

## Stakeholder feedback, National Walking Strategy 20<sup>th</sup> May 2014

Ramblers Scotland welcomes the opportunity to comment on the draft strategy, version 4. We have the following comments:

We are broadly content with the strategy as it provides a good overview of the importance of walking to the life of the nation and indicates the range of interests that should be involved in helping to promote walking. Two elements that we feel are missing are the absence of a clear recognition of the role of all government departments in taking responsibility for the delivery of the strategy, and a recognition of the potential role of voluntary organisations in adding value to the delivery process and encouraging a massive expansion in walking activity.

Although there is reference to the New Strategic Group and the programme board of senior managers we think this should be linked to a statement which shows the priority which this Group and managers will give to cross sectorial effort between government departments and to the role of government in supporting the voluntary sector in delivery of the strategy.

Despite this broad agreement, however, we are concerned that the strategy has no time frame . Without this virtually everything in the strategy as regards the future is nothing more than general aspirations. There was agreement within the stakeholder working group on the need for the strategy to focus on a 10 year programme, with 1 and 5 year milestones. There is a need to restate this aim in the strategy, albeit that the detail of what it is intended to achieve at each stage can be embedded within the action plan.

With regard to specific questions:

### Vision

1. Yes, we think this is the right vision.
2. Yes, so long as the associated action plan outlines what has to be done by each milestone, with clear targets for each stage.
3. We are committed to supporting all aspects of the strategy, from cradle to grave, from sofa to summit. There is a need to inculcate the walking message into virtually all elements of life if we are to become a much fitter and vibrant nation.

### Strategic Aims

4. Yes we think these strategic aims are adequate to support the vision.

### Great places

5. We think the most effective action would be for the Scottish Government to state that they consider it should be a fundamental right of all citizens to be able to walk between one community and the next by travel on paths or other routes which are safely separated from vehicular traffic.

We hope that the above comments are of assistance and we look forward to making further contributions to this important aspect of the Scottish Government's work.

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