the car*

**EDUCATION**  
Implement safer routes to nurseries, schools, colleges and universities to encourage daily walking

**BUILT ENVIRONMENT**  
Design our towns and cities to be walkable, safe, attractive, and sustainable

**WALKING FOR HEALTH**  
Offer free community walking programmes supported by trained volunteers

**GREEN INFRASTRUCTURE**  
Enable easier access to parks, greenspaces and wider countryside for everyone

**LOCAL ECONOMIES**  
Supporting economic activities, including tourism, through improved walking opportunities

**WORKPLACE**  
Promote walking as an important part of the working day

**PATH NETWORKS**  
Provide good quality, maintained multi-use path networks in and around communities

**HEALTH & SOCIAL CARE**  
Promote the benefits of walking for mental and physical wellbeing

**EVERYONE, EVERYWHERE**  
Walking is free, fun, healthy and for everyday journeys

**Let's Get Scotland Walking**  
Everyone can help make Scotland a 'walking friendly' country  
#stepchangescot [www.stepchangescot.scot](http://www.stepchangescot.scot)

 **healthier scotland**  
SCOTTISH GOVERNMENT

We want people to walk more everyday - to work, to school, for health and wellbeing, to enjoy being outdoors and just for fun! This will enable a step change towards making Scotland a 'walking friendly' country.

## Useful Policy Links:

Scottish Government (2014) Let's Get Scotland Walking: The National Walking Strategy. Edinburgh: Scottish Government

Scottish Government (2014) Active Scotland Outcomes Framework. Edinburgh: Scottish Government

Scottish Government (2014) National Physical Activity Implementation Plan (NPAIP): Building a Legacy from the Commonwealth Games. Edinburgh: Scottish Government

Scottish Executive (2003) Let's Make Scotland More Active. Edinburgh: Scottish Executive

National Institute for Health and Care Excellence (2012) NICE Guideline PH41 Walking and cycling: local measures to promote walking and cycling as forms of travel or recreation. London: NICE

Scottish Government (2008) Good Places Better Health: Scottish Governments Strategy on health and the environment. Edinburgh: Scottish Government

Scottish Government (2015) Integration of Health and Social Care. Edinburgh: Scottish Government

APS Group Scotland (2011) Commission on the Future Delivery of Public Services. Edinburgh: Public Services Commission

Scottish Executive (2003) Land Reform Scotland Act. Edinburgh: Scottish Executive

Transport Scotland (2006); Refresh (2015) Scotland's National Transport Strategy. Edinburgh: Transport Scotland

Transport Scotland (2014) A Long-term Vision for Active Travel in Scotland 2030. Edinburgh: Transport Scotland

Scottish Government (2013) Low Carbon Scotland: Behaviours Framework. Edinburgh: Scottish Government

Scottish Government (2013) National Review of Town Centres Edinburgh: Scottish Government

Scottish Government (2014) National Planning Framework 3. Edinburgh: Scottish Government

Scottish Government (2014) Scottish Planning Policy. Edinburgh: Scottish Government

Scottish Government (2014) Scottish Rural Development Plan. Edinburgh: Scottish Government

Transport Scotland (2013) Cycling Action Plan for Scotland (CAPS). Edinburgh: Transport Scotland



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