



LIVING STREETS
PUTTING PEOPLE FIRST

Walking & Public Space – Public Opinion Survey 2009

Contents

	Page
1. Introduction	3
2. Study Aims	3
3. Methodology	4
4. Analysis	4
5. Survey Results	
5.1 Reasons for walking	5
5.2 Time/distance to facilities	6
5.4 Where walking is done	8
5.5 What would encourage you to walk more?	9
6. Discussion	12
7. Conclusion	13

1. Introduction

Paths for All and Living Streets

recognise the need to engage effectively with walking and public space issues in Scotland. Both organisations wish to see more people walking more often in public spaces and along paths and routes which are safe, attractive and enjoyable and where walking for everyday purposes leads to healthier and more inclusive communities. In particular, they wish to prioritise attention and future actions on key aspects of walking in Scotland.

Paths for All

Paths for All is the national charity promoting walking for health and the development of multi-use path networks in Scotland. Paths for All plays a critical role in getting more people outdoors and active in Scotland and is successful in pushing this agenda with local and national government and in communities. Paths for All's vision is:

“Paths for people... a happier, healthier, greener, more active Scotland.”

In delivering this vision, Paths for All is working towards two equally important and interlinked long term Outcomes:

- Reducing the proportion of the population who are inactive, through the delivery of a national walking programme. In particular, through volunteer led walks, innovative approaches to promoting walking and capacity building within key stakeholders.

Increasing the number, quality, accessibility and multi-use of paths. In particular through advocacy, advice and support on delivery of path networks, a technical programme,

community paths support programme and an active travel agenda

Living Streets Scotland

Living Streets is the national charity that stands up for pedestrians. With our supporters we work to create safe, attractive and enjoyable streets, where people want to walk.

We have been the national voice for pedestrians throughout our 80 year history. In the early years, our campaigning led to the introduction of the driving test, pedestrian crossings and 30mph speed limits. Since then our ambition has grown. Today we influence decision makers nationally and locally, run successful projects to encourage people to walk, and provide specialist consultancy services to help reduce congestion and carbon emissions, improve public health, and make sure every community can enjoy vibrant streets and public spaces.

In Scotland, there are three operational areas:

- Campaigning for better streets, putting people first, nationally and locally.
- Working with local authorities to deliver healthy environments, encouraging physical activity as part of our everyday routines.
- Working with community groups across Scotland to help achieve improvements to their own streets and neighbourhoods.

2. Study Aims

Paths for All and Living Streets want to understand what issues matter most to the public and what potential barriers stop people from walking more and becoming a healthier society.

This survey was designed to add to an existing body of knowledge regarding walking habits and issues in Scotland and was conducted on behalf of the organisations by the Progressive Partnership. Information from the research will be used to inform strategy in the future and may be used for press campaigns.

3. Methodology

The data was gathered using the Scottish Opinion Omnibus Survey. It is a telephone survey focusing on the entire Scottish population and involved a total of 1,001 national representative telephone interviews with adults aged 18+ across Scotland. The interviews were conducted over the period 28th April to 6th May 2009. In addition to the overall Scottish figures, the survey was conducted to provide data by type of area in which respondents lived and a screening question on type of area was therefore included (city centre, town, village, rural).

4. Analysis

The information has been analysed by age, gender, social grade, standard Scottish regions and area of residence. Also the 15% most deprived areas were determined from individual postcodes, according to the Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation and analysis conducted for each of the questions. A sample size of 1,001 provides a data set with a maximum standard error range of between $\pm 0.9\%$ and $\pm 3.1\%$ at the 95% confidence interval (market research industry standard). It also provides a robust enough sample to allow sub group analysis in terms of age, gender, social grade, SIMD, etc.

5. Survey Results

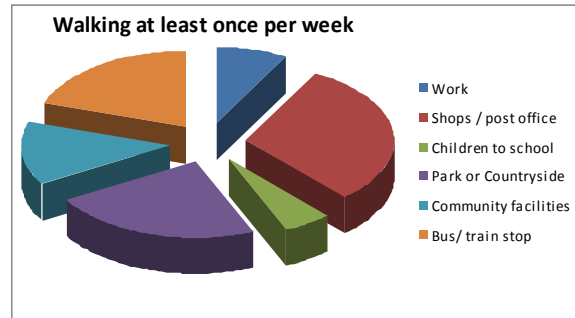
5.1 Reasons for walking

Visiting the local shops/Post Office is the most popular destination for walking journeys (in the past month). Four out of every five respondents (80%) had walked for this purpose. It was also the most frequent walking visit with 29% visiting daily, 59% several times per week and rising to 72% walking at least once per week. This demonstrates the importance of shops and post offices in local communities for main and occasional shopping and the importance of walking as a means of access and obtaining physical activity.

Other frequent walking visits are:

71% of respondents walked to **visit a local park or countryside**. 12% walked every day, rising to 35% several times per week and 54% at least once per week. A further 16% walked less often. Recreational walking is a growing activity and walking for health is a key message and this shows the importance of local green space.

60% of respondents walked to **reach a bus stop or train station**. 19% walked daily, 36% several times per week and 47% on at least one occasion per week. Walking is an essential feature of public transport usage.



Less popular walking destinations are:

54% of respondents never walk to **community, leisure or health facilities**. Those visiting are 4% daily, 17% several times per week, rising to 31% at least once per week. This probably reflects the normal pattern of usage of such facilities which is likely to be occasional.

76% of respondents never **walk to work**. This is a reflection of the sample with some people not working, unemployed or retired. Only 18% walk to work at least once per week.

84% never **take children to primary school**. This is understandable as many respondents are not parents with primary school children. Of those who do walk, 7% are daily, 10% several times per week and 12% at least once per week.

5.2 Time/Distance to Facilities

Facilities with the greatest accessibility are:

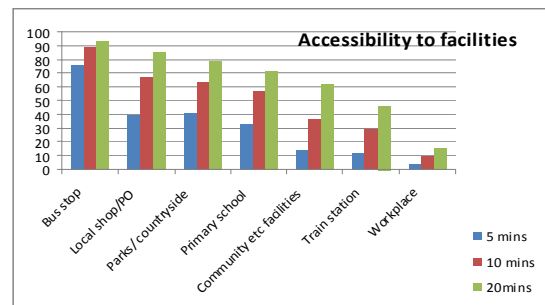
Bus stops, with 76% within 5 minutes walk, 89% within 10 minutes walk and 93% within 20 minutes walk. Recent years has seen local authorities and bus operators seeking greater penetration of bus services into residential areas and allows people to walk more readily to access public transport.

Local shops/Post Office, with 39% within 5 minutes, 67% within 10 minutes and 85% within 20 minutes. Trends show that local shops are being lost due to superstores and larger developments. This demonstrates that, despite this there is still a large core of local shopping and that it contributes substantially to people walking.

Local parks and countryside, with 41% within 5 minutes, 63% within 10 minutes and 79% within 20 minutes. Walking for health, physical activity and community development is aided by the local availability of green space and countryside.

Primary schools, with 33% within 5 minutes, 57% within 10 minutes and 71% within 20 minutes. Local schools at the heart of a neighbourhood or community provide an opportunity for parents and children to walk to and from school and to other activities

which make use of school facilities.



Less accessible facilities are:

Community, leisure and health facilities, with 14% within 5 minutes, 37% within 10 minutes and 62% within 20 minutes. It is not always possible to have truly local siting of these facilities as they need population catchment sizes. 62% within 20 minutes is a reasonable walkable distance.

Train station with 12% within 5 minutes, 30% within 10 minutes and 46% within 20 minutes.

Workplace with 4% within 5 minutes, 9% within 10 minutes and 16% within 20 minutes. This reflects people travelling long distances to work within and between towns.

Individual Aspects of the Survey

Walk to Work

- A large proportion of the sample never walks to work (76%). This accounts for those not working, unemployed or retired
- Of those who work, 19% walked to work at least once per week
- Walking to work once per week is strongest amongst the younger age group 18-24 (41%) and reduces steadily through the age groups to 13% at age 55-64

- Walking to work once per week is most likely in city centres (29%) and least likely in rural areas (17%)
- Younger age ranges tend to live closer to work – 41% of 18-24 year olds and 30% of the 24-44 age group and walking every day is highest for the 18-24 age group (24%)
- 22% of people report that they could not walk to work and is at its lowest in Lothian (17%) and in the 15% most deprived areas (16%)

Walk to local shops or post office

- 59% of respondents walked to shops/post office several times per week with 29% walking daily
- Walking is most popular with younger people aged 18-34 (68%) and least popular with older people (e.g. 58%) of people 55-64
- Men walk to shop more frequently (63%) than women (56%) walking several times per week
- Walking to shops/post office is a regular activity for many people, with only 14% in city centres saying they never walked, rising to 40% in rural areas
- Over 2/3 of people can reach local shops/post office within 20 minutes walking time. Very few could not do so, mainly in rural areas

Walk to take children to primary school

- 84% of respondents never take children to primary school. This is a significant section of the population
- Of the relatively few numbers who do walk with children, most are in

the 18-34 age groups and predominantly female

- Significantly, even in the 18-34 age groups most people never take children to primary school (e.g. 74% in 25-34)
- Most people live within 20 minutes walking distance of their local primary school (71%), with 57% within 10 minutes walk
- More women (16%) take children to school at least once per week, than men (9%)

Walk to visit a local park or countryside

- 71% of people had walked to a local park or countryside within the last month. Of these 54% walked at least once per week, 23% several times and 12% daily
- Those walking most were in the older age groups and particularly those 35-44 (42% walking several times per week or more)
- 28% of people never walked to a local park or countryside but rose to 33% for those in the 15% most deprived areas
- People in villages and rural areas were more likely to walk several times per week (37% compared with 33% in towns and 27% in city centres)
- Accessibility to a local park or countryside is good with 41% of people within 5 minutes walk, 63% within 10 minutes and 79% within 20 minutes walk

- Strathclyde and Grampian have the poorest accessibility within 10 minutes walk (57%) and those in the 15% most deprived areas (47%)

Walk to community, leisure or health facilities

- People visiting community, leisure or health facilities at least once per week stands at 31%, with higher usage in urban (32-35%) than in rural areas (22-28%)
- Not surprisingly access to facilities is significantly better in urban areas (69-70% within 20 minutes walk) compared with villages/ rural areas (59-45%)
- Once per week visits to the facilities in the 15% most deprived areas is also lower, at 28%
- 37% of 18-24 year olds never walk to the facilities rising to 63% of 45-54 and 58% of 65+

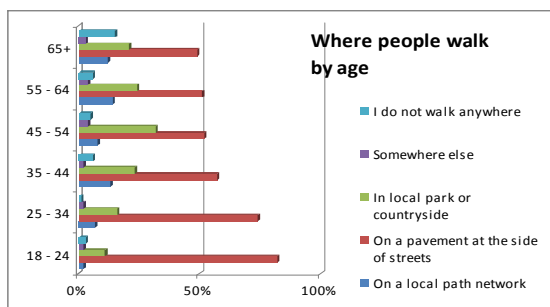
Walk to reach a bus stop or train station

- 19% of respondents walked daily to reach bus or train. Highest participation was in Lothian (29%) and lowest Highlands and Islands (6%)
- Those walking most are in the 18-24 age group (42% walking daily and 62% on several days per week). Walking for public transport reduces with age to age 64 (27%) and then increases for 65+ (38%)
- Of those who never walk, 25% are in the 35-44 age group and 27% in the skilled manual workers category

- Over $\frac{3}{4}$ of people were within 5 minutes walk of a bus stop and with very few who could not do so at all
- Bus accessibility was highest in city centres (87% within 5 minutes) and towns (77%) and in Lothian (82%) and Grampian (81%). Poorest accessibility was in rural areas (56%) and in Highland (59%)
- Accessibility to train stations was a function of the existing rail network. 30% were within 10 minutes walk and 46% within 20 minutes. 19% considered they couldn't walk to a station
- Strathclyde has by far the most stations within 5 minutes walk (20%) and only 10% considered they couldn't walk

5.3 Where walking is done

- Most walking is done on a pavement at the side of a street (60%), followed by in a local park or countryside (22%) and on a local path network (10%)
- 72% of people in city centres do most walking on pavements, reducing to 63% in towns and 54% in villages. 64% of people in the 15% most deprived areas walked mostly on pavements
- Only 6% report that they do not walk anywhere
- Younger age ranges walk most on pavements (82% of 18-24 and 74% of 25-34) reducing steadily to reach 49% of 65+ ages
- Conversely, older age groups do more walking on path networks, local parks and countryside, with people in mid age range using these facilities most



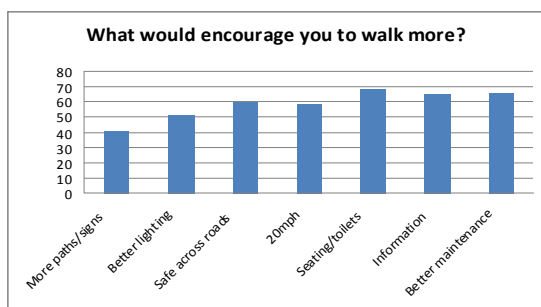
5.4 What would encourage you to walk more?

The **features attracting most support** (strongly and slightly agree) as likely to encourage people to walk more are related to the basic infrastructure of a good walking environment:

- Seating and public toilets should be provided (69%)
- Better maintenance of paths, streets and public spaces (66%)
- Provision of information on walking and places to walk (65%)

The **next most important** are identified as relating to road safety:

- Need for safe places to cross roads (60%)
- Vehicle speeds limited to 20mph (59%)



Other factors important are:

- Better lighting (51%)
- More paths with signs (41%)

Top items for those **strongly agreeing** are maintenance (46%), seating/public toilets (41%) and vehicle speed/ road crossings (37%)

Individual Aspects of the Survey

More paths with signs

- 41% of respondents agreed (strongly or slightly) that more paths with signs would encourage them to walk more, particularly those in the older age groups (41% to 51%)
- More paths with signs are most desired in villages and rural areas (45%) compared with 34% in city centres
- 48% of those in the 15% most deprived areas say more paths and signs would encourage them to walk more
- More women (44%) than men (39%) wanted more paths with signs

Better lighting

- 51% of people agreed that better lighting would encourage them to walk more, with 29% strongly agreeing
- Those most in favour of better lighting were the 18-24 year olds (59%), the 45-64 age group (55%) and those in the 15% most deprived areas (53%)
- 58% of females would like better lighting compared with 44% of males

- Lighting was an equal issue in both urban and rural areas

Safe places to cross roads

- Six out of ten people agreed that there should be safe places to cross roads, consistent across all age groups
- People in lower skilled jobs had a higher agreement for safe places (66%)
- More women (63%) than men (56%) wanted safe crossings, with women having a high strongly agree rating (41%)
- People in the 15% most deprived areas had the highest strong agreement for safer places to cross roads (44%)

Vehicle speeds limited to 20mph

- 59% agreed that a 20mph limit would encourage them to walk more
- More women (64%) than men (53%) agreed with 40% of women strongly agreeing
- People in lower skilled jobs (64%) were more supportive of a 20mph limit than those in managerial/professional category (54%). People in the 15% most deprived areas (65%) also supported the speed limit
- Support for a 20 mph limit was strongest in villages (66%) followed by rural areas (59%) and towns (58%)

Seating and public toilets

- 69% agreed that seating and public toilets should be provided with

strongest support from age groups from 35 upwards (67% to 75%)

- Support was consistent across urban and rural areas, but was particularly supported in Dumfries and Galloway (58%)
- People in the 15% most deprived areas particularly supported the need for seats and toilets (74% compared with 69% elsewhere)

Information about walking and places to walk

- Nearly 2/3 of respondents agreed that information on walking and places to walk should be provided and this was consistent across all age ranges
- People in three regions strongly agreed with the need for information – Tayside, Highland and Dumfries and Galloway (42%)
- Support was consistent around 61-65% across all types of settlement and in areas of multiple deprivation

Local paths, streets or public spaces need to be better maintained

- 66% of respondents agreed that local paths, streets or public spaces should be better maintained. This applied across all age groups but was highest for the 55-64 year olds (73%)
- Strong dissatisfaction with maintenance came across particularly in Dumfries and Galloway (67%), Strathclyde (51%) and Fife (48%)
- Extreme dissatisfaction was recorded by those in the 15% most deprived areas with 81% saying local paths, streets or public

spaces need to be better maintained, against an average of 66%

22% of respondents took the opportunity to specify anything else which would encourage them to walk more

Footpath standards	9
Better weather	9
Vandalism/behaviour	4
Better lighting	2
Walking Groups	3
Cleaner	10
Other	4

A broad range of personal, environmental and social factors are mentioned with key features being:

- Better pedestrian facilities, including seats, bins and lighting (14% of total mentions)
- Better standard of paths and networks (13%)
- Personal security and policing (12%)
- Better cleanliness (10%)
- Better maintenance, including more greenery (8%)

Dog fouling was also a much mentioned issue (10%) along with a desire for improved weather (10%).

The full list is noted here, and indicates some people did choose items which had been covered in the main survey.

More seats	2
More bins	6
Info, maps, signs	4
Personal safety	6
More policing	6
Better maintenance	4
Better health	3
Pedestrian facilities	4
Less dog fouling	10
Green and pleasant	4
More paths	4
Public transport links	2
Traffic/bikes	4

6. Discussion

Why people walk

Generally people walk when it is part of their daily/ weekly routine or part of another travel pattern. The majority of individuals in the survey walked as a means to an end such as going shopping or catching the bus. However among those who walk a high number also did so for recreation. Listed below are the three main reasons to why people walk.

- **Shopping.** The most common reason for walking is to get to the shops: 80% of people walk for this purpose.
- **Public transport.** 60% walk to the bus or the train and 89% of people have a bus stop within 10 minutes walk while nearly half (46%) have a train station within 20 minutes.
- **Recreation.** A large majority also walked for recreation and 71% walked to their local park or countryside which on average was only 10 minutes away. Although a majority walked for recreation these walks took place less often than walking to the shops or to public transport. The majority walked at least once per week but only 12% did so on a daily basis.

One of the lessons that can be learned from this is that we need to recognise the importance of walking for the local economy. People do walk as part of their daily routine when using public transport or doing their shopping. This needs to be taken into account when engaging with communities and

promoting walking, bringing local shops and services onboard to distribute and support positive walking messages. This must also be taken into account in town planning as a better supported and maintained path network linking local services will be key to the success of efforts to increase walking.

What encourages people to walk more

From the survey it is clear that there are a number of areas of improvement and development that would encourage people to walk more. Naturally the improvements are relative to the age of the respondents and the area they come from but the following improvements came through as the most important.

1. 69% want more seating and public toilets
2. 66% want better maintenance of paths, streets and public spaces. This figure increased to 81% in the most deprived areas.
3. 65% want information about walking and places to walk for example, easily accessible walk and route information.
4. 60% want safe places to cross roads.
5. 59% want a 20 mph speed limit, increasing to 66% for people who live in villages.

Other important factors included better lighting and more and better signage on paths. In general, women were more concerned with issues relating to

safety, such as speed limits, safe places to cross, and street lighting than men were. This would be in line with the lower figures of walking by women in socially deprived areas that has been identified by the Scottish Government's Ministerial Taskforce on Health Inequalities.

support and develop walking in Scotland.

7. Conclusion

Walking accounts for 1 in 4 of the trips which people make and walking is the easiest way of fitting in the recommended physical activity levels to our busy everyday lives. Walking is actually, in fact, part of every trip we make whether it is walking to the destination, walking to the bus stop or train station or walking to the car and from the car park. Many people, including the elderly and those from deprived areas, don't have access to a car so depend on walking for their needs, yet walking is still undervalued.

The survey demonstrates the demand for action and gives a clear indication about what people believe would make them walk more and be more active through walking. It shows that there is already a significant amount of walking taking place but that the level of walking needs to increase and the number of people walking regularly also needs to increase. It shows strongly that with the right measures in place numbers of people walking and the frequency of walking will increase. However, for this to happen Scottish and local government need to commit to a strategic approach to increasing walking and put the actions in place to