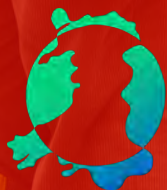


Getting people walking and wheeling



Gweithredu ar
Hinsawdd Cymru

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Introduction

What

This toolkit is intended to get more people in Wales walking and wheeling their everyday journeys.

It has been designed to help local authorities engage the communities they serve. It highlights effective campaigns to increase the number of purposeful walking and wheeling journeys.

It is intended as a useful, practical document. We've undertaken and read existing research to ensure this toolkit is useful and promotes campaigns that work.

We welcome the feedback of users and local authorities. We'll integrate this feedback into future versions of this toolkit.

Why

There are many benefits of getting more people to walk and wheel to their destination. Walking and wheeling is an easy way to integrate exercise into people's day. It can improve physical and mental well-being.¹

The rates of people walking everyday journeys remains low in Wales. In 2022/23, 58% of people walked at least once a week.²

To improve people's well-being and tackle climate change, we need to increase walking and wheeling journeys. This should decrease the number of cars on the road. Pollution may also fall.³

How

Transport for Wales and the Welsh Government are working with local authorities to change the way people travel. We're doing that through targeted interventions that we know work.

This toolkit provides a number of campaigns to be run at a local level. These campaigns are intended for communications professionals to use to run active travel campaigns. It sets out key messaging to help overcome barriers to people walking more.

It highlights a number of interventions that have worked. We will update these case studies and campaigns as we better understand what works for communities in Wales.

Walking regularly reduces the risk of a heart attack⁴

Walking instead of driving can save over

100g
of CO₂ per kilometre⁵

Walking regularly reduces the risk of depression⁶



Key messaging

Health

Better health is one of the major benefits of increasing walking and wheeling. Walking regularly can improve musculoskeletal health and reduce the risk of cardiovascular disease.⁷ There is evidence that walking can be beneficial in reducing depression and anxiety.⁸

Currently, only around 55% of Welsh adults exercise the suggested 150 minutes a week. 31% of adults get less than 30 minutes a week.⁹

Even just small increases in walking can improve physical fitness.¹⁰ Integrating walking into commutes or shopping trips is an easy way to get that exercise.

Environmental

Stressing the environmental benefits at a local and national level can help people see the impact walking and wheeling more can make.

Cars produce localised air and noise pollution. Getting more people walking and wheeling even just a few more journeys a week could have substantial benefits for the environment.

The Welsh Government has set the goal of 45% of journeys being undertaken by sustainable means by 2040.¹¹ Increasing the frequency of people walking and wheeling local journeys is key to hitting this target. It will also help local authorities meet the duties of the Environment (Air Quality and Soundscapes) (Wales) Act 2024.

Time saving

For short distances, walking often does not take that much longer than by the car.¹² Congestion and difficulties with parking can all add to journey times.

In 20 minutes, healthy adults could walk a mile. Highlighting the local services and areas they can reach in this time, can encourage more people to walk and wheel rather than drive.

It may also be beneficial to highlight that people can multi-task while walking and wheeling. People can listen to podcasts, talk to their children or phone a friend while walking and wheeling.

Money saving

Walking is a cheaper alternative to driving or taking public transport. With rising inflation, it is vital that we advocate for walking and wheeling. It could reduce pressure on family finances during the cost of living crisis.¹³

Running a car is increasingly expensive. Sustrans have highlighted that in most areas of Wales, 40-50% of households spend more than 10% of their income on running a car.¹⁴

Safety

Concerns around safety is often cited as a reason why people take the car rather than walk.¹⁵ Parents may worry their children might be harmed. Women may have experienced abuse on the street. People who live in remote rural areas may not walk because of a lack of pavements.

It is important our campaigns engage with these legitimate concerns. Local authorities could tie in active travel campaigns with wider road safety or hate crime campaigns. Living Streets research has shown an increase in children walking or cycling to school when 20mph speed limits are introduced.¹⁶



Campaigns that work

Start small

Travel behaviour does not change overnight. Success could be a person walking to work one day a week where before they drove every day.

Start with one-off events that coincide with special days or weeks. These one-off events can then build up to more frequent events throughout the year.

Living Streets runs a [Walk to School Week](#) in May. Sustrans runs a [Big Walk and Wheel](#) event in March. Living Streets runs a [National Walking Month](#) in May.

Route planning

Route planning has been shown to help people begin to walk everyday journeys.¹⁷ [Traveline Cymru](#) helps people plan sustainable journeys. [Google Maps](#) provides walking routes. Local authorities have mapped active travel routes and these should be highlighted to local residents.

Lack of safe infrastructure is regularly cited as a key reason why more people do not walk or wheel more.¹⁸ Running a campaign to highlight new or existing infrastructure is one way to get people walking and wheeling more.

These campaigns are especially successful on a town and city level.¹⁹ We're working on understanding initiatives that work in rural areas where walking levels are lower.

Schools and work

Initiatives that target schools and workplaces can help build a dedicated community of people who commute by walking and wheeling.²⁰

[Healthy Travel Wales](#) has a charter organisations can commit to.

Living Streets has a [Walk to School Challenge](#) that rewards children for travelling actively to school. It allows schools to track how their pupils travel to school.

Endnotes

- 1 Public Health England, [Everybody active, every day: an evidence-based approach to physical activity](#) (2014), p8.
- 2 [National Survey for Wales](#) (2023). Responses to the question: 'In the last three months, how often have you walked for more than 10 minutes as a means of transport?'
- 3 Transport Scotland, [Literature review - Best practice in active travel and its associated benefits](#) (2023).
- 4 Public Health England, [Cycling and walking for individual and population health benefits: A rapid evidence review for health and care system decision-makers](#) (2018), p15.
- 5 Transport Scotland, [Literature review - Best practice in active travel and its associated benefits](#) (2023).
- 6 Kelly, P., Williamson, C., Niven, A. G., Hunter, R., Mutrie, N., & Richards, J. (2018). Walking on sunshine: scoping review of the evidence for walking and mental health. *British journal of sports medicine*, 52(12), pp800–806.
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- 9 'MVPA meets guidelines 150 minutes weekly, 2022-23', [National Survey for Wales](#).
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- 11 Welsh Government, [Llwybr Newydd: the Wales transport strategy 2021](#) (2021).
- 12 Department for Transport, [Journey time statistics, England: 2019](#) (2021).
- 13 Sustrans, [Helping people through the cost of living crisis and growing our economy: The role of walking, wheeling and cycling](#) (2022).
- 14 Sustrans, [Making the Connection: Why Wales must act now to tackle transport poverty and ensure access for everyone](#) (2022), p5.
- 15 Panter, J.R., Jones, A.P. & van Sluijs, E.M. Environmental determinants of active travel in youth: A review and framework for future research. *Int J Behav Nutr Phys Act* 5, 34 (2008).
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- 18 Panter, J.R., Jones, A.P. & van Sluijs, E.M. Environmental determinants of active travel in youth: A review and framework for future research. *Int J Behav Nutr Phys Act* 5, 34 (2008).
- 19 Sustrans, Dr Nick Cavill and Professor Adrian Davis, *Active Travel & Physical Activity Evidence Review* (2019), pp20-24; Anna Le Gouais, Jenna R. Panter, Andy Cope, Jane E. Powell, Emma L. Bird, James Woodcock, David Ogilvie, Louise Foley, [A natural experimental study of new walking and cycling infrastructure across the United Kingdom: The Connect2 programme](#), *Journal of Transport & Health*, 20, 2021.
- 20 Sustrans, Dr Nick Cavill and Professor Adrian Davis, *Active Travel & Physical Activity Evidence Review* (2019), p27.

