

Scottish charity is on the hunt for Edinburgh Health Walk Volunteers

Public invited to step forward to community roles after post-Covid decline

Scotland's national walking charity urges Edinburgh locals to become Volunteer Walk Leaders to lead Health Walks in the area.

Paths for All supports a network of more than 800 short, social, and accessible low-level walks which are led by trained volunteers.

However, since the end of the global pandemic, the charity has recorded a decline in Walk Leaders throughout Scotland.

The Stirling-based organisation has launched a recruitment campaign to tackle the shortage and encourage Scot's up and down the country to become volunteers in the Scottish Health Walk Network.

Kevin Lafferty, Chief Executive Officer of Paths for All, said: "Walk Leaders are the most integral part of a Health Walk and the time and care they give to the local communities they serve is extremely valuable. "Health Walk Volunteers help to support the health and wellbeing of local people by providing a safe, fun and friendly space for people to be active, socialise and enjoy the outdoors. But volunteers experience many benefits too – exercise, getting outside and a having a good blether, all while helping others.

“Training is provided so volunteers feel confident and ready to lead the walks, for all ages and abilities, in their communities.”

Individuals who are looking to give back to their community, enjoy the outdoors and keeping active, or are already part of a Health Walk are encouraged to apply.

Charlotte Mackenzie, Health Walks Project Manager for Highland Third Sector Interface helps to coordinate over 200 walkers across 30 Health Walks across the Highlands.

She said: “Health Walk Leaders are the backbone of Walking Groups. For many individuals, particularly those who live in remote communities, being part of a Health Walk can be the highlight

of their week making it extremely important that Health Walk Leaders are there to guide and arrange regular outings.

“Being a Walk Leader has so many benefits. I often ask the leaders I work with what they find to be the best part of their role and the feedback is normally very similar; they feel a positive change in their mental health, confidence as well as their self-esteem- which is fantastic.

“For anyone considering becoming a Health Walk Leader, I would highly recommend it. Not only will you see so many benefits for yourself but it’s great opportunity to have a positive effect on your local community. “ To find out more about becoming a Health Walk volunteer and to register your interest, visit www.pathsforall.org.uk/volunteering

Paths for All has a clear and simple aim, which is to get Scotland walking: everyone, every day, everywhere. Walking outdoors is a fantastic way to boost your mood, clear your head and benefit from fresh air in local parks and greenspaces.

<https://www.pathsforall.org.uk/>

