

Step up for better health this spring

A national walking challenge is returning this spring, inspiring people across Scotland to improve their wellbeing by increasing their daily step count.

The spring Step Count Challenge, led by walking charity [Paths for All](#), runs from Monday, 5th May to Sunday, 29th June, offering a fun and social way for teams to stay active during the working day.

Past participants have reported benefits including improved mental health, stronger social connections, and increased daily movement – many return year after year to take on the challenge.

For Fiona, from team Strideclyders For Life, the Step Count Challenge has become a workplace tradition. Having taken part in five challenges, she was recognised as a runner-up in the 2024 autumn Step Count Champion competition by Paths for All, with colleagues nominating her for her commitment and motivation.

“My job is mostly desk-based, so I have to motivate myself to get outside—whether it’s a pre-work walk, a lunchtime stroll, or even just climbing the leaderboard. Having teammates makes all the difference, especially in the winter months,” said Fiona, who works in the Alumni and Development Department at the University of Strathclyde.

“My favourite type of walk is a brisk one along the beach. I’m from Kinross-shire, so some of my top spots are St Andrews, Aberdour, and the East Neuk of Fife, though I’ve also enjoyed some stunning beach walks on the west coast.”

Fiona has encouraged dozens of colleagues to get involved,

particularly new team members, helping them connect while staying active. A highlight for her was creating a video for the team's Instagram (@unistrathclydealumni), featuring their favourite walking routes.

The Step Count Challenge invites teams of five—including workplaces, friends, and families—to log their steps and engage in friendly competition while working towards personal and team goals.

The challenge offers more than just physical activity—it supports workplace wellness by reducing stress, improving productivity, and promoting safer, cleaner, and greener work environments through reduced carbon emissions and decreased car use.

Kevin Lafferty, Chief Executive Officer at Paths for All, highlights the benefits of taking part: “Walking is one of the most accessible ways to improve both physical and mental health. Fiona's story is a perfect example of how small, daily changes can have a big impact.

“The challenge is a fantastic way to build healthy habits, reduce stress, and support Scotland's journey towards a greener, healthier future.

To encourage participation, an early bird discount is available until Monday, 31st March. Teams can sign up for £48 instead of £60 by using the voucher code SPRING25 at checkout.

Paths for All, which works with the Scottish Government and partner organisations, is committed to promoting walking as the default choice for short journeys and supporting local authorities in creating inclusive, active environments. More information and registration details for the Spring Step Count Challenge can be found at www.stepcount.org.uk

