

What you can do



How I've made my workplace healthier: Gordon's story



Gordon encourages his fellow colleagues to cycle to work and get active

Gordon Stewart is a workplace volunteer in Glasgow, encouraging and inspiring his colleagues to walk, jog, and cycle to and from work.

I started working with NHS National Services Scotland three years ago now. I was always a cyclist commuter and this new job allowed me to maintain my cycle commute. In fact it made it much easier, with secure bike parking, shower and locker facilities and, more recently, drying facilities too, so we are superbly well catered at work for cycling.

Getting started as a workplace volunteer

Our building has a Health Promotion Group which I was made aware of early on, and being a cyclist it seemed natural to become part of it. It was my intention to take a small role initially, but quite quickly it became something that I really enjoyed doing. The group conducts running and walking groups and we all support each other when we can. I quickly became a jog leader, regularly taking colleagues out for a jog around the local area.

Every now and then we have a health promotion event in our main lobby, which includes stalls for the jogging and walking groups, health checks with our onsite nurses, information to give up smoking, and external organisations such as Sustrans.

I loved inspiring people in my work to get active and so I became a Sustrans workplace volunteer in 2014.

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A couple of months into my role I successfully applied for Sustrans funding for a pool bike, which was matched by my director to give us two bikes for staff use.

Now colleagues can check the bike out for a cycle ride whenever they're free, which has helped to encourage even more people to take up cycling and start commuting to work by bike.

More recently, a **Sustrans-funded Cycle Ride Leader course** has allowed myself and one of my other colleagues to become Lunchtime Social Cycle ride leaders.

This summer we've taken groups out for a bike ride over lunchtime roughly every second Tuesday – avoiding clashes with lunchtime led jogs and walks, and the rush to get to the pub after work on a Friday! It's a great way to get us up and moving and away from our desks, as well as being social and good fun.

Motivating people to get active

There is so much cycling stuff going on out there that it is hard to keep track of sometimes but we use **a website called ScotBUG** to share useful information and news. We include internal initiatives such as our cycle to work scheme as well as getting groups together to take part in events such as the **Skyride** and **Pedal for Scotland**.

From our building of maybe 500 staff there are now 70 people signed up to receive updates and we add to this number regularly.

Our newest event is supporting Breast Cancer Care Scotland in their Tour de Scotland static bike challenge. Over two days in October we're motivating people to cycle for 15 minutes, make a donation and compete against others around Scotland. Two of our other sites are also taking part so we will have some definite competition to spur us on.

We have recently written to the council to request that the one-way street behind our building is given a contraflow for bikes, this has been adopted and will soon be implemented.

If you have an idea of how to improve the cycling experience in your area, make any suggestions you can – it might just happen.

Enjoying the challenge

If you'd like to encourage people in your workplace to be more active I think the main thing is to just keep going, keep chipping away and enjoy the challenge of bringing cycling into people's lives.

It's a slow process and dragging people away from their desks is hard to do but being active makes everyone happier and more productive. It fills me with pride that people appreciate what I am doing. Go for it.

Check out our tips for cycling to work with confidence

Want to encourage your colleagues to cycle to work? Take a look at our guidance for becoming a bike buddy

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