

# Walking and wheeling

2023 attitudes survey – key results

## Walking participation



Of Scottish adults surveyed:

**85%**

walk several times  
a week or daily



The most common motivations for frequent walking:

**59%**

for leisure/  
exercise

**32%**

to go to work

**26%**

exercising  
the dog



During previous month people  
said they walked in:

**85%**

urban places

**77%**

rural places



Walking participation  
is highest amongst  
those **aged under  
45**, those **with  
children** in their  
household, and,  
most notably,  
**dog owners**.

## Attitudes to walking



The majority of Scottish  
adults either '**strongly agree**'  
or '**agree**' that they enjoy to  
walk because:



**84%**

it's good for  
their health



**80%**

it helps  
them relax



**77%**

it clears their  
head and helps  
them concentrate



**66%**

it's good for  
the environment

## Increasing participation

**2/5** of adults walk more frequently  
now than they did before the pandemic,  
with the highest change amongst those who  
describe themselves as **very comfortable  
financially**, those in **very good health**, and  
people **aged between 16 and 34**.



The most common reasons  
provided for increasing walking/  
wheeling participation included:



a desire to get  
more physically

**fit**



the  
**fun**

and enjoyment  
of participation



to  
**relax**

and unwind



Feeling **safer at night**, **better  
quality pavements** and **having  
someone to walk with** remain  
the key factors that would  
encourage people to walk or  
wheel more often, especially  
for **women**.

## Active travel

Around **7 in 10** Scots support the idea of being able to access most of the things they need everyday in a **20 minute return walk**, and most reported they do live within **10 minutes** of a **public transport link** or **shop** that sells everyday necessities.



Over **4 in 5** Scottish adults are prepared to walk the distance required to get to the nearest **public transport link**, the nearest **shop** selling essentials, and **green spaces**, but only a third are prepared to walk the distance required to get to their **place of work**.



Overall **53%** of the population had walked or wheeled to a **railway station**, **bus stop**, **tram stop** or other public transport terminal as part of longer journey during the previous month.

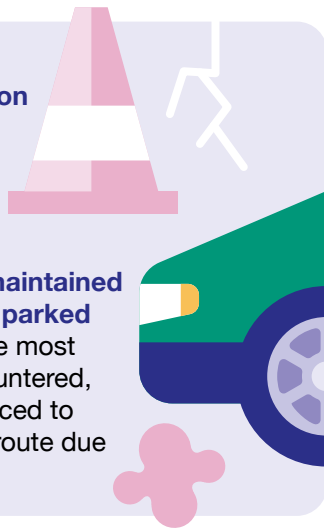


Respondents walking to **public transport links** most often stated that on the last occasion this was to **catch a train**, an increase since 2019.

Since 2019 views on the conditions of local paths have become **more negative**.

## Local paths and walking opportunities

Only **19%** feel the **condition of paths** and other places for walking in their local area has improved in the last 5 years.



**Littering**, **cyclists on pavements**, **poorly maintained pavements** and **cars parked on pavements** are the most common issues encountered, with **64%** of Scots forced to change their walking route due to these issues.

In the scenario of moving house, **path networks** and being able to walk to **shops** and **public transport** are important to more people than being able drive to **towns and retail parks**. When choosing where to move house it was important for Scottish adults to be able to walk to:

**67%**

local shops and facilities



**54%**

a regular bus service



**31%**

the nearest town centre

Town Centre



Those aged **under 45** were more likely than older age groups to state that they would like to be able to walk to the **place they work or study** and to be close to safe routes for **cycling**.

## Communicating the benefits

**45%** of adults had recently seen or heard advertising regarding the benefits of walking and cycling.

Recall was highest amongst those **aged 16 to 34**, people with **good health**, and **dog owners**.



**24%** had heard about the health benefits



**20%** had heard about the environmental benefits