



FOR A HAPPIER,
HEALTHIER SCOTLAND



2020/2021
Annual Report

Introduction

We're the Scottish charity championing everyday walking for a happier, healthier Scotland.

Our aim is to significantly increase the number of people who choose to walk in Scotland - whether that's leisure walking or active-choice walking to work, school or shops. We work to create more opportunities and better environments not just for walking, but also for wheeling cycling and other activities, to help make Scotland a more active, more prosperous, greener country.

We have a very clear focus: we want to get Scotland walking: everyone, everyday, everywhere. We are talking about regular, easy, local walking. Walking that can be part of daily routines and family life. Walking to be enjoyed in groups or alone, at work or at home. Walking that takes place in city streets, community parks, local woodlands or coastal paths. This is walking that's relevant and accessible to us all: this is everyday walking.

Our Vision

We want to create a happier, healthier Scotland where physical activity improves quality of life and wellbeing for all.

Our Focus

We work to get Scotland walking: everyone, every day and everywhere

We work to get EVERYONE more active.

We encourage physical activity with a particular focus on EVERYDAY walking.

We work to improve environments so that people can be active EVERYWHERE.

Our Themes

Walking For Health

Our Aim: The number of people in Scotland walking every day is increasing — improving wellbeing, reducing health inequalities and preventing ill health.

Active Environments

Our Aim: Outdoor environments in Scotland are increasingly welcoming, safe, fit for purpose and encourage increased physical activity.

Active Travel

Our Aim: More people choose to walk and cycle for everyday short journeys, thereby improving health, creating safer communities and enhancing environmental impacts.

Communications and Policy

Our Aim: More people are aware of the benefits of everyday walking, physical activity and how to take part. There is an increasing focus on physical activity within national and local policies and practice.

Introduction

Continued

Despite our ability to rise to the challenges that Covid-19 brought and the success of our work throughout the year, 2020-21 ended in tragedy with the sudden death of our Chief Officer Ian Findlay CBE. Ian led Paths for All for the last 17 years with passion, insight and dedication. His reach and influence across many sectors will be a significant loss. We would like to dedicate the achievements of the past year to Ian, in recognition of his work and the positive impact he had on so many lives across Scotland.

Ian was proud of how the organisation adapted during the last year, modifying activities, introducing new projects and ultimately still delivering against our outcomes and upholding our values despite the challenges.

We moved more of our services, resources and communications online, delivering significant benefits in terms of reach and efficiencies. We were able to effectively support our networks to maximise delivery and impact, even within the restrictions, and we endeavoured to be a flexible and pragmatic funder.

The past year has highlighted, more than ever, the need for our work towards making Scotland a walking nation. We heard from our stakeholders about the unmet demand for quality environments for walking, the benefits of facilitating social connections and the difference being physically active in the outdoors has on our quality of life.

As the pandemic continues, the spotlight has rightly been shone on the unacceptable inequalities that exist in Scotland today. Going forward, Paths for All will do everything we can to ensure that our work helps address these inequalities to create a healthier, happier, greener Scotland, where everyone has the opportunity to be active every day.



Ian Findlay CBE

1961-2021

Walking for Health

Health Walks

We manage and support the Scottish Health Walk Network. The network runs over 650 weekly walks across Scotland. Walks are free, short, local, volunteer led and accessible to all. Walks were put on hold for large parts of the lockdowns but projects continued to support their communities through delivering shopping, creating befriending programmes, running Buddy Walks, delivering online exercise sessions or just keeping in touch with walkers and volunteers. We provided extensive support and guidance to projects throughout and to ensure walks could resume as soon and as safely as possible.



“Paths for All have enabled us to deliver what we can when we can, due to fast updates following ScotGov announcements, and Walk Leader and walker guidance sheets.”

Health Walk Volunteer

271

members of the
Scottish Health Walk
Network (increase of 41
this year)



Developed **4** new
online training courses



Trained **1080** new
Volunteer Health Walk
Leaders

28

live
online NetworkChat
support sessions for
project coordinators



Over **19,000** Strength
& Balance leaflets
and **1,500** other
resources to support
Strength and Balance
activity distributed to
older adults and those
shielding

7

different versions
of Covid operating
guidance produced
for the Scottish
Health Walk Network
in line with Scottish
Government guidance
as restrictions changed.

£216,372

distributed to 26
projects through the
Walking for Health
Grant Fund

“The information given out by Paths for All on how to run safe walks using updated walk agreements cards and risk assessments has been invaluable. It gave me the confidence to offer walks which have been highly successful in combating social isolation during these difficult times.”

Health Walk Coordinator

Case study

Using 1:1 buddy walks to boost confidence and fitness after lockdown

Like all Health Walks, the Walk It project based in the Scottish Borders had to pause their walks in March 2020.

During the first months of lockdown the project reported an overwhelming number of people experiencing social isolation and decline in physical activity and they were keen to provide support in any way they could.



Denise, Project Coordinator for Walk It said:

“Noticeably, we had an increase in the number of referrals to our project. I was delighted to launch our Buddy Walking 1-1 programme in response to this demand.

This allowed us to take referrals from a wide range of partners and individuals, which were paired with a volunteer who supported them to get out and walk. Many referrals came from those who had a long-term health condition, who were isolated, who had a dementia diagnosis and who were inactive. We took 17 referrals in the first month alone, all of whom we matched with a Walk Leader.

The aim was, over time, the person will gain confidence and physical fitness to join a mainstream group.

Its success is a testament to the volunteers, with feedback stating how much they have enjoyed the experience, made social connections, and felt fitter as a result. I had excellent feedback from those with a dementia diagnosis, with one person already joining a mainstream group and others really enjoying the safety and level of knowledge of their buddy.”



Dementia Friendly Walking

We're working towards making the Scottish Health Walk Network more accessible to people living with dementia. This year, we also supported people living with dementia in care homes to benefit from being more active and we worked with communities to create places and spaces that are welcoming and safe for people living with dementia.

“Anne lives on her own, is 92, and has deteriorating eyesight. She was scared to walk by herself. Once we restarted the walks, she joined us - and really enjoys them. It’s become really important to her very quickly.”

Project Coordinator



11 new projects now able to deliver Dementia Friendly Health Walks (a 41% increase)



2 online dementia friendly environments workshops were delivered focusing on practical measures and community engagement



Digging Deeper research project launched looking at the culture in care homes and what needs to be in place to promote physical activity



Safety and accessibility improvements to **Prestwick promenade** included installing colourful benches, signage and noticeboards, a pedestrian refuge and artwork created with our artist in residence Alec Finlay

Movement for Health Coalition

We launched Movement for Health, a coalition of leading Scottish health charities, in October 2020. The aim is to work together to support people living with long-term conditions to enjoy and access physical activity. This will enable people to improve social, mental and physical health and to manage health conditions.



Influence:



we've engaged widely with politicians, distributing our Calls to Action for the Scottish 2021 elections

Members:



16 organisations from leading health charities and **4** partners

Voice:



we launched new website and social media aiming to share resources and increase awareness



Dr Gregor Smith, Scotland's Chief Medical Officer endorsed Movement for Health saying;

"I welcome this new Coalition and hope that it will provide a strong voice to reinforce the importance of physical activity for our health and wellbeing."

GP, Emma Lunan was appointed as chair in January 2021

"I am looking forward to collaborating with such a wonderful group of charitable organisations and partners, and moving forward with the vision of improving physical activity levels and health for all."

Workplace Walking

An active workplace is a happy and healthy workplace. We support workplaces to get their staff moving more during the working day.



We launched an online **Workplace Walking** training course enabling more workplaces to promote physical activity.



10,276

participants took part in our national and bespoke Step Count Challenges this year, an increase of **59%** compared with 19/20



Step Count Challenge

Ditch the desk. Walk the walk



10

workplaces achieved the Walk at Work Award this year, with 7 more working towards it. Workplaces implemented activities like creating wildlife gardens for staff to enjoy or encouraging culture change by asking staff to take walking breaks during the day.



“I feel that the challenge has brought people together from different areas of the organisation that wouldn’t otherwise get to speak to one another. These types of informal conversations are missing now that we are working from home. Staff have also said they feel better when going a walk in the morning prior to starting their tasks - setting their mindset for the day.”

Step Count Challenge Participant

Case study

The Robertson Trust employees walked 6,796 miles during a lockdown Step Count Challenge

10 teams from the Glasgow charity boosted their health and wellbeing during two bespoke Step Count Challenges.

Gurdeep Kaur, Funding Officer at The Robertson Trust, described what impact the challenges had on staff:

“The Step Count Challenge was a great way to connect with colleagues whilst working from home and we enjoyed it that much that we were set to do our third challenge!”

“It has been a fun way to get our steps in, which we were missing during our commutes to work, our lunch time walks round to the shop or a walking meeting.

“Whilst it has helped our staff physically, it has also increased their mental and social wellbeing, with colleagues organising virtual walks, in turn giving individuals some sort of personal interaction that we miss whilst working from home.

“We made sure to mix the teams up so colleagues were interacting with new people, and friendships have blossomed as a result. It has been really positive to see people ‘virtually’ rally round their colleagues to make sure everyone was getting their steps – a little bit of healthy competition definitely set in.

“Everyone who took part has benefited in their personal and work life. We receive frequent encouragement from senior management to get away from the screen and, we all now realise just how important it is.”



Active Environments

Access to good quality, well-maintained outdoor spaces can help improve our physical, social and mental health.

We provide support to community organisations, community groups and access professionals improving local paths throughout Scotland.

Many site visits and training courses were suspended in April 20 due to Covid-19, but we adapted to provide online support to an increasing number of requests.



Working with communities experiencing disadvantages

We allocated £25,000 to five disadvantaged communities to create greener, healthier, more active communities. We worked together on a range of activities including:



Production of **5,000** walking map leaflets



total value of the projects was **£62,756** with **£13,400** of this being in kind contribution of volunteer time



11 interpretation information boards produced



2 miles of path created



11 miles of waymarked paths promoted using the path grading system

We worked with **4** community groups from disadvantaged areas to help people to benefit from connecting with nature while on daily walks, as part of our Walking with Nature campaign.

We provided activities and prizes for the groups to host locally including: micro-volunteering, litter picking, and bird spotting.



Working with young people

We developed the Summer Path Days campaign which ran over the school holidays to support families during a tricky staycation summer. We used our website and social media to provide competitions, ideas & inspiration about enjoying activity outdoors and protecting nature.



campaign reach was over **110,000** people



190 families shared stories and photos of their #SummerPathDays.



Community Path and Community Active Travel Grants

Our grants give communities the resources they need to create, promote and maintain their community path projects and our schemes saw huge demand this year. Although many groups had work delayed by the pandemic and restrictions, many used the time to review and plan future work.



In kind contribution of volunteer time totalled

£136,800

and equates to **7833** hours



33 projects awarded
a total of **£66,965**



Grants were used for a variety of things including signage, maps and path improvements

“The completed project has given a sense of satisfaction to the volunteers who have wanted to see this project carried out for some time. It has given them the confidence that they can achieve a sizeable project and organise a very successful opening event. They have also worked together from several different groupings in the community which has forged new friendships and thoughts of new projects which can be pursued”

Ettrick and Yarrow Community Development Company



Training

We adapted our community path training courses and offered a series of webinars, aimed to give people the skills, knowledge and confidence they need to create, promote and maintain their local network of community paths.



173 people attended
6 webinars

“It made me think about how climate change might influence our path maintenance and repair”

Webinar participant

Advice and technical support

We saw increased demand for our support services due to greater use of community paths during lockdown. We worked with a range of organisations, community groups and access staff to support path development across Scotland.



£28k funding

secured for the production of the Countryside for All Guide. We established a UK steering group to undertake this work.



76 communities and
12 professionals were provided with advice and technical support to create, promote and maintain their Community Path Projects.



13 days

technical support was provided to NatureScot for active travel route planning



7 technical resources were reviewed and updated and **2** new produced

“Once again, thank you for all the information, support and help you have given us this time and in the past. We are going to look in detail at all your suggestions and implement them, which will safeguard us, the land and work to be done, and the community in which it is taking place.”

Mearns Coastal Heritage Trail



Case study:

Volunteers logged record-breaking visitor figures in Argyll woodland thanks to our funding.

Our Community Path grant helped volunteers log record-breaking visitor numbers three times greater than predicted for the winter months at a Scottish woodland by Loch Goil in Argyll.

Two people counters were installed at Cormanachan Community Woodlands (CCW) in Loch Lomond and Trossachs National Park and recorded 2,795 visitors.

The installation of the technology was funded by one of our grants and helped the volunteer group record the footfall at the site strengthening their funding application for a 2km path extension.

The extension would allow visitors to reach the Cormanachan Waterfalls, a stunning landmark within the woodlands which is currently too dangerous for the public to reach.



Douglas Locke, secretary of CCW said:

“The people counter posts have been a great addition to the woodlands and have helped us accurately monitor how many people visit daily – and the increased footfall has been a lovely surprise!

“Many people have looked to the outdoors to keep busy during the last year, and I hope it has highlighted just how much Scotland has to offer and how important it is to have access to nice outdoor spaces.

“By logging our visiting levels, we hope to further expand the project turning the Woodlands into a real tourist attraction to support the local economy.”

Active and Sustainable Travel



We aim to make walking and cycling the natural choice for short journeys, and public transport, along with walking, the first choice for longer journeys.

Active travel simply means making journeys by physically active means - like walking, wheeling or cycling.

By supporting more people in Scotland to walk and cycle for everyday short journeys, we will improve health, create safer communities and reduce environmental impacts. By encouraging people to take public transport, or use shared transport like car clubs for longer journeys, there is a knock-on effect of people walking more.

We work in collaboration with Scotland's Active Travel Delivery Partners, as a key partner we champion walking to deliver Transport Scotland's Active Travel Vision.

We led the partnership delivering the Walking Cycling Connecting Communities conference with 219 online attendees.

Smarter Choices, Smarter Places

Smarter Choices, Smarter Places (SCSP) is our grant programme, funded by Transport Scotland. SCSP aims to encourage people to change their travel behaviour and adopt more sustainable travel options such as walking, cycling, or using public transport.

Our programme offers funding and support to local authorities, public, third and community sector organisations who deliver innovative local projects for local needs. All funded projects must deliver against one of our Programme outcomes.

Our 2019/20 report was released in September 2020 and showed an impressive impact



15,600
people travelled
more sustainably for
longer journeys with
121,000 recorded
journeys



150,000
people walking or
cycling more for
everyday journeys



Sustainable travel
messaging had a
media reach of over
23 million



Our 2020/21 Highlights

Covid-19 had a huge impact on travel behaviour, as governments advised the public only to travel if essential. Yet, our SCSP projects were creative and flexible. They rose to the challenge of supporting communities and keyworkers to make essential journeys sustainably, actively and safely.

Local Authority Fund

All of Scotland's **32** Local Authorities participated in the programme

They were awarded **£5,515,000** between them

Open Fund

Demand was high for the Open Fund. **83** Projects received funding

£2,506,414 was awarded



1. More people choose to walk or cycle for short local journeys



434,318 people travelling actively more often

There was a significant increase in people walking and cycling. Even while schools and many workplaces closed, innovations such as free bike hire schemes increased active journeys.

2. More people choose sustainable travel for longer journeys



30,718 people choosing sustainable transport for longer journeys

In a year where the public were asked only to travel if essential, SCSP was successful in influencing people, and in particular key workers to travel safely on public transport, by car clubs and e-bikes.

3. People develop more positive attitudes toward sustainable travel choices



485,000 people were engaged through SCSP events and activities

SCSP projects adapted to deliver online events to engage directly with people in local communities to positively influence attitudes.

4. People's knowledge about sustainable transport choices increases



4.38m people reached through media campaigns

During lockdown the 'essential travel only' restrictions impacted campaign implementation, however SCSP was successful in getting tailored, targeted messages out to specific communities across Scotland.

5. There is an increased evidence base to support sustainable travel interventions.



251 research projects, feasibility studies and other evidence gathering projects

This evidence will help ensure more effective investment in sustainable travel in the future.

Case Study:

Refugee Survival Trust

The Refugee Survival Trust provide refugees and people seeking asylum with practical support when it is most needed. The SCSP fund has helped them to fund bus travel and walking initiatives to help refugees access essential services and improve wellbeing. They reported:

“We continue to make very good use of the bus passes and tokens. One guest whose mental health was particularly fragile with suicidal thoughts (said that) the ability to travel by bus and then walk back to GWR had helped him immensely. The freedom to explore his new city combined with the walk was therapeutic and had helped with his low mood. We have also developed a walking group, using the tokens to get into town. The group had then taken photographs of Glasgow landmarks including useful places as part of the asylum process. These photographs have then been shared with guests along with the details of the bus route.”



Communications and Policy

Our communication activities, campaigns and events increase the profile of physical activity and the benefits of everyday walking in Scotland. Through our policy work, we provide key evidence and arguments to influence policy positively at a national level.

Covid-19 response

With ever evolving rules and restrictions, we produced timely and clear communications on what people could do in relation to keeping active.

We produced new resources created for homeworkers, staying active at home, and advice on walking while social distancing, continuing to update all advice as government guidelines changed.

We achieved over **56,000** web hits to Covid advice pages.

Communication channels

We use a range of channels to make sure our walking messages reach the right audiences.



935,666 hits to website



Social media following grew to **18,186**



Tweets reached **4** million people



980 articles in the media reaching **14.4 million**



Newsletter subscriber list grew to **11,243**



Produced six new episodes for our **'Voices of the Walk'** podcast



Communication campaigns

As many of our planned communication campaigns paused due to lockdown, we quickly adapted and developed new messaging and marketing campaigns to support people to be more active during such a difficult time.



Worked with Edith Bowman to produce **Mind to Walk** – a walking meditation podcast



Produced a digital photography exhibition **Humans of the Walk** sharing the powerful benefits of walking during lockdown



Produced a series of **Strength and Balance** and **One Minute Mover** animations to help people stay active at home



Ran a **Walking with Nature** campaign inspiring people to get outdoors and connect with the natural environment.



Launched a **Walk Once a Day** hub on our website, sharing content to motivate people to walk during the winter lockdown



Hosted an online **Expert Lecture** for **320** professionals



Awarded **13** volunteers awards at our online ceremony celebrating the small acts of kindness making a big difference in communities

Case study:

A mood-boosting podcast to help people unwind while they walk

In response to research highlighting an increase in people experiencing mental health issues during the first lockdown, we developed a walking meditation podcast called Mind to Walk.

We teamed up with BBC presenter Edith Bowman who narrated the audio, talking the listener through a walk aimed to relax the mind as you move.

Launched as part of May's National Walking Month, the podcast used mindfulness techniques aiming to support people dealing with stress and anxiety caused by Covid-19, during their government-recommended daily outdoor exercise.



On recording the audio, Edith commented:

“When I heard about Mind to Walk I was eager to be involved. If I can do one small thing to help a few folk’s lockdown to be less anxiety-ridden it makes me very happy. If we can get as many people as possible taking the podcast on their walks with them, that would be incredible, and hopefully helpful to them.”

The audio achieved over 12,000 listens this year. We secured interviews to talk about the podcast on both Bauer Radio Group and BBC Good Morning Scotland and achieved 84 articles on the campaign in the media.



Influencing policy

During Covid-19, the focus on giving more space for walking, wheeling and cycling gave a fresh impetus to try to secure longer term change. Our policy influencing work focused on showcasing walking as an integral solution to some of society's biggest issues including health inequalities, climate change and physical inactivity.

We provided input at local and national levels to a significant number of policy consultations, including key government policies NTS2, STPR2, and NPF4.



Produced **78**
consultation
responses



44 national policy
forums and cross-
party groups attended



16 academic
partnerships
increasing the
evidence for our work



Produced '**Walk
Back Better**' a
joint manifesto with
Living Street Scotland
and Ramblers
Scotland



Worked with
NatureScot on
valuable research
identifying how people
visited and interacted
with the outdoors
during lockdown

Case study:

Walk Back Better – a national call for post-lockdown Scotland



In summer 2020, we produced a statement on behalf of the National Walking Strategy Delivery Forum, of which we facilitate, to call for Scotland to ‘Walk Back Better’ as society reshaped from Covid-19. The statement was a strong collective message from 27 of Scotland’s most influential public and third sector organisations, including NatureScot and the University of Edinburgh, highlighting the need for action.

The purpose of the statement was to call on MSPs, policy makers and communities to embrace recent positive societal impacts in relation to walking experienced during the pandemic (YouGov: 61% walked more during the first lockdown than before the pandemic).

In the statement, the forum pledged to champion walking across Scotland and to work to ensure people and walking and wheeling are put first in national and local planning developments. We called on others to develop and promote walking initiatives, seek to shift private vehicle use to public and active modes of travel and create better walking environments and safer urban spaces as an important way to look after physical and mental wellbeing.

With significant changes visible within our towns and cities during lockdown; through the temporary introduction of wider pavements, closed roads for traffic to encourage walking and cycling and reductions in speed limits, we called for these to not be seen as just temporary measures.

The statement achieved 15 pieces of coverage in the media, significant social media engagement and wide circulation round the 27 forum member networks.

Working in partnership

We don't work alone, as a partnership organisation we work with a range of organisations to help us get more people walking in Scotland.

We are one of the key organisations which make up Scotland's Active Travel Delivery Partners. Working in collaboration, this group works to deliver Transport Scotland's Active Travel Vision of enabling walking and cycling to be the most popular mode of travel for short, everyday journeys.

We manage and facilitate the National Walking Strategy Delivery Forum. Working in collaboration this group supports delivery of the National Walking Strategy and its associated Action Plan in support of the Scottish Government



Our Partners



Our Funders





FOR A HAPPIER,
HEALTHIER SCOTLAND

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