

Walking charity pledges £7 million to get Edinburgh moving

Active travel projects across the country to benefit from launch of a trio of funds

SCOTLAND's national walking charity has launched three funds worth £7 million in a bid to encourage Edinburgh locals to choose active travel.

The new Smarter Choices, Smarter Places (SCSP) Active Nation Fund worth £1.5 million, the Ian Findlay Path Fund (£1.5 million) and the £5 million SCSP Open Fund have been announced by Paths for All this month.

Supported by Transport Scotland and backed by the government, the three funds hope to encourage Scots to drive less and to walk, wheel or cycle as part of their everyday short journeys to cut Scotland's carbon emissions and improve air quality.

It is hoped the initiatives will help contribute to reversing the trend of inactive lifestyles by tackling health inequalities throughout the country.

Minister for Active Travel Patrick Harvie said: "I'm pleased to welcome the launch of three active travel funding opportunities delivered through Paths for All.

"This will help to support the growing ambitions of public, third and community-sector organisations to provide bigger and better active travel opportunities right across Scotland.

“As part of our record funding for active travel, this work directly supports our ambitions to build a more active nation – where more people can choose to walk, wheel and cycle for everyday journeys than ever before, and I look forward to seeing the success of new projects in action.”

The SCSP Active Nation Fund invites public, community and third-sector organisations to apply for up to £200,000 to support projects which encourage everyday travel behaviour change on a national or multi-regional level in Scotland.

To commemorate the legacy of the former Paths for All CEO, the Ian Findlay Path Fund supports projects designed to make improvements to local walkways and paths, and to make them more accessible to all. Applicants can receive a grant of up to £100,000 for their project.

First launched in 2018, the SCSP Open Fund grants communities and public and third-sector organisations up to £100,000, and encourages people to change their everyday travel behaviours – such as using sustainable travel for longer journeys.

Kevin Lafferty, CEO of Paths for All, said: “These funds will increase the pace and scale of active travel delivery across the country as we collectively work together to encourage active travel for a happier, healthier and greener Scotland.

“If we all make small changes to our daily travel habits such as making walking, wheeling or cycling the natural choice for journeys to the local shop, school or pharmacy, for example, it will make a huge difference to our health and wellbeing.

“This new support will help deliver a step change in how we choose to travel in order to tackle the climate emergency and help reduce car kilometres and would only be possible with support from the Scottish Government and Transport Scotland. It means projects will be able to extend their reach and will

be more effective in communicating important information and improving local assets.

“We would like to thank them for supporting the funds and look forward to seeing the amazing work that comes off the back of this.”

Applications for this round of funding will open on June 6.

To apply for the SCSP Active Nation Fund, please visit:
<https://www.pathsforall.org.uk/active-travel/smarter-choices-smarter-places-1/active-nation-fund>

To apply for the SCSP Open Fund, please visit:
<https://www.pathsforall.org.uk/active-travel/smarter-choices-smarter-places-1/open-fund>

To apply for the Ian Findlay Path Fund, please visit:
<https://www.pathsforall.org.uk/community-paths/cmp-grants/ian-findlay-path-fund>

To read inspiring more examples of how funding has been used to further active travel in Scotland, please visit: <https://www.pathsforall.org.uk/active-travel/at-success-stories>

