



FOR A HAPPIER,  
HEALTHIER SCOTLAND

# Step it up

Our strategic statement



**Imagine a healthier, happier, greener Scotland, where everyone has the opportunity to be active every day. As Scotland's walking charity, that's exactly what Paths for All is working towards. Here, we set out how we plan to do that – and how you can join in.**

## **Our strategic statement June 2021**

Since we published our 2017 strategy, the world has changed. The global pandemic has caused immense upheaval and uncertainty in our communities. As Scotland adapted to physical distancing and lockdowns, many people found themselves and unable to participate in their regular walking activities. But for others, a daily walk became a saviour as they discovered the physical and mental benefits of walking in their local area, particularly as traffic levels, emissions and noise dropped.

Despite the challenges, our communities are resilient. Now, we have a chance to recover and rebuild in a better way that helps change behaviours and promotes the healthier, happier, greener Scotland we want to see.

Looking ahead, Scotland must tackle physical inactivity, poor mental health, increased health and transport inequalities and the climate emergency. Our work to champion and increase levels of everyday walking and physical activity (whether on foot or with a wheelchair or mobility aid) must be at the heart of the response.

**Now is the time to step things up. By doing more to promote walking as the natural choice, we'll improve people's lives and re-build as a happier, healthier, and greener nation.**







## Why walking matters

**Walking is an easy, effective and accessible way to improve health.**

Going for a walk each day can boost physical, mental and social health. Being active helps prevent heart disease, stroke, diabetes, cancer and depression. And if people walk in nature, especially with others, these positive health effects are even greater. We'll work to create and promote more opportunities to walk daily for leisure and getting to school, shops and services.

**Walking is a way to tackle inactivity and health inequalities on a population-wide scale.**

COVID-19 has exacerbated social and transport inequalities. A lack of facilities and poorly maintained pavements, paths and routes have made it harder for some to walk, wheel or cycle and access local greenspaces. This means they're less likely to be active, and more likely to feel lonely and isolated. To tackle inequalities in access to everyday walking, sustainable travel and outdoor physical activity, we'll focus on changing behaviours, removing barriers and supporting those who are most inactive.

**Walking is also part of the response to the climate challenge.**

It's the cleanest form of transport. The pandemic changed work, travel and recreation patterns and we have a chance to make these positive changes stick. We'll be supporting communities and local authorities to enable behaviour change within the population, create good environments for walking and wheeling with effective and affordable public transport connections and champion planning and policy which makes walking a natural choice for short daily journeys. This in turn will help Scotland meet its ambitious net-zero goals and tackle the climate emergency.

# Collaborating for change

None of our work happens in isolation. Walking contributes to wide agendas including health, transport, planning, environment and physical activity promotion. It should be embedded in all of those systems.

Our trusted partnerships and wide network put us in the perfect position to spot opportunities for connections and collaboration. We support local authorities and communities to develop inclusive environments for everyone to be active, including walkers, cyclists and wheelchair users. We support projects that increase use of sustainable transport and build capacity within communities. And we champion the creation of walkable environments with access to quality greenspaces, close to where people live, so being active is easy for everyone.





# Our Vision

Scotland is a walking nation. Everyone has the opportunity to be active every day, ensuring a happier, healthier and greener Scotland.



# Our Values

## Integrity

Our work is driven by evidence, impact and improvement. We trust and listen to our partners and the communities we work with. We are open, flexible and fair. We walk our talk.

## Collaboration

Working in partnership means we all achieve more. We turn national policy and practice into local actions that make a real difference to people in their communities.

## Innovation

We are confident, positive and future-focused. We embrace new technology and creative, diverse ways of working to achieve our goals.

## Ambition

We want long lasting social change. Creating a Scotland where everyone walks every day means we always choose the bold path.

# Our Mission

**Our mission is to support people in Scotland to be active every day. Walking is the easiest and most accessible way to do this.**

**To change the way people move, travel and enjoy life in Scotland, our work will focus on three themes:**



**Walking  
is for  
everyone.**

**Everyone in Scotland, no matter who they are or where they live, should benefit from walking.**

By creating inclusive opportunities for everyone to walk and wheel, we can connect communities and help people live healthier, happier lives. By focusing our efforts on those who can benefit the most, we can reduce some of Scotland's biggest health inequalities and reduce pressure on the NHS.

**Walking  
is for  
everywhere.**

**Our places and spaces should be safe and attractive for everyone to walk in.**

If our towns, cities and rural areas are designed and managed for walking, we will reduce car use, improve connectedness and allow everyone to benefit from accessing natural environments.

**Walking  
is for  
every day.**

**Everyone in Scotland should feel motivated to walk every day.**

By making walking the default choice for short journeys, leisure, socialising or a part of longer public transport journeys, we will improve physical, mental and social health, and support Scotland's journey to net-zero.



# How will we change behaviours?

To achieve our mission, we have structured our work around the four key objectives in the WHO Global Action Plan for Physical Activity. Our strategy also contributes to and is informed by the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals for Scotland and Scotland's National Performance Framework.



## Creating a walking society

Changing social norms and increasing positive attitudes towards walking.

### We will:

Work to change Scottish cultural norms, behaviours, and opinions on walking through our communication and campaign work.

Promote walking as the best investment for Scotland, in line with the National Walking Strategy.

Raise awareness of the benefits of walking for all and increase professional knowledge and skills in health, transport, planning, education, tourism and recreation, sports and wellness, and in grassroots community groups.

Champion inclusive and accessible opportunities to walk and wheel for all, focusing communications on those experiencing inequalities.

## Creating walking environments

Making places and spaces safe and attractive for walking and wheeling.

### We will:

Support policy, planning, development, maintenance and promotion of places and spaces, paths and routes for everyone

Champion best practice design standards to improve our walking environment (urban and rural) and infrastructure, to provide local, accessible and enjoyable opportunities to walk and wheel for everyone.

Promote our places and spaces to increase use of our paths, parks, urban greenspaces, coasts, canals, and forests as ideal places to be active, improve health and wellbeing, and support climate mitigation.





## Creating active people

Encourage behaviour change and participation in daily activity through the right programmes, infrastructure and community opportunities.

### We will:

Deliver and fund evidence-based behaviour change programmes in our communities, transport, workplaces, education and care settings, with a focus on the least active groups.

Facilitate and expand the Scottish Health Walk Network to increase activity levels and reduce health inequalities.

Promote walking as an option for short daily journeys including as part of multimodal journeys, for leisure, to improve health and to protect the planet.

## Creating walking systems

Strengthening leadership, partnerships and policy to make Scotland a walking nation.

### We will:

Support and influence policy across all relevant sectors relating to walking, by encouraging, advocating and enabling change, sharing knowledge and best practice.

Enhance data-gathering, research and evaluation of walking and behaviour change programmes and activities to increase the evidence base, share learning and strengthen advocacy for walking.

Be the leading voice for walking in Scotland to advocate for those who could benefit most.

# Our Strategy

## Our Vision



**Scotland is a walking nation. Everyone has the opportunity to be active every day, creating a happier, healthier and greener Scotland.**



## Our Themes

**Walking  
is for  
everywhere**

**Walking  
is for  
every day**

**Walking  
is for  
everyone**

## Our Mission

**Our mission is to support people in Scotland to be active every day. Walking is the easiest and most accessible way to do this.**



## Our Objectives

### **Creating a walking society**

Changing social norms and increasing positive attitudes towards walking.

### **Creating walking environments**

Making places and spaces safe and attractive for walking and wheeling.

### **Creating walking systems**

Strengthening leadership, partnerships and policy to make Scotland a walking nation.

### **Creating active people**

Encourage behaviour change and participation in daily activity through the right programmes, infrastructure and community opportunities.





# Measuring success

To measure the impact of our work and that of the projects we fund and support, we will track progress through quarterly and yearly reporting, and analyse this against national indicators.

## Want to get involved?

If you're interested in joining Paths for All's mission as we work to create a happier, healthier, greener Scotland, contact [info@pathsforall.org.uk](mailto:info@pathsforall.org.uk).

To stay in the loop on our latest activities, volunteering opportunities or just to find out how to be more active yourself, sign up for our newsletter or follow us on Twitter or Facebook.







**We are Scotland's walking charity. Paths for All is a partnership of 30 national organisations with a shared vision of a healthier, happier, greener Scotland, where everyone has the opportunity to be active every day.**







FOR A HAPPIER,  
HEALTHIER SCOTLAND

---

**Paths For All**

Kintail House, Forthside Way  
Stirling FK8 1QZ

**T** 01786 641851

**E** [info@pathsforall.org.uk](mailto:info@pathsforall.org.uk)

**[pathsforall.org.uk](http://pathsforall.org.uk)**

Paths for All Partnership is a recognised Scottish  
Charity No: SC025535 and a Company Limited by  
Guarantee No: 168554 incorporated 19 September  
1996 at Companies House, Edinburgh

Registered Office:

Kintail House, Forthside Way, Stirling, FK8 1QZ

---

