

Volunteers needed to lead Ageing Well walks

Edinburgh Leisure is looking for new volunteers to step this way to train as walk leaders for their award-winning Active Communities programme, Ageing Well.

A Walk Leader training course will take place on Friday, 18 February from 10.00am – 1.30pm. The training is “laid back and friendly” and there are no exams or tests.

The Ageing Well Project is run by Edinburgh Leisure in partnership with NHS Lothian and delivers a range of city-wide activities which support people to become, and remain, active in later life. The emphasis is on meeting new people and making physical activity accessible and enjoyable.

Ryan Dignan, Health Development Officer (Older Adults) at Edinburgh Leisure explained: “Our programme relies on the generous support of volunteers – older adults who give up 1 or 2 hours a week to help and support other older adults to get or stay active. No previous experience is necessary – just enthusiasm, the ability to get on well with people from differing backgrounds and ages and a love of walking.

“It’s not just Ageing Well who benefit from the volunteers’ gift of time, our volunteers say that they develop deeper connections within their communities, feel better physically, mentally and emotionally; and are better able to manage health conditions such as stress.

“On completion of their training, they will lead or support one of the many weekly walking groups that take place across the city.”



In 2018 the Ageing Well programme was awarded the Queen’s Award for Voluntary Service (QAVS), which is the highest award given to UK volunteer groups and is the equivalent of an MBE. The award reflects the tremendous contribution of Edinburgh Leisure’s Ageing Well volunteers and the positive difference they make to the lives of participants.

Ageing Well activities have been developed to cater for a wide

range of tastes and abilities and all activities are either led by or supported by fully trained volunteers, who are all older adults themselves.

Jerry Gregson, one of Ageing Well's valued volunteers who gives up 2-3 hours of his time each week, and who has been involved with the programme for 15 years explains: "Being retired, I love having the regular social contact that being a walk-leader brings, as well as the satisfaction of knowing I am doing something that is useful to others in our age-group.

"It's also an excuse to explore the many highways and byways across the city. We take walkers to places they didn't know about and wouldn't go themselves, certainly not alone. Even after 15 years, I get a kick from someone saying, 'I've never been this way before'."

Anyone interested in volunteering as a walk leader and to join the training course on 18 February should email: ryandignan@edinburghleisure.co.uk

[Ageing Well Walks – Edinburgh Leisure](#)



PATHS FOR ALL BOTANIC GARDENS – EDINBURGH Ageing Well Project