

Promoting walking

Encouraging staff to walk more has benefits for both employers and employees. With the amount of time we spend at work and our increasingly sedentary lives, it is important to integrate physical activity in and around the workplace and during our commutes.

Walking to and at work is a great way to counterbalance the sedentary effects of an office environment. It is a great low-impact exercise, with mental-health benefits as well.

This toolkit provides you with ideas and information to encourage your office to make the switch to walking to work and throughout the working day.

Devon's workplace walking campaign: Let's Walk

Devon's workplace walking campaign, Let's Walk, is all about how little changes make a big difference to you, your business and the world around us.

Your workplace can compete against other businesses across Devon, climb the leaderboard and take part in fun challenges with a chance to win great prizes.

The campaign aims to get:

- People at work thinking about their health and the power of walking, then walking more to work, in work and at weekends
- People at work engaging more with their community and environment by walking more
- Businesses to support a walk-friendly culture and show commitment and leadership towards a more sustainable future

Step up, get involved and register your interest for the next [Let's Walk campaign](#).

Walking campaigns and initiatives

Existing walking campaigns and initiatives are great opportunities to raise the profile of walking at your workplace. They also provide a good setting to organise a walking themed day at the office (see the next paragraphs for ideas on what activities you could run).

On Your Feet Britain Day – April

[On Your Feet Britain](#) is a national day in April when organisations can encourage staff to #SitLess and #MoveMore at work.

The challenge dares you to convert 'sitting time' to 'standing time'. You can encourage staff to try some of these simple changes:

- Stand during phone calls
- Stand and take a break from your computer every 30 minutes
- Use the stairs
- Have standing or walking meetings
- Eat your lunch away from your desk
- Walk to your colleague's desk instead of phoning or emailing them
- Stand at the back of the room during presentations

Walking Month – May

Walking Month is in May each year, promoted and organised by [Living Streets](#) who aim to encourage people to add more movement to their daily routine. The Living Streets website offers free event guides, posters, flyers and template emails to encourage employees to walk more.

Encourage employees to take a stand, team up with colleagues and see how easy it is to walk more and sit less for workplace challenges and campaigns.

Walking for health

To encourage your staff to become more physically active, you could advertise [Walking for Health](#) to your staff. Find a local health walk in your area offering regular short walks over easy terrain with trained walk leaders.

[Get Britain Standing](#) is a campaign to increase awareness of the dangers of sedentary working and prolonged sitting, they are empowering people to calculate the number of hours they spend sitting and get us to stand and be more active.

Walker's breakfast

A walker's breakfast is where a free breakfast is provided for staff who walk to work on a particular day. Alternatively, all staff could be invited to attend, and the event used as an opportunity to raise the profile of walking to work or during leisure time.

A walker's breakfast can be a good way of incentivising people to walk to work, raising awareness of walking and providing a forum for staff to discuss their journey options.

These events are low cost and can give a real boost to the promotion of sustainable travel. The [Travel Devon website](#) have tips for walking to work which could be shared at your event.

Stress busting lunchtime walks

Organising lunchtime time walks can be a great way of reducing stress at work, increasing health levels, boosting morale and getting people into the habit of walking. Walking maps for Exeter can be found on the [Travel Devon website](#).

Walk leader training is free, available to anyone and is part of the Walking for Health scheme. The course is split into theory and practical sessions, with the aim to ensure that all volunteers are trained to a high standard and are able to competently and confidently lead short, free health walks. Active Devon provides this training for individuals to attend, see their [events calendar](#) for more information.

Leisure walks

Did you know that if you walked every day for a year in Devon you would never have to walk the same path twice? There is something for everyone, from accessible trails to long distance routes.

Encourage staff to walk at the weekend and explore the beauty of our county. Why not circulate a 'walk of the week' for people to consider planning an outing during the weekend.

Check out the [Explore Devon website](#) to find out more information about walks around Devon.

[The Exeter Green Circle](#) is a twelve mile walk that provides a great walking experience around the boundary of Exeter.

Further information and support

[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.

This page was last updated February 2023.

URLs

- Information on the Let's walk campaign:
<https://www.activedevon.org/lets-walk-a-devon-workplace-walking-campaign-for-spring-2020/>
- On your feet Britain website: <http://onyourfeetday.com/>
- Living streets website – National walking month information:
<https://www.livingstreets.org.uk/get-involved/campaign-with-us/national-walking-month-2019>
- Walking for health website: <http://www.walkingforhealth.org.uk/>
- Travel Devon – walking to work tips: <https://www.traveldevon.info/walk/walking-to-work/>
- Explore Devon website: <http://www.exploredevon.info/>
- Exeter Green Circle information: <http://exeter.gov.uk/leisure-and-culture/walking-in-exeter/exeter-green-circle-walks/overview/>