

A Living Streets project in partnership with Glasgow Centre for Population Health

Walking is an important form of physical activity, not just for our physical and mental health, but because of its social and environmental benefits

Walking in Scotland



People in the highest income households walk more for leisure purposes than those in the lowest income households



People from the lowest income households and the most deprived areas tend to walk to work more than those in higher income households and less deprived areas



Journeys in Scotland where the main mode was walking

Benefits of walking

Physical activity prevents an estimated

3.9 million

premature deaths globally each year

Walking can **reduce** the risk of many common diseases and conditions including:

- heart disease
- stroke
- hypertension
- type 2 diabetes
- postpartum depression

Walking **reduces** isolation and loneliness and **encourages** social interaction

It has been shown to have a **positive effect** on the symptoms of depression

Issues facing walkers

Poor footway quality and on street parking

Streets and roads without support for pedestrians to cross

Absence of passive surveillance across wide urban areas

Limited availability of walkable facilities

Recommendations for change

Good walking infrastructure

- Change the current hostile walking environment for older people
- Provide good quality network of streets for walkers and wheelers
- Involve communities more in advocating for good walking infrastructure
- Involve people with disabilities in the early design stages of new active travel infrastructure

Lower speed limits

- Commitment to a 20mph speed limit in built-up areas across Scotland
- Creation of 20-minute neighbourhoods, particularly in areas with the highest risk of road collisions

Safer outdoor spaces

- Make outdoor spaces safer by providing better street lighting at night and on popular paths across parks. Particularly for women walking alone and adults living in the most deprived areas who are much more likely to feel unsafe

Access to greenspace

- Ensure equitable access to good quality greenspace for all communities
- Treat greenspaces, such as parks and canal paths, as core parts of active travel networks

Placemaking and transport policies

- Make placemaking approaches mandatory as part of planning new developments or redesigning existing communities
- Reimagine and redesign urban environments to create more compact towns and cities where walking and other active travel options are the most convenient, safe and affordable choices
- Create an integrated public transport system which links well with walking routes
- Make public transport cheaper to more people are to choose to use it
- Increase efforts to reduce car use and encourage people to use more sustainable travel modes in order to drive down carbon emissions and air pollution

Search 'Getting Scotland Walking' at www.gcph.co.uk for the full report