

# Active travel for the summer



**We are all guilty of saying we should do more exercise but here are some ideas for getting out and about.**

The Scottish Government recently launched the next phase of the national Active Travel campaign which will ensure a further £250,000 for local authorities who wish to promote the initiative. Scots are being encouraged to leave the car for journeys under two miles and enjoy the stress-relieving and health benefits of active travel.

Minister for Environment and Climate Change Paul Wheelhouse explained that by using active methods of transport, such as walking, instead of the car for short journeys, Scots can help improve their health and well-being, save money, reduce carbon emissions and help make Scotland a cleaner and greener place to live.

In Scotland:

- one in three car journeys are under two miles
- nearly a quarter of all our trips are one mile or less
- road transport accounts for 70 per cent of all transport emissions
- short journeys cause more pollution – emissions are almost double for these journeys as vehicles use more fuel when the engine is cold

The latest campaign is to prompt commuters travelling short journeys to walk or cycle to and from work where practical. Walking to and from work can provide valuable thinking time and relieve stresses of the day. To help Scots track their progress, the [Greener Together 'Journeys' app](#) can be

downloaded to monitor distance travelled, calories burned, CO2 emissions saved and improvements in mood.

Families around Scotland are also being encouraged to leave the car at home for traveling to and from school. This follows the findings of a number of international studies which suggest children who walk or cycle to school have improved concentration, cognitive function and mood.

Here are some ideas for getting out in Edinburgh.

#### [Dean Village and Galleries of Modern Art](#)

Distance: 4.5km; duration: 1.5 hours

Venture to Stockbridge and wander through Edinburgh's beautiful New Town and past some magnificent Georgian architecture to reach the National Galleries of Scotland. Take the return stretch back along the Water of Leith to properly stretch the legs, passing the deep gorge and the beautiful Dean Village on your way. Perfect on a sunny summer's day.

#### **Arthur's Seat**

Distance: 5.5km; duration: 1.5 hours

The ultimate in Edinburgh walks for the best views of the city. No walking tour in the capital is complete without an attempt at scaling Arthur's Seat. There are numerous routes to take from the bottom that mean you can enjoy a light walk or something more strenuous. When you reach the summit, eat your picnic and enjoy the stunning views of Edinburgh, the Firth of Forth and Fife.



#### **Water of Leith**

Distance: 20.5km; duration: 7-8 hours

One for when you have a whole day to stroll and enjoy walking in the city. This rank takes you through the heart of

Edinburgh and passes many areas of interest, including Murrayfield Stadium, the Scottish Gallery of Modern Art, Dean Village, Stockbridge and the Royal Botanic Garden. You can choose to join the walkway from a number of places up and down the river or link with other paths, cycle routes, the canal and Pentland Hills. Make sure to plan plenty pit stops en route to get refreshed and refuelled.

The Scottish Government is also promoting its year-long 'Fit in 14' campaign, encouraging employers and employees across the country to become more active by taking part in a variety of workplace activities. Workers are being urged to start a 'Wednesday walking club', do stretches and chair-aerobics at their desks and take part in a Friday Fitness Hour as part of a bid to make Scotland's workforce fitter and healthier, with a view to improving wellbeing, workplace productivity, reducing levels of sickness and injuries, and extending life expectancy.

And finally there are a great number of great cycle routes for the holidays, which can be found here: <http://www.sustrans.org.uk/ncn/map/themed-routes-0/urban-adventures/edinburgh-loops-and-links>