

Paths for All charity encourages walking and cycling for short journeys



Paths for All – the charity that promotes everyday walking in Scotland – is aiming to inspire people across the Central Scotland Green Network (CSGN) area to take part in ‘active travel’ by sharing examples of excellence from across the region and beyond.

Active travel is about walking and cycling for everyday short journeys. It helps improve quality of life and quality of place, bringing multiple benefits to people and the environment.

The Scottish Gas workplace cycling improvement programme focused on improving facilities, lockers, changing rooms, cycle security, showers and hairdryers to make it easier and more appealing for employees to cycle to work. The initiative also hosted alternative travel to work days and offered advice on routes, safety and Dr Bike sessions to get people back on the road.

The project achieved Scotland’s best ‘Cycle Friendly Employer’ award in 2011 and resulted in significantly more cyclists at the company, improving employee health and wellbeing.

On average only 1% of all trips in Scotland are currently made by bike and 23% are made on foot. Scotland’s roads are dominated by cars with 64% of all trips being made by vehicles. Over 50% of all driven journeys in Scotland are less than 5km, and 26% are less than 2km, underlining a significant opportunity for walking and cycling to become the most sustainable forms of transport.

Sixteen organisations across Scotland, from community based projects to workplaces, including Scottish Gas, have already invested in active travel programmes and are experiencing the benefits.

Paths for All wants to encourage communities and employers across the CSGN area to follow in the footsteps of these organisations and has developed case studies highlighting this best practice. The case studies have been produced with financial support from Scottish Natural Heritage.

By opting for everyday walking and cycling, people can increase their physical activity, leading to improved health and well-being and helping to tackle the obesity epidemic facing Scotland today. Active travel also helps to reduce traffic congestion and improve air quality.

Ian Findlay, Chief Officer of Paths for All, said: “Our vision is for walking and cycling to be the natural choice for short journeys, creating a healthy, socially inclusive, economically vibrant, environmentally friendly Scotland.

“We’ve put together a range of examples showcasing public sector organisations, groups and businesses which are leading the way in creating unique ideas to promote active travel. Interventions include street maintenance and design, path improvements, signage, marketing campaigns, bike loans, safety improvements and cycle training. There’s a great variety of things people can do to get involved.”

Keith Geddes, Chair of the Central Scotland Green Network Partnership Board, added: “Local community groups and employers across the central belt are in a powerful position to initiate active travel schemes to improve the well-being and quality of life of local residents and employees, enabling them to profit economically in the face of rising fuel prices, whilst benefiting the environment at the same time through a reduction in carbon emissions.

“Scottish Gas in Edinburgh is an excellent example of a workplace initiative using an innovative approach to inspire people to change their travel habits.”

For further information and to view the full range of active travel case studies, please visit