

Making your business walk friendly

Improving workplace facilities can empower you and your workforce to make smarter travel choices and can be a key element of establishing a modern, environmentally conscious workplace culture.

Below we have provided you with ideas to increase the levels of walking to work and on business, by making your workplace walk friendly.

Auditing your site

Reviewing your site will give you an idea of how well your business currently supports walking and can provide clear direction on how to make your business more walk friendly.

The questions below provide an overview of what to consider when getting started:

- Are there convenient and safe crossing points across roads for pedestrians?
- Are there alternatives to highly trafficked routes using back streets?
- Are pavements or paths flat, even and in reasonable repair?
- Are they well-lit at night?
- Are there cars parked on footways or other obstructions?

You can find out the local area [‘walk score’](#) for your site, which is based on the accessibility of local amenities.

Easy improvements can be made by removing obstructions and monitoring parking and lining car parks with pedestrian awareness signs.

Offsite problems such as trip hazards, street lighting, overgrown vegetation can be reported on Devon County Council’s [online ‘Report a problem’ portal](#).

Onsite facilities for walking

Lockers, changing and drying rooms give staff the opportunity to change and store their clothes and shoes when walking to work, especially if the weather is wet. They can also help reduce trip hazards around desks.

Some facilities are easy and cheap to provide. You could consider making the following items available to borrow from reception:

- umbrellas
- pedometers
- personal safety alarms
- torch

Walking for business travel

A walking friendly employer is not just one where there are facilities such as lockers, but where there is a real culture of walking, which encourages standing and moving in and around the office more.

Consider the measures below to encourage your staff to travel actively for at least part of their journey to work or on business:

- Purchasing an annual bus or train ticket for communal staff use for staff making regular business trips to the same destination, could enable staff to walk more, or buy ‘pool tickets’ so any member of staff can take the ticket for meetings, training, or whenever necessary.
- Purchasing laptop rucksacks or lightweight tablets could enable staff to walk more as part of their business travel and save money on taxi fares.
- Many organisations offer a cycling mileage rate for staff who use their bikes during work time, why not introduce something similar for walking to encourage sustainable and active travel.
- Alternatively, you could consider introducing a flat mileage rate of, for example, 40p per mile, claimable for walking, cycling and driving journeys.

Route mapping

Mapping some circular routes that people can walk from your office at lunchtime can help staff reach their target of [150 minutes of moderate intensity activity a week](#) for exercise and to improve their mental health. You can include a few different options that vary in length and duration for faster and slower walking speeds.

You can map these walks using online journey planners such as: [Map My Walk](#), [Walkjogrun.net](#) or [Google maps](#).

You can share these routes on staff notice boards, intranet and on the company website, together with information on walking times and routes to the nearest bus stops and train stations.

This information can also be included in staff induction information and in meeting confirmations to visitors.

Active working facilities

A culture of walking and moving more can be supported by re-imagining the office environment as an active office. Promoting active working in your workplace is complementary to promoting walking and can be a low-cost solution to getting staff moving more during the working day.

- Consider trialling or investing in some sit/stand desks. There are a variety of sit-stand solutions to suit every office and budget and some providers offer free trials.
- Have active meetings: Have standing or [walking meetings](#).
- Watch a [TED talk](#) about walking meetings – ‘Sitting is the new smoking’. Get everyone to move around with each new agenda item.
 - Use an onscreen notification software or app to set an alert for employees to stand/move regularly. Examples of onscreen notification software include [StandApp](#) and [Little Nudge](#).

Further information and support

More information on how to encourage your workplace to get moving can be found in the [‘Promoting walking’ toolkit](#).

[Active Devon](#) is a community-focused, non-profit organisation dedicated to inspiring and supporting people in Devon to be active. They can help you get your workplace more active and support you with behaviour change campaigns, workplace challenges, programme management, design, consultancy and more. Please contact Active Devon via 01392 925 150 or hello@activedevon.org.

Want to encourage smarter travel to work at your workplace? Devon County Council can offer support* to organisations who want to enable their staff to travel more sustainably and actively. Please get in touch via traveldevon@devon.gov.uk for more information.

*Support offered will depend on availability of funding and engagement and commitment of your workplace.

URLs

- Walk score website: [walkscore.com](https://www.walkscore.com)
- DCC 'Report a problem' online portal: <https://new.devon.gov.uk/roadsandtransport/report-a-problem/>
- NHS – Physical activity guidelines for adults – <https://www.nhs.uk/live-well/exercise/>
- Map my walk website: <http://www.mapmywalk.com/>
- Walk Jog Run website: <http://www.walkjogrun.net/>
- Google Maps website: <https://maps.google.co.uk/>
- Feet First Guide to Walking Meetings: <http://www.feetfirst.org/walk-and-maps/walking-meetings>
- TedTalk on walking meetings: http://www.ted.com/talks/nilofer_merchant_got_a_meeting_take_a_walk
- Standapp website: <http://standapp.biz/>
- Information on Little Nudge: <https://getbritainstanding.org/littlenudge.php>
- Promoting walking toolkit: <http://www.traveldevontoolkit.info/promoting-walking/>