

Lothian MSP praises central Edinburgh walking route

The Water of Leith Walkway in Edinburgh has received the seal of approval from Lothian MSP, Lorna Slater, who gained a new found appreciation for this important city asset during a Valentine's Day walk.

The Scottish Government's Minister for Green Skills, Circular Economy and Biodiversity, Ms Slater met with partners from [Paths for All](#) and Water of Leith Conservation Trust who help to improve conservation, biodiversity and path access in the area.

The Minister walked part of the well-loved route which is 13 miles long and a haven for wildlife and biodiversity in Edinburgh city centre.

She said: "Getting outside and exploring nature is incredibly beneficial to both our physical and mental wellbeing but this can be difficult to do if you don't live in the countryside.

"That's why projects such as the Water of Leith Walkway are so important as they offer those that live in the city the opportunity to get active amongst a piece of Scotland's rich biodiversity.

"I'd like to thank Paths for All and the Water of Leith Conservation Trust for inviting me along today to learn more

about the walkway and I would also like to express my gratitude for their vital work in combatting local nature loss.”

Kevin Lafferty, CEO of Paths for All said, “The combination of path maintenance and biodiversity enhancements along the route create wonderful opportunities for people to be active outdoors and connect with nature.

“The work of the Water of Leith Conservation Trust is incredibly valuable to the local community and visitors to the area. This route is a haven from the bustle of the city, a place to enjoy and a vital off-road link for people to get from A to B for everyday journeys.

“The benefits of good quality paths here in making this wonderful place accessible for all to enjoy is immeasurable to the health and wellbeing of the local population and for our environment.”

A big part of the Water of Leith Conservation Trust’s role is maintaining the walkway, which has received also path maintenance funding from Scotland’s walking charity Paths for All. The route is an essential corridor for walking along the historic river. It links people to areas of interest including Colinton Village, Craiglockhart Dell, the Union Canal, Saughton Gardens, Murrayfield Stadium, the Scottish Gallery of Modern Art, Dean Village, Stockbridge, the Royal Botanic Garden and Leith.

Charlotte Neary, Conservation and Volunteers Officer at Water of Leith Conservation Trust, said: “The Water of Leith is a haven for wildlife. The walkway along the river allows people to get close to rising Brown Trout, Kingfishers and Otters right in the middle of the capital city.

“The work that our volunteer’s carryout to maintain the walkway and enhance biodiversity is essential to giving people this access. Having these vital routes in urban green / blue

space gives people a chance to switch off from the hustle and bustle of busy lives and appreciate the natural world.

“We often find that volunteers join our team as they are walkway users, so it becomes a two way relationship where we care for wildlife and wildlife cares for us.”



Kevin Lafferty CEO of Paths for All with Lorna Slater MSP



Lorna Slater MSP and Charlotte Nearly are pictured at the Water of Leith Visitor Centre, on February 14, 2023, in Edinburgh, Scotland. (Photo by Paul Devlin / SNS Group)



(L-R) Paths for All CEO Kevin Lafferty, Lorna Slater MSP,

Charlotte Nearly and Richard Armstrong are pictured at the Water of Leith Visitor Centre, on February 14, 2023, in Edinburgh, Scotland. (Photo by Paul Devlin / SNS Group)