

HOW TO

HAVE
MORE FUN

MAKE
**NEW
FRIENDS**

BE
**HAPPIER &
HEALTHIER**



BE MORE ACTIVE!

Foreword

I am pleased to present my annual report for Buckinghamshire. This year's report focuses on physical activity as one of the most important things we can do for our own health and wellbeing and that of our families and friends. As my report shows, it's not just our health and wellbeing that is improved by physical activity but also the educational attainment of our children and young people, the safety and quality of our environment and the connections we make in our communities. This year sees the launch of many new community based physical activity opportunities in Buckinghamshire as part of our Active Bucks programme so I hope many of you will take advantage of this to join in and try something new!

Dr Jane O'Grady
Director of Public Health for Buckinghamshire

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INTRODUCTION

Being physically active is one of the keys to a long, happy and successful life. In our early years it plays a key role in brain and physical development, helps us develop social skills and make friends and promotes educational attainment and success. During our adult lives it helps give us the energy and health to enjoy life to the full and be productive at work. As we grow older being physically active slows the ageing process, keeping us fit, healthy and independent for longer.

Places with active communities tend to have better social connectedness, be safer, greener and wealthier as this report shows. Active communities are good for business and the taxpayer alike, increasing business productivity and reducing demands on health and social care services.

Despite all these benefits many of us are not active enough to benefit our health. We are 20% less active than we were in the 1960s and if current trends continue we will be 35% less active by 2030. Today's children are 15% less fit than their parents were at a similar age. International comparisons suggest the UK is more inactive than similar European countries and the USA.

Approximately half of all women and a third of men are not active enough for good health. Being inactive directly contributes to 1 in 6 deaths in the UK – equivalent to the harms from smoking - and around one fifth of adults in Buckinghamshire are currently inactive. The low levels of activity of our children are also concerning.

Humans were designed to move and stay active but slowly, under the guise of convenience, the need to be active has been designed out of everyday life for many of us. We need to reverse this trend and consider how we once again make being physically active part of our daily routines.

This requires sustained action across all sectors of society in Buckinghamshire – local government, schools and colleges, businesses and voluntary organisations, the health and care sector, communities and individuals. We need to make being active the easy and enjoyable choice every day. The good news is that if we can achieve an increase in physical activity everyone will benefit as this report shows.

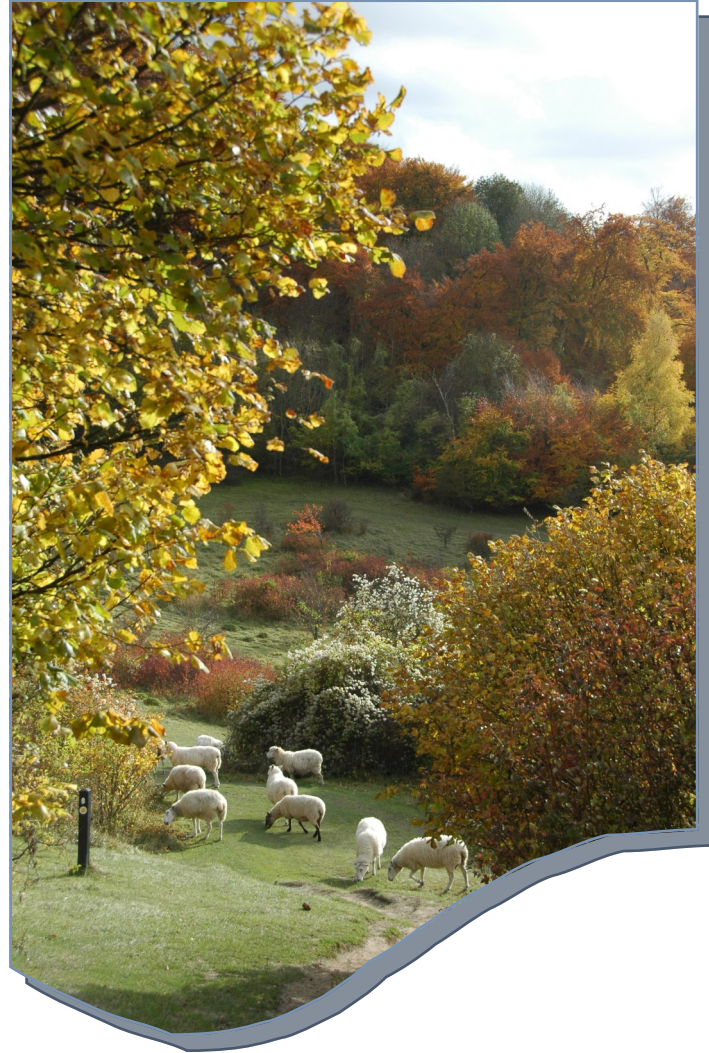
In Buckinghamshire we recognise the vital importance of physical activity to everyone at all ages and levels of ability in Buckinghamshire. The desire to work together to address the issues resulted in the development of our multi-agency physical activity strategy for 2014-2017 ["Making physical activity a priority"](#)

The strategy has four strategic aims;

- ★ Ensuring an active start in life
- ★ Building activity into everyday life – creating environments that support physical activity
- ★ Adding active years to life – increasing activity levels of older people and those with disabilities
- ★ Incorporating physical activity into health and social care services

Given the huge benefits of physical activity and the missed opportunities resulting from our low levels of physical activity there is an urgent need for action across all sectors to improve the health of individuals and our communities.

This report highlights the benefits of physical activity and some key local initiatives . It calls for more action across Buckinghamshire to ensure we all benefit from longer, happier healthier lives, more connected communities, and makes Buckinghamshire an even better place to live.



How Much is Enough Physical Activity?

Being active is important throughout life. The benefits to health occur from the earliest years to old age and it's never too late to start. How much activity we should be doing depends on our age.

What activity should we be doing?

Activity should, as a minimum, be undertaken at a **moderate intensity** - meaning it will raise your heart rate and make you breathe faster and feel warmer.

Early years (under 5's)



Particularly through floor-based play and water-based activities in safe environments



Children & young people (5-18 years)



Moderate-vigorous intensity activities, including those that strengthen muscle and bone, should be incorporated at least three days a week

Adults (19-64 years)



Moderate intensity activity in bouts of 10 minutes or more; physical activity to improve muscle strength on at least two days a week

Older adults (65+)



Moderate intensity activity in bouts of 10 minutes or more; physical activity to improve muscle strength on at least two days a week; physical activity to improve balance and co-ordination on at least two days a week

For the greatest benefits, activity should be undertaken at least at moderate intensity but any amount is better than nothing.

What is moderate intensity and vigorous intensity activity?

It is also important to do regular activities that strengthen all the major muscle groups, including arms, legs and core abdominal muscles. Examples include exercising with weights, yoga, pilates and carrying or moving heavy loads such as groceries.



- ★ **Moderate** activity = you won't be able to sing but can speak in full sentences

Moderate activity raises our heart rate; we breathe faster and feel warmer e.g. a brisk walk, housework or gardening, recreational swimming or cycling.

- ★ **Vigorous** activity = you won't ...be able ...to speak...in full sentences.....

Vigorous intensity means you'll be sweating more, very out of breath and you struggle to talk during the activity! E.g. running, sports or climbing a lot of stairs.



Regardless of how much moderate and vigorous activity we do, everyone at all ages should minimise the amount of time they spend sitting still.

Too much sitting still

We spend a lot of our time sitting at home, at school or work, in our leisure time and travelling between the three. Sitting watching TV or playing computer games, sitting at a desk, travelling in a car, are all sedentary behaviours as they require very low levels of energy and muscle activity.

Sitting still appears to have damaging effects on the cells in our bodies. When we stand up, our muscles contract and stimulate an important enzyme that is involved in the metabolism of cholesterol and glucose. When we sit still the enzyme activity is suppressed, resulting in an increase in risk factors for diabetes and cardiovascular disease.



Sitting still for long periods has been associated with an increased risk of type 2 diabetes, cardiovascular disease and death. Breaking up long periods of sitting helps avoid this and can be done by simply standing up and walking around perhaps for 10 minutes every hour as evidence suggests that incidental physical activity is positively associated with cardiorespiratory fitness.

Family and home-level interventions have been shown to be effective in reducing sedentary behaviours in children and young people. For example, encouraging parents to reduce/limit the amount of screen time (watching TV; playing on the computer) their children have, can reduce the amount of time children and young people are sedentary at home.

The simplest solution to reduce sedentary time at school or work is to encourage regular active breaks during work and school time. Other possible solutions to reduce sedentary time at work include standing meetings or modified desks. Further information can be found here:

[Get Britain Standing](#)

Make your day harder

Some of the most commonly reported barriers to being more active are lack of time and money.

One of the easiest ways to be more active is build more activity into daily life by walking or cycling on journeys to school, work or the shops and being more active during the hours we spend at work or school. Being more active in our own homes and in our leisure time is also a great investment in our health.

A set of really simple ways to build more activity into our daily routines is in this video [*“Let’s make your day harder” by Dr Mike Evans.*](#)

Active Children and Young People

Why it's important

Physical activity is essential for the healthy growth and social development of children, their learning and educational attainment.

Being active in early childhood plays a key role in brain development. Children and young people who are active are happier, more confident, and are less anxious and stressed, than children who are not very active.

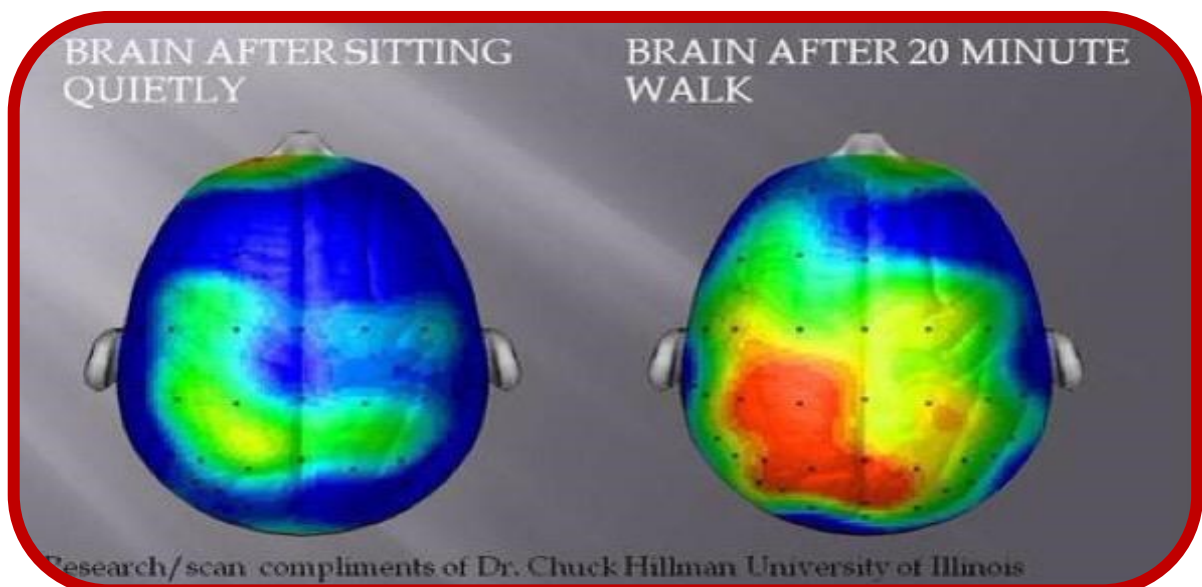
Healthy
growth
and
weight
in
children



Physical activity provides a great opportunity to spend time with other children and develop social skills through play and team sports, which means that active children are more likely to have better social skills and be accepted by their peers than children who are inactive. It improves muscle strength, bone health and cardiorespiratory fitness. Physical activity is associated with better mental health in young people and sitting still for too long has been shown to be associated with poor mental health. Some studies have found that physical activity may be as effective at reducing depression in young people as psychosocial interventions.

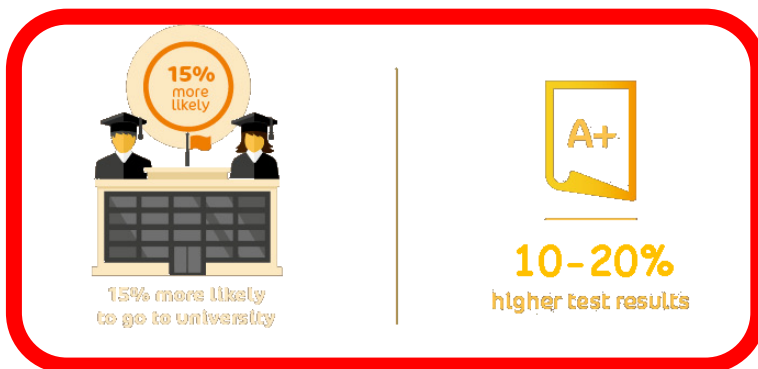
Physical activity improves the ability of children to concentrate, think and remember things, which means that active children do better in school.

Studies have shown that increased childhood aerobic fitness is associated with better control and co-ordination of thoughts and actions and an increased size of the key regions of the brain responsible for this. The brain scans in the following picture show that active children had more activity going on in a key area of the brain responsible for coordinating thoughts and actions.



Physical activity can improve learning for children with learning difficulties by turning on the attention system including sequencing, working memory, the ability to prioritise and increased attention span making them more primed to learn.

Studies have shown that the GCSE results of active young people are 10-20% higher than those of inactive young people. A study identified that the amount of physical activity that 11 year old girls do, predicts how well they do in science at age 11 and 16 years of age and physically active young people are 15% more likely to go to university. Studies have also shown that physical activity is linked with improved classroom behaviour.



Alongside healthy eating, physical activity is important in maintaining a healthy weight. There are lifelong health benefits, such as reducing the risk of developing Type 2 diabetes and cardiovascular disease in later life. The more active a child is the greater the benefit they will get. In addition an active child is more likely to become an active adult, conferring lifelong benefits on health in adulthood and older age.

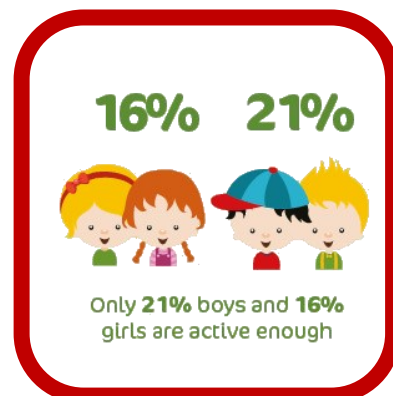
How active are today's children and young people?

The Chief Medical Officer (CMO) guidelines are that:

*Children under 5 years should be active for a minimum of **180 minutes every day** spread throughout the day.*

*Children and young people aged 5-18 years should be active for a minimum of **60 minutes every day**.*

- ★ Only 1 in 10 children aged 2-4 years meet the recommended 180 minutes of physical activity a day in England.
- ★ Nationally only 1 in 5 children aged 5-15 meet the recommended 60 minutes of physical activity per day (boys 21% and girls 16%). Rates in South East England are 26% of boys and 16% of girls meeting recommendations.
- ★ Nationally 2 in 5 children aged 5-15 are classed as inactive. Girls are more inactive than boys - 45% of girls and 39% of boys are inactive. Rates of inactivity are highest in children from the 20% of families on the lowest income where almost 1 in 2 children are inactive.
- ★ Nationally the percentage of children being active fell between 2008–12 and those classed as inactive increased. Today's children are about 15% less fit than their parents were. In a race over 1 mile, on average a child from 1975 would beat a child from today by 90 seconds!



Activity levels fall in the teenage years particularly among girls and sedentary behaviour increases.

What Can We Do?

The Early Years

Being active is very important in early years. It helps to set positive physical activity habits early on and supports healthy physical and mental development at this crucial time. Physical literacy is about learning fundamental movement skills that will help children move confidently and with control, setting them on a good foundation. To understand this better, please take a look at this video - <http://physicalliteracy.sportwales.org.uk/en/>

Children are more active if their parents and carers are active. Children who spend longer periods outside are more active and engage in less screen time compared to children who spend more time indoors. Families and those who work with children have a crucial role to play in promoting activity and physical literacy at this vital time and policy and environment in childcare settings can influence activity levels in the early years. Interventions which include family, school and the local community are the most effective in promoting physical activity among children. Safe, enjoyable and accessible community activities and play and green spaces are important in supporting this.

Physical Literacy Project in Buckinghamshire

Physically literate children will be able to perform a range of movement skills e.g. hop, climb or catch that will improve agility, balance and coordination at levels appropriate to their capabilities. A child's movement confidence will develop as they become more competent in performing these skills.

The Bucks Physical Literacy Project focuses on engaging children aged 3-7 through the training and mentoring of staff in Children's Centres and primary school (KS1) settings. The project is currently in its pilot phase and 50 settings and up to 100 staff will have been involved over 2 academic years by July 2016.



Active Schools and Colleges

Schools and colleges have a very important role in encouraging and providing opportunities for children and young people to take part in physical activity. As young people spend a large amount of time at school or travelling to and from school, this provides crucial opportunities for us to promote physically active lives to young people from all backgrounds.

There is good evidence that school-based physical activity interventions are effective in increasing duration of physical activity, reducing blood cholesterol and time spent watching television. Current [NICE guidance](#) on physical activity for children and young people recommends multi-component physical activity programmes that include education about the benefits of physical activity, creating a more supportive school environment and engagement of the family and local community.

Further guidance can be found here <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/what-works-in-schools-to-increase-physical-activity-briefing>

Schools can help children and young people to be more active in many different ways. A whole school approach should be taken, comprising physical activities in class, during break-time and after school; changes to the school curriculum, culture and environment and the promotion of active travel to and from school.

Important components of successful approaches include discussing levels of activity with children and young people; involving them in choosing from a range of activities; and providing appropriate activities and additional support for those with disabilities or health issues. There are opportunities to discuss and incorporate physical activity into the curriculum e.g. forces and energy transfer in physics, designing active cities.

Schools around the world are taking innovative approaches to increasing physical activity. In Finland more than 1,000 schools are taking part in a programme to increase physical activity. They are doing this by incorporating extra opportunities for physical activity into the school day e.g. standing to discuss lessons learnt and short breaks to stop students sitting too long in the classroom.

In Norway some schools are using physical activity during lessons to promote learning and physical activity at the same time. This approach recognised that children have different learning styles and the activity helps reinforce classroom taught lessons.



School design can play an important role in helping children be active. Fuji Kindergarten in Tokyo, Japan has used clever design to increase physical activity in children. The kindergarten is oval in shape with a perimeter of 183 metres. The classrooms run along this perimeter with sliding doors and no fixed walls; trees grow through the building; and there is a wide, area where children can run around all day. Without the need for any structured activity, the children run an average of 3.7 miles every morning.

Ali Arbour, PE Specialist, says “Physical activity is of paramount importance in the development of future generations. In a school setting not only does this include physical education, sports and dance activities, but also playtime activities, outdoor and adventurous activities and active travel to and from schools. The foundation on which to build active communities starts in schools. For some children their weekly opportunity to be physically active is in their physical education lessons. High quality physical education is the key, for every child, to developing their personal health and well-being through regular physical activity.”

Physical activity levels tend to fall in the teenage years especially among girls so this is an important group to target. Evidence suggests that teenagers are more likely to be active if:

- ★ They get to choose the activity or can help plan activity
- ★ The activities are appropriate for their own ability
- ★ Family, friends, teachers and other professionals are supportive
- ★ There are playgrounds and green spaces available
- ★ There are safe walking or cycling routes to school
- ★ Schools are committed to increasing levels of physical activity and provide good PE or sports activity.

This Girl Can is a national campaign developed by Sport England to engage women and girls aged 14-40 in regular sport and physical activity by reducing any anxiety about being active. Research undertaken showed that millions of women and girls are reluctant to exercise because of fear of judgement. For more about this campaign, go to www.thisgirlcan.co.uk where you can find out more, get tips on how to get active and join the national debate.

What we are doing in Buckinghamshire

Schools across the county are encouraged to actively discourage car use and promote safe and sustainable travel to pupils and families on the school journey. School Travel Planning work has led to an increase in active travel on the school journey from 40% in 2010 to 53% in 2014.

Local initiatives encourage active travel such as scavenger hunts on the walk to school or having passports stamped every time children travel actively to school. In order to help keep children safe on our roads children are offered Bikeability cycle training and in 2014-15 2,924 children in Buckinghamshire received this training.



Physical education and sports can be an important source of physical activity in schools. Each primary school currently receives annual funding from the Department for Education to deliver high quality sport and physical activity to their pupils.

Leap (our County Sport and Activity Partnership for Buckinghamshire) supports schools to make decisions on how to best use this money. The Youth Sports Trust also delivers opportunities for all school-aged pupils to engage in high quality competitive sport as part of the national school games competition.

A further initiative is the development of satellite clubs where established local sports clubs develop satellite clubs on secondary school sites, with the aim of developing better links between school and community activity.

Bucks 7-minute workout (B7MW): This project aimed to address increasing levels of inactivity in young people aged 13-25 years old by giving them the opportunity to participate in a series of short equipment-free exercise videos (delivered through YouTube) which can be used at home or on the go.

There are six different workout categories each with five intensity levels so participants challenge themselves as they become fitter and more confident.

The videos generated over 900 separate views and, from the evaluation forms received, the young people mentioned that the main benefits of the videos included increased energy, healthier eating, encouragement to be more active and awareness of other sporting clubs and activities.

Girls on a Mission: Delivered by the BCC Children's Partnership Team, in partnership with the Royal Air Force, the programme was a free, eight-week motivational training programme for young women aged 16-24 years old. Its aim was to increase physical and emotional health whilst having fun and making friends. The programme received the status of 'Highly Commended' in the Children and Young People Now Awards 2015, Health and Wellbeing category. Outcomes included:

- ★ 75% of young people reported their physical fitness levels had increased
- ★ 50% of participants said they realised the benefits of regular exercise
- ★ 83% reported they had changed their attitude towards physical fitness
- ★ 67% were aware of other sporting activities and clubs



Source: Bucks Girls on a Mission Programme, 2015

What do young people in Buckinghamshire want?

As part of the Active Bucks survey 124 young people were asked what would encourage them to be more active and what the barriers to being more active were. The most popular activities identified by the pupils included team sports, activities in the park, swimming, martial arts/self-defence and running/jogging group sessions.

Barriers to physical activity in Buckinghamshire were identified as having the time or the money to participate in activities. When asked for potential solutions to these problems young people identified after school/college activity (48%), activity in weekends (37%), low cost activities (66%), and 'pay as you go' activities (28%). One fifth of respondents preferred activities with people of same age and ability.

This information will inform the design of our programme of activities as part of the Active Bucks programme (See Active Communities, page 42)

Active Adults

Why it matters

Active people live longer and in better health than their inactive neighbours. Evidence suggests that increasing activity levels will help prevent and manage as many as 20 chronic health conditions including heart disease, cancer, diabetes, depression, dementia, obesity and stroke.

Physical activity also has a role in enhancing mental wellbeing by improving mood, self-perception, self-esteem and reducing stress and anxiety. Inactive people go to the GP more often, have more nurse visits and spend almost 40% longer in hospital than active people.

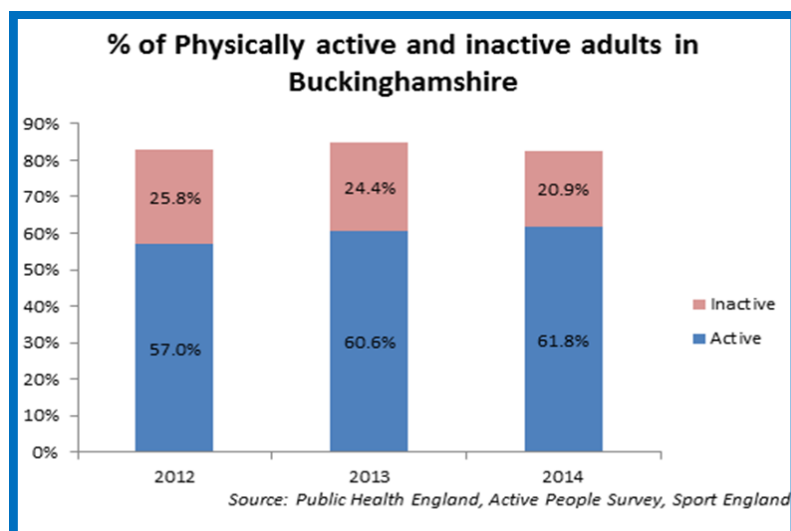
How active should adults be?

- ★ Adults (19 to 64 years) – should aim to be active daily.
- ★ Over a week, activity should add up to at least 150 minutes (2.5 hours) of moderate intensity activity in bouts of 10 minutes or more.
- ★ Alternatively, comparable benefits can be achieved through 75 minutes of vigorous intensity activity spread across the week or combinations of moderate and vigorous intensity activity.
- ★ Adults should also undertake physical activity to improve muscle strength on at least two days a week.

How active are adults in Buckinghamshire?

National data shows that 62% of men and 51% of women report that they meet the recommendations on physical activity. However estimating how much moderate intensity activity we do is difficult and objective measurement, such as using accelerometers which measure actual activity levels, suggest that in reality activity levels may be much lower, with less than 1 in 10 people achieving the recommended levels of physical activity.

In Buckinghamshire, the latest figures from the Active People Survey (2014-15) shows that 62% of adults report meeting the physical activity levels recommended by the CMO of 150 minutes per week (South East average 59%; England average 57%). Perhaps more importantly 21% of Buckinghamshire adults are considered to be inactive by not undertaking even 30 minutes of activity in each week (South East average 25%; England average 28%). The greatest health gains can be made by increasing the activity levels of inactive people.



Evidence shows that increasing levels of activity in inactive people to just 30 minutes a week could increase life expectancy by 3 years.

This chart shows a modest increase in self-reported physical activity in Buckinghamshire over the last 3 years. The data suggests that the proportion of active people has increased from 57% in 2012 to 61.8% in 2014; and the proportion of inactive people has declined from 25.8% in 2012 to 20.9% in 2014.

How active should adults be?

This infographic from the CMO for England summarises what activity adults should do for their health.

Physical activity benefits for adults and older adults

-  **BENEFITS HEALTH**
-  **IMPROVES SLEEP**
-  **MAINTAINS HEALTHY WEIGHT**
-  **MANAGES STRESS**
-  **IMPROVES QUALITY OF LIFE**

REDUCES YOUR CHANCE OF

Type II Diabetes	-40%
Cardiovascular Disease	-35%
Falls, Depression and Dementia	-30%
Joint and Back Pain	-25%
Cancers (Colon and Breast)	-20%

What should you do?

For a healthy heart and mind

To keep your muscles, bones and joints strong

To reduce your chance of falls

Be Active

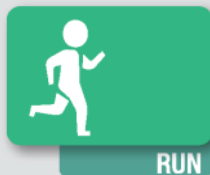
Sit Less

Build Strength

Improve Balance

VIGOROUS

MODERATE



RUN



WALK



SPORT



CYCLE



STAIRS



SWIM



TV



SOFA



COMPUTER



GYM



YOGA



CARRY BAGS



DANCE



TAI CHI



BOWLS

MINUTES PER WEEK

75 OR 150

VIGOROUS INTENSITY

(BREATHING FAST
DIFFICULTY TALKING)

MODERATE INTENSITY

(INCREASED BREATHING
ABLE TO TALK)

OR A COMBINATION OF BOTH

BREAK UP SITTING TIME



2 DAYS PER WEEK

Something is better than nothing.

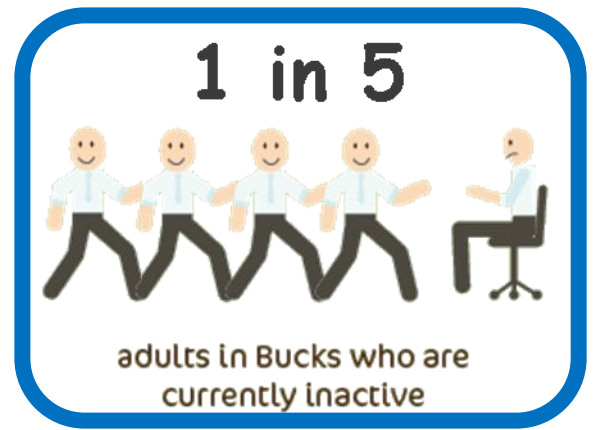
**Start small and build up gradually:
just 10 minutes at a time provides benefit.**

MAKE A START TODAY: it's never too late!

Inactive groups

Activity levels vary by age, sex, ethnic group and income. Activity levels are lowest in older adults, women, Black and Asian groups, people with a disability and those on the lowest income.

As adults get older they are less likely to be active. According to the Active People Survey (2013-14) 40% of 65+ years are inactive in Buckinghamshire compared with 22% of 35-44 year olds. Nationally, by the age of 75 years only one in ten men and one in 20 women are active enough for good health.



Workplaces

Adults in the UK spend much of their waking time at work and the UK workforce tends to spend more hours at work than in most other EU countries. Workplaces are therefore a crucial setting for promoting physical activity however more than 40% of women and 35% of men spend more than six hours a day desk-bound or sitting still at work.

Staff ill health has cost implications for businesses through loss of productivity, early retirement, staff turnover and absenteeism including long term sick pay and the cost of temporary staff. Businesses with active workforces are more productive, have lower sickness rates and lower staff turnover. Physical activity also increases workplace productivity by improving concentration and alertness. According to the Physical Activity Task Force 2003, physically active employees take 27% fewer days of sick leave.

Back pain is the most common cause of sickness absence from work in the UK, with an estimated 16 million people affected each year, at a cost to industry of £5.7 billion each year. Work related stress, depression and anxiety form the second most common reasons for work related sickness absence, costing the UK economy between £3.7 and £7 billion each year.

Evidence shows that physical activity can reduce a person's risk from suffering from back pain and can also aid recovery from back pain and other musculoskeletal disorders. Physical activity has been shown to have an anxiety-reducing effect and single sessions of moderate intensity exercise have been shown to reduce short term reactions to stress and enhance recovery from stressors. Physical activity also helps reduce the risk of depression and can be an important part of recovery from depression.



Employees are more likely to be active if there is a supportive environment, facilities such as conveniently located and good quality places to shower and change, the stairs are located more conveniently than the lift and there are safe cycle routes to work with secure places to leave bicycles.

Buckinghamshire Public Health Team on the 'Midday Mile'

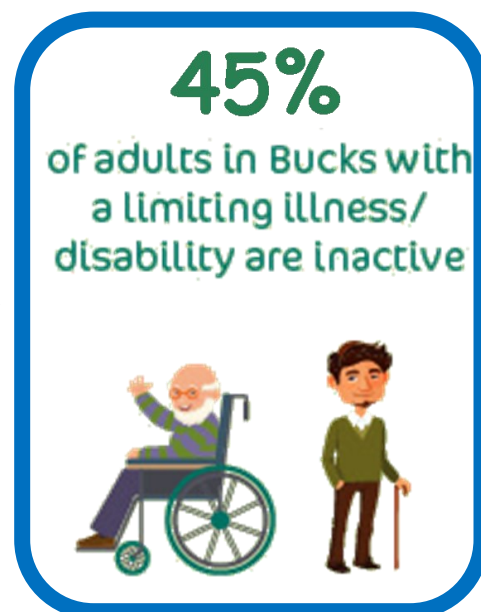
Disability

Almost 1 in 5 people in England have a long standing limiting disability or illness. Disabled people are half as likely to be active as those without a disability. 45% of people with a limiting illness or disability are inactive compared to 22% of those without a limiting illness or disability.

Buckinghamshire has a long association with sport for those with a disability. In 1948, the Stoke Mandeville Games were founded with 16 ex-members of the British forces and by 1954 14 nations were represented at the Games.

In 1961 Guttman founded the British Sports Association for the Disabled, introducing organised sport to men, women and children with disabilities other than spinal paraplegia. Stoke Mandeville has since been known as the home of the Paralympic movement.

There are a range of organisations that deliver physical activity opportunities to people with a range of disabilities in Buckinghamshire including:



- ★ Wheelpower is a charity dedicated to providing opportunities for disabled people to live healthy active lifestyles. Based at Stoke Mandeville Stadium, Wheelpower deliver a large number of sports and link to many competitions. More information can be found on their website www.wheelpower.org.uk
- ★ Some of our local leisure centres deliver the Inclusive Fitness Initiative to ensure equipment is accessible for people with a disability - these include Stoke Mandeville Stadium (Aylesbury), Chesham Leisure Centre and Fitness First (High Wycombe)
- ★ Horizon Sports Club is a registered charity which provides a unique after-school sports club for children and young people with disabilities who live in South Buckinghamshire, creating the opportunity to develop both physically and socially through the enjoyment of sport. More information can be found on their website www.horizonsportsclub.org.uk
- ★ Halton Tennis Club has many years experience as a Disability Tennis provider recognised by the Tennis Foundation and each year they hold an Inclusive Tennis Festival. They offer tennis to people with different disabilities including learning disabilities, wheelchair users, blind/visually impaired and deaf. More information on their webpages <http://www.haltontennis.co.uk/tennis/disability/>
- ★ The Buckinghamshire Disability Service (BuDS) is an independent charity which speaks up for the interests of disabled people in Buckinghamshire. BuDS helps ensure many services are accessible for people with a disability and were involved in the London 2012 Buckinghamshire Legacy programme which included the 'Stoke Mandeville Way' – an accessible pathway route linking Aylesbury town centre to Stoke Mandeville Stadium,

Hospital and village. Intended to be the first of many, it shows how collaboration can make public spaces accessible to all. More information about BuDS can be found by visiting their website www.buds.org.uk.

The Buckinghamshire Public Health team commissioned Leap, the Buckinghamshire Sport and Physical Activity Partnership, to undertake a disability needs assessment for physical activity. The needs assessment included an overview of existing activity for disabled people across Buckinghamshire, along with some key recommendations to improve access further through a 10 Point Plan.

As a result of this, in September 2016, the first Buckinghamshire Disability Sport and Physical Activity Summit will be held. It is being coordinated by Leap, to work with activity providers to enhance opportunities for disabled people to become more active.

Active Older People

Active older people are healthier, happier and more independent

Being active throughout life helps slow the ageing process. Active people age well and older people who have been active in middle age are more likely to age with fewer long term conditions, a 30% lower risk of dementia and have greater independence. Physical activity declines with age to the extent that by the age of 75 years only one in ten men and one in 20 women are active enough for good health but it doesn't have to be this way! Although being active before you reach older age and continuing to be active in during old age has the greatest benefits, it is never too late to benefit from physical activity. Older people living alone, those living in poorer neighbourhoods and those suffering from dementia tend to be less active.

Staying active (whether walking, dancing, playing bowls, working on allotments or volunteering in the community) is important to ensure older people can keep mobile. It enables them to get out and see their friends and to stay connected with their community thus reducing social isolation and loneliness. This in turn can contribute to higher levels of mental wellbeing and longer happier lives. Physical activity can therefore help to contribute to a higher quality of life, regardless of level of intensity.

By the age of 70, in England 25% of women and 7% of men lack the leg strength to get out of a chair without using their arms. Older people should do activities to improve balance and strengthen the thigh muscles and arm muscles to avoid falls. Being active also helps reduce osteoporosis and thus makes older people less likely to fracture their bones if they fall. Even amongst the frailest of older people, small amounts of physical activity will promote blood flow and help prevent blood clots in the leg veins, pressure sores and other complaints.

How active should older people be?

Recommendations:

- ★ Older people (65 and over) should aim to be active daily.
- ★ Over a week, activity should add up to at least 150 minutes at a moderate intensity.
- ★ Older adults should also undertake physical activity to improve muscle strength on at least two days a week and those at risk of falls should incorporate physical activity to improve balance and coordination on at least two days a week.
- ★ All older adults should minimise the time spent sitting for extended periods.



How active are older people in Buckinghamshire?

The Active People's Survey 2013 shows that 45% of people aged 65+ in Buckinghamshire report achieving at least 150 minutes of physical activity each week which is better than the national average of 38%.

40% of the 65+ population in Buckinghamshire achieve less than 30 minutes of physical activity each week which is better than the national average of 47%.

In Buckinghamshire, 50% of men aged 65+ are active, compared to 42% of women. 42% of women are inactive compared to 39% of men.



What is happening in Buckinghamshire?

Programmes such as Simply Walk offer opportunities for older adults to participate in a range of guided walks with different distances/difficulty on a regular basis in sociable settings. In fact, 56% of those that access the Simply Walk programme are aged 65+.

For those who have more problems with walking or standing, chair-based exercise (CBE) is an ideal alternative, with a strong evidence-base to support participants to progress from sit to stand exercise.

To ensure some of our most vulnerable and inactive older adults have the opportunity to access regular physical activity, Buckinghamshire Public Health commissioned free CBE training to staff from 15 residential care settings across Buckinghamshire.

Regular CBE sessions were then subsequently delivered to residents in those settings on a weekly basis. The training offered teaches care home staff to be knowledgeable and competent in delivering the 22 exercises that make up the evidenced based 'Sit Tall, Stand Strong' CBE programme.

Delivery of CBE training to other residential care settings across Buckinghamshire is due to be delivered in 2016/17.



As part of the Active Bucks programme (see Active Communities, page 42), funding from the Department of Communities and Local Government has enabled the development of a targeted campaign to encourage Buckinghamshire residents aged 60-70 to create a 'pension for your body' through increasing the amount of regular physical activity they undertake – particularly walking. More information can be found at <http://www.buckscc.gov.uk/healthy-living/active-bucks/pension-for-your-body/>.

In addition, many of the Active Bucks activities developed in collaboration with Local Area Forums (LAFs) will provide new opportunities to engage older adults in regular physical activity. Examples include:

Yoga & Pilates in Denham and Fulmer

Gentle exercise in Marlow and Stokenchurch

Dance in Princes Risborough

Nordic Walking in High Wycombe

Walking Football in Burnham and Stoke Poges

The Movers and Shakers programme is an award winning health and wellbeing initiative that supports older people to stay fitter for longer. Members attend weekly sessions that encourage a healthier lifestyle.

A typical session consists of an hour of physical activity: Zumba Gold, Jazzercise or Tai chi, an hour of social activities and a healthy lunch in a communal setting. There are:

- ★ 5 sessions in Aylesbury
- ★ 7 sessions in Wycombe
- ★ 2 sessions in Chesham

New sessions have started in Gerrards Cross, Burnham, Stoke Poges, Farnham Common and Iver.



Movers and Shakers getting together for an exercise session Caribbean style (Source: Bucks New University)

More information can be found by visiting:

http://bucks.ac.uk/research/research_institutes/idrics/Current_Projects/movers-and-shakers/

Being Active Each Day Keeps the Doctor Away

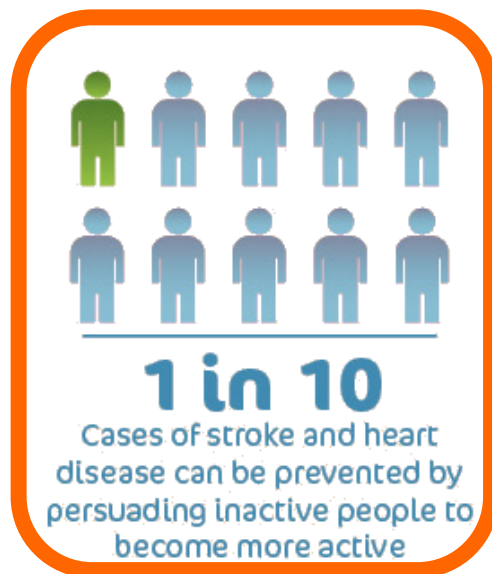
Introduction

Increasing physical activity levels will significantly improve both physical and mental wellbeing, reduce death rates and improve life expectancy in Buckinghamshire.

Physical inactivity has been estimated to cause 17% of all deaths and is a major risk factor for a wide range of health conditions. Active adults have a 25-35% reduced risk of premature deaths from all causes, this rises to a 50% or greater reduction if objective measures of fitness are used rather than the self-reported activity levels.

Long term conditions such as heart disease, stroke, diabetes, cancer and depression account for approximately 70% of health and social care spending. The prevalence of these conditions increases with age but staying physically active reduces the risk of these conditions by 30-50%. Physical activity is also an effective part of treatment for many long term conditions.

Inactive people go to the GP more often, have more nurse visits and spend almost 40% longer in hospital than active people.



Dr Stephen Murphy says *"I'm trying to get all my patients to get moving a little more each day, because even a small increase in activity makes a difference - and the more we do, the greater the benefits. As a GP I could sit in my room all day without needing to walk very far. Instead I don't use the phone for internal calls, I go and seek out the individual I need to speak to in person; I always collect my patients from the waiting room at the surgery instead of sending a message to the TV screen; I walk an extra half a mile a day doing that."*

The benefits of physical activity on health have been well documented and follow a dose-response relationship i.e. a small amount of physical activity is good but more is better. The greatest health benefits are achieved in those who are inactive and begin to undertake even a small amount of physical activity.

Local GPs recommend activity to their patients and follow the same advice themselves.

Dr Annet Gamell, local GP and Chief Clinical Officer for Chiltern Clinical Commissioning Group CCG) keeps active by *"walking my grandson to school, playing football with him in the garden, parking at furthest part of car parks, using stairs instead of lifts, making time for brisk walking and gardening whenever possible i.e. cheap and cheerful activities. I talk about these to all my patients and tell them 30 minutes of physical activity 5 times a week can reduce risk of heart attack, stroke and dementia more than any tablet I can prescribe."*

Nationally physical inactivity costs the NHS an estimated at £1.06 billion based on national cases of heart disease, stroke, diabetes, colorectal cancer and breast cancer (all conditions that are potentially preventable or manageable through physical activity). This is a conservative estimate, given the exclusion of other health problems that physical activity can help manage and prevent including osteoporosis, falls and high blood pressure.

The total cost of inactivity further increases when considering the wider economic costs. These include sickness absence, estimated at £5.5 billion per year, and the premature death of productive people of working age from 'lifestyle-related' diseases, estimated at £1 billion per year.

Dr Karen West, a local GP and member of the Buckinghamshire Health and Wellbeing Board says *“When the Buckinghamshire Health and Wellbeing Board was first created, physical activity was the first priority we focused on as a board. Through the presentation of evidence regarding the benefits of physical activity at this board, my behaviour changed, both personally and professionally. I now focus on physical activity as part of my family life and I promote it through my work as a GP. I believe strongly in the value of physical activity and widely advocate it as part of prevention and treatment strategies.”*

Physical activity and its impact on common health problems in Buckinghamshire

In Buckinghamshire, the commonest causes of death are cardiovascular disease and cancer, accounting for 29% and 30% of overall deaths respectively. The commonest causes of disability in Buckinghamshire are diseases of musculoskeletal system such as arthritis, mental health problems and long term conditions such as heart disease, stroke, diabetes, depression and cancer. Being physically active is a very effective way to prevent and reduce the impact of over 20 common chronic conditions. If activity were a pill, it would be one of the most cost-effective drugs ever invented.

Physical activity and cardiovascular disease

Cardiovascular disease includes a range of conditions including coronary heart disease and stroke, and is one of the commonest causes of death in Buckinghamshire accounting for 29% of all deaths in Buckinghamshire between 2010 and 2014.

Physical inactivity carries a similar risk of increasing cardiovascular disease as smoking and high blood pressure. Regular physical activity reduces the risk of developing cardiovascular disease by 35% and best results are obtained by meeting the CMO's recommendations of 150 minutes a week of moderate intensity physical activity.



Physical activity also has a positive effect on the risk factors for cardiovascular disease including high blood pressure, high cholesterol levels, and high blood sugars. Adults who are inactive have a 30% higher risk of high blood pressure than active adults and aerobic activity reduces blood pressure levels in people with “normal” blood pressure and with high blood pressure.

There is a dose response relationship between physical activity and reduction in death from cardiovascular disease, ie a small amount of physical activity is good but more is better. Just 1 hour of walking per week reduces risk of death from cardiovascular disease. Inactive patients with cardiovascular disease should be able to participate in some activity by starting at 10 minutes walking a day and then slowly introducing other activity. Inactive men who become active at 50 years old can halve their risk of death from cardiovascular disease at the age of 60 years compared to those who remained inactive. Similar results are found in women who become active later in life. After a heart attack, if a patient receives cardiac rehabilitation that includes physical activity, their risk of dying is reduced by 20-30%.

Local consultant cardiologist Dr Piers Clifford says *“There is no doubt in my mind that physical exercise is crucial in preventing the development of cardiovascular disease and in rehabilitating patients who have already suffered from a cardiac event. At Buckinghamshire Healthcare NHS Trust we have developed an award winning cardiac rehabilitation program. The exercise program within this is the main factor in allowing heart attack patients to regain their confidence, lose weight, stop smoking and generally feel better about themselves. Patient feedback has been incredibly positive and over 90% of them now continue to exercise even after they have been discharged. The success of this program has encouraged us to consider developing a program for individuals at high risk of developing cardiovascular disease. It is my firm belief that we should consider exercise in the same way we see medical drugs - if we can deliver an adequate dose on a regular basis we will see a disease changing response.”*

Physical activity and cancer

Cancer is the commonest cause of death in Buckinghamshire accounting for 30% of all deaths between 2010 and 2014. It accounts for 44% of all deaths under 75 years. The four commonest cancers that account for over half (53%) of all new cases of cancer in the UK are breast, lung, prostate and bowel cancer. Breast cancer is the most common cancer in the UK, despite the fact that it is rare in men. In men, prostate cancer is the most common form of cancer.

Physical activity has a strong protective effect against breast and colon cancer and a moderate effect against prostate and lung cancer. Those who are active have a 20% lower risk of developing colon and breast cancer. Physically active women also have a 27% lower risk of developing endometrial cancer.

Physical activity also reduces the risk of dying from cancer. Evidence suggests that women reaching the equivalent of the recommended minimum levels of physical activity (i.e. 150 minutes of moderate intensity activity per week) had a 40% lower risk of breast cancer recurrence, and 40% lower risk of dying from breast cancer compared to women who were active for less than one hour a week. Undertaking the recommended levels of physical activity reduces the risk of dying from prostate cancer by 30-40%. Undertaking physical activity for 6 hours a week decreases the risk of dying from colon cancer by 50%.

There is increasingly strong evidence that physical activity can help prevent and manage the side effects caused by cancer and its treatment. Tiredness and lack of energy is one of the troubling symptoms of cancer or its treatment. Evidence shows that keeping active during and after treatment of cancer improves or prevents the decline of physical function without increasing fatigue. Physical activity, during treatment, has been shown to have a positive effect on anxiety and self-esteem. Following treatment, quality of life, depression and anxiety is significantly improved in people continuing to be active. In advanced cancer, physical activity can help maintain independence and wellbeing.

Dr Nicholas Bates, Consultant in Clinical Oncology, Buckinghamshire Healthcare NHS Trust says *“There are many benefits from being more physically active. It can give a sense of greater wellbeing and confidence, helps in weight control and reduces the risk of developing some types of cancer. When people need treatment for cancer, maintaining physical activity helps them cope with side effects more easily and maintain a good quality of life.”*

For this reason the Macmillan Cancer Support charity has called physical activity “the underrated wonder drug” and in its report [Move More](#) recommends that physical activity should be part of standard NHS care for cancer because of its beneficial impact on the side effects associated with cancer and its treatment. They recommend that every patient with cancer should be offered a brief intervention on physical activity to encourage people to gradually build up to 150 minutes of physical activity per week supported by goal setting and written resources. They also recommend that clinicians are trained in behaviour change techniques such as motivational interviewing to help people become more active. It has a range of useful resources on its website to help people with cancer get more active.

Physical activity and diabetes

Diabetes is one of the most common long term conditions and there are currently 23,865 people known to have diabetes in Buckinghamshire. The prevalence of diabetes in Buckinghamshire is predicted to increase by 42% by 2025. Diabetes can have a significant impact on individuals and their families.

The commonest type of diabetes is Type 2 diabetes which is associated with being overweight or obese and leading a sedentary lifestyle. Type 2 diabetes increases the risk of coronary heart disease by five-fold and stroke by three-fold and is a major cause of blindness and limb amputation and often leads to a 10 years reduction in life expectancy. Type 2 diabetes is more common in people of Asian, African, Afro-Caribbean, Middle Eastern and Chinese descent. Physical inactivity is a major factor increasing the risk of diabetes and physical activity reduces the risk of developing diabetes by up to 50%. If all inactive people were to become active 13% of cases of Type 2 diabetes in the UK could potentially be prevented.

There is also good evidence to suggest that Type 2 diabetes can be prevented or delayed in people with pre-diabetes. There is strong evidence that in those patients with pre-diabetes, increased physical activity and a good diet can reduce the incidence of type 2 diabetes by 58%.

Physical activity improves blood glucose control in Type 2 diabetes and this may lead to a reduction or even discontinuation of medication in a proportion of patients. Physical activity is also important in reducing the risk of complications in Type 1 diabetes.

Consultant Diabetologist, Dr Henrietta Brain says *“Regular physical activity can improve insulin resistance and improve diabetes control even in the absence of weight loss. Exercise can also aid weight loss which can improve diabetes control and slow down the progression of Type 2 diabetes.”*

In 2014-15 Buckinghamshire CCGs spent over £23 million on treating diabetes and over £7 million on prescribing medicines for diabetes.

Physical activity and lung diseases

Chronic obstructive pulmonary disease (COPD)

Physical activity improves cardiorespiratory health by improving breathlessness and a person's ability to get on with their life. Physical activity is the strongest predictor of life expectancy in patients with COPD and exercise training via pulmonary rehabilitation can help improve functional capacity and quality of life. Encouraging even the smallest increase in daily levels of physical

activity can bring significant benefits for patients with COPD. Where there is no formal exercise programme the physician can use clinical judgement to recommend moderate intensity exercise (eg light walking) for a total of at least 20-30 minutes a day broken down into bouts of 10 minutes. For every four people who receive pulmonary rehabilitation including physical activity after an exacerbation of their COPD, then one hospital admission will be prevented and for every six people receiving pulmonary rehabilitation one death will be prevented.

Breathlessness caused by COPD can cause anxiety and as a result many people reduce the amount of activity they do. In the long term, this physical inactivity not only increases people's chance of developing heart and circulation problems but it leads to a feeling of being tired, unfit and even more breathless. Starting and maintaining regular activity can improve breathing and make day to day activities easier.

Asthma

Similarly people with asthma feel anxious about exercising because it can make them feel breathless but having asthma doesn't mean they can't exercise. Exercising regularly has a long list of physical and emotional benefits and it can help patients cope better with their asthma.

Physical activity and depression

Active adults are 20% to 33% less likely to develop depression than inactive adults. There is evidence that regular physical activity not only reduces the risk of developing depression by up to a third but can also be used as an effective part of treatment for depression for some people. 150 minutes of moderate activity and/or 75 minutes of vigorous activity is recommended with possible greater benefit from being outdoors in green space. Activity also improves the tiredness and other symptoms of depression.



Physical activity and dementia

There is consistent evidence that physical activity in mid-life reduces the risk of dementia in later life by up to 30%. Leading a physically active lifestyle can also have a significant impact on the wellbeing of people with dementia. Physical activity improves the quality of life for people in all stages of the condition and may improve memory and slow down mental decline.

Evidence suggests that in adults with subjective memory impairment, a 6 month program of physical activity provided a modest improvement in cognition over an 18 month follow up period.

Physical activity and musculoskeletal problems

Osteoarthritis can cause pain and stiffness in joints. This is often accompanied by muscle weakness which can increase joint problems. There is good evidence that people who undertake moderate physical activity have a lower risk of developing osteoarthritis.

Regular moderate physical activity not only helps to prevent the development of osteoarthritis but also reduces pain and increases function in patients with existing hip or knee osteoarthritis and improves quality of life and confidence. Moderate activity also increases the quality of cartilage and muscle strength. The effect of physical activity on pain is similar to the treatment effect of non-steroid anti-inflammatory drugs (NSAID).

Lack of physical activity is also associated with low bone mineral density and increased risk of osteoporosis in later life. Women can lose up to 20% of their bone mass in the 5 to 7 years after menopause and this can result in higher incidence of osteoporotic fractures in women as compared to men. Regular aerobic, weight-bearing and resistance exercise training has been shown to have a positive effect on the bone mineral density of the spine in post-menopausal women. Walking is effective for hip bone mineral density .

Rheumatoid arthritis also causes inflammation, pain and swelling of joints. Overall, moderate levels of activity have no ill effects on joints and importantly it has a positive effect on reducing the risk of osteoporosis.

Staying physically active can both prevent and treat lower back pain. There is good evidence that physical activity can prevent lower back pain in asymptomatic individuals. There is moderate evidence that physical activity can prevent further recurrence of lower back pain.

Physical activity improves muscle strength, balance and coordination, all of which reduce the risk of someone falling. Being more active has consistently been proven to reduce the risk of falls by 30-50%.

The role of the health and social care professionals

The [NHS Five Year Forward View](#) highlights the importance of preventing ill health saying “*the future health of millions of children, the sustainability of the NHS, and the economic prosperity of Britain all now depend on a radical upgrade in prevention and public health. Twelve years ago Derek Wanless’ health review warned that ‘unless the country took prevention seriously we would be faced with a sharply rising burden of avoidable illness. That warning has not been heeded -and the NHS is on the hook for the consequences.’*

Given the huge importance of physical activity to people’s health and its role in maintaining independence, both health and social care professionals should consider how they can promote physical activity to the people they come in contact with. There is good evidence from [NICE guidelines](#) that there is an increase in the self-reported physical activity levels in people who received brief advice, or who were seen by primary care professionals trained to deliver brief advice.

Best practice involves staff identifying inactive people using a standard question and using a brief intervention to motivate patients to become more active. A brief intervention consists of:

- ★ Identifying the inactive patient and use your clinical judgement to assess suitability
- ★ Exploring how they might change their behaviour
- ★ Helping to find suitable activities locally
- ★ Goal setting, feedback and reinforcement.

Brief interventions are most effective when clinicians are involved, but can be carried out by different members of the healthcare team.

As this chapter has shown physical activity has very beneficial effects for a wide range of conditions and should be a routine part of the advice offered to patients and clients of health and social care services.

Creating Active Environments

Finding time to be active in our busy lives can be a challenge and success is more likely if we can incorporate being active into our daily routines such as travelling to work or the shops, or socialising with friends and family. Creating environments that help and encourage people to be more active as part of daily life doesn't just make people healthier, but also contributes to those areas being wealthier, safer, greener and friendlier.

Healthier

Urban design affects residents' levels of physical activity and therefore their health. Areas that encourage people to walk and cycle more for travel have healthier residents than areas where urban design doesn't encourage active travel. Urban sprawl encourages more car use and studies have shown that significant increases in urban sprawl cause an increase in health problems which is equivalent to the population ageing by 4 years.

Walking or cycling regularly is a great and simple way to stay healthy, and are activities that can be built into everyday life. According to the World Health Organisation Economic Assessment Tool (HEAT), if all adults in Buckinghamshire walked for 30 minutes every day, this would lead to a reduction in death rates across the population of 14%. If we could encourage all Buckinghamshire adults to undertake an average of 30 minutes of cycling every day, this would lead to a reduction in the risk of death across the population by 21%. So the message seems to be - burn calories not carbon!

Wealthier

People, who walk, cycle or use public transport to travel into town tend to spend more money in shopping streets than car users. Promoting walking and cycling can boost trading by up to 40%. Walkability and easy proximity to local shops and services is associated with higher property values. Improvements to the design and maintenance of streets that encourage people to walk and cycle can increase property values and retail rents by up to 30%.

Delays from congestion have been estimated to cost £10.9 billion per year in England and the best way of reducing congestion is to help people switch from cars to other modes of transport, such as public transport, cycling and walking.

Safer

Active cities have less crime and fewer pedestrian and cyclist injuries. Marked bicycle lanes can reduce vehicle-bicycle collisions by up to 50%.



Greener

Air pollution has a significant public health impact in the UK with an effect equivalent to 29,000 deaths a year. The main cost of air pollution comes from the impact on health, which was estimated to be between £8.5 billion and £20.2 billion a year in England in 2009.

Exposure to high levels of particulate matter from vehicle exhausts and other sources in the air we breathe (eg during short term pollution episodes) can exacerbate lung and heart conditions, significantly affecting quality of life and increasing deaths and hospital admissions. Children, the elderly and those with pre-existing lung and cardiovascular disease are known to be more susceptible to the health impacts from air pollution.

In Buckinghamshire, 5.3% of all adult (30+ years) deaths every year can be attributed to particulate air pollution which amounts to around 205 deaths. This is similar to the England average of 5.3% and the south east regional average of 5.2%. This varies across the district council areas in Buckinghamshire, from 5.1% in Aylesbury Vale to 5.8% in South Buckinghamshire.

Air pollution also causes significant damage to the environment. Car travel is estimated to cost £1.2 to £3.7 billion due to greenhouse gas emissions (2009). Short car journeys of less than 5 miles account for 20% of all car-related carbon dioxide emissions. Encouraging people to walk or cycle for some of these journeys will help reduce air pollution.

Friendlier

Active environments strengthen communities by connecting residents with one another. People who live in environments that encourage people to walk or cycle rather than use the car and are active outdoors have a stronger sense of community and feel more positive about the places they live. Attractive open public spaces encourage people to use those spaces and can help reduce loneliness and improve social integration.

The benefits of green space

Giving everyone the opportunity to enjoy greater access to safe, green spaces and reconnect with nature has multiple benefits for physical and mental health at all ages from the earliest years to old age.

Many studies have shown the importance of incorporating green spaces e.g. parks, tree-lined streets and green communal spaces into the design of towns, cities and housing developments.

In addition, access to “blue spaces” e.g. open water, streams, ponds, canals, rivers is also good for health and wellbeing, and although there are currently fewer studies, blue space also appears to have a positive effect on mental wellbeing.

Studies have shown that those living near green spaces are more likely to be physically active and that the presence of nature influences perception and motivation for physical activity. People make more walking trips to shops or cafes when they perceive there are many natural features along the route including roadside trees. In less green neighbourhoods people judge distances to be further than they actually are which may discourage walking.



The creation or improvement of a park or open spaces was shown to lead to a 25% increase in nearby residents exercising on 3 or more days a week and a 48% increase in physical activity. Physical activity in green spaces appears to offer additional health benefits compared to physical activity in indoor settings with a greater positive effect on mental health.

Another study estimated that every 10% increase in green space is associated with a reduction in disease equivalent to gain of 5 years of life.

The presence of green spaces in urban areas can also help reduce health inequalities. Urban green spaces offer a free, accessible environment in which to be active to those who cannot afford to pay for leisure activities. A study across England showed that people who lived closer to greener environments had death rates 25% lower than people living further from green spaces even after taking account other factors such as income and deprivation.

Studies have found the health benefits of urban green spaces are most marked among the elderly, housewives and people from lower socio-economic groups.

Benefits of green space at different ages

Children

The ability to participate in outdoor play is one of the most important social benefits of green spaces for children and young people. Open spaces enable children to develop imagination and creativity and interact with the natural environment. Play enables children to socialise and meet others from different backgrounds, bridging cultural and socio-economic divides. Adventurous outdoor play such as climbing, rough and tumble play, and exploring improves children's physical health while also helping them develop creativity, social skills and resilience. Playing in green spaces has also been found to lessen the symptoms for children with attention deficit hyperactivity disorder (ADHD).



Green spaces also offer opportunities for teenagers to be more active. Physical activity levels decline in girls at adolescence. Studies have found that girls participated in more non-school physical activity if nearby parks with shaded areas were available. Girls' activity rates more than doubled in areas conducive to walking.

There is also an association between exposure to green spaces at school and cognitive development in primary school children. Researchers found that exposure to green spaces within and around schools promoted enhanced mental abilities and also reduced inattentiveness.

Green spaces also have benefits for the health of economically disadvantaged children where studies have found that children living in areas with more green space were less likely to be obese and overweight than children living in areas with less green space over a 2 year period.

Adults

Exposure to green spaces and the natural environment also benefits adults. Adults living in areas with the highest levels of greenery were 3 times as likely to be physically active and 40% less likely to be overweight and obese than those living in the least green settings.

Studies have shown that exposure to green spaces improves mental wellbeing and reduces stress. For example residents living in housing with nearby trees and grass were more able to cope with major life issues compared to those with homes surrounded by concrete. Clinical studies have shown that within 5 minutes of viewing a nature setting positive changes occur in blood pressure, heart rate, muscle tension and brain activity occur and that people who walked in a nature reserve

showed a fall in blood pressure and also reported an increase in positive emotions. In people with depression exercising in natural environments was associated with greater feelings of positivity, increased energy and decreases in tension, confusion, anger and depression compared to being indoors. Caring for the natural landscape improves self-reported health and depressive symptoms especially in mid-life volunteers. Outdoor activities also improve exposure to sunlight which is important for strong bones and improving sleep. Studies have also shown that having views of nearby nature can improve worker productivity and reduce stress.

Older people

Physical activity improves the health and wellbeing of older people. Research has shown that older people who lived near parks, tree-lined streets and space for taking walks showed greater longevity over a 5 year period. Studies in Japan of forest walking have found that this boosted immunity, lowered stress indicators and reduced depression.



Studies have also shown potential benefits of gardening for healthy ageing as physical health was better and perceived stress levels decreased significantly among those aged 50-88 years who maintained a community garden plot compared to those who exercised indoors.

People with dementia who have access to gardens have improved socialisation and sleep, less agitation and are less likely to display aggression or experience injuries. Quality of life measures for people with dementia, their families and staff appear to improve at long term care facilities with therapeutic gardens.

Benefits of green space to communities

Strong social ties in a community are good for the people that live there. Communities where residents have high levels of community trust and connectedness have better health on a range of indicators. Neighbourhoods lacking positive social connections have higher rates of social disorder, anxiety and depression and crime. Children and young people in close-knit communities are less likely to participate in health harming behaviours. Older people with strong social connections have lower rates of early death, reduced suicide rates, less fear of crime and better physical health.



Well designed environments can facilitate the building of well-connected communities. Good natural landscaping encourages greater use of outdoor areas by residents and well managed green common spaces are very important in promoting the development of social ties.

Studies have shown that more social activities occurred in green common spaces than treeless spaces of the same size. Older adults who have more exposure to green common spaces report a stronger sense of unity among residents and a stronger sense of belonging to the neighbourhood.

There is less graffiti, vandalism and littering in outdoor spaces with natural landscapes than in comparable plant-less spaces and residents in these areas also report fewer acts of domestic aggression, property crime and violence.

What works?

We can encourage people to be more active by making sure that the environment they live in makes this easy and appealing and by addressing any barriers to being active. Attractive, safe, welcoming and accessible environments which are traffic free, e.g. tree lined streets and parks encourages physical activity, walking and cycling. Conversely neglected streets, playgrounds and public spaces, may stop people from wanting to use these areas.

Other barriers to physical activity include a lack of confidence to cycle, particularly if there are no designated cycle lanes and lack of suitable places to lock up bicycles or wash and change upon arrival at school or work .

It is important to create liveable, green developments that prioritise walking and cycling by considering the design of the environment, the open public spaces and how people move around the community. Providing practical support such as information about the options (including public transport links to support longer journeys), routes, cycle parking and individual support is essential.

Public Health England, in collaboration with University College London Institute of Health Equity, has outlined what works to increase access to areas of green space:

- ★ **Creating new areas of green space and improving the quality of existing green spaces**
- ★ **Increasing accessibility and engagement:**
Innovative strategies to encourage people to try green spaces and motivate them to venture outdoors can help to improve usage of green space.
- ★ **Increasing the use of good quality green space for all social groups**

How are we doing in Buckinghamshire?

Active Travel

Buckinghamshire has high levels of car ownership and car travel. 87% of households have access to one or more cars compared to 82% in the South East and 74% nationally. Since the 2001 census, there has been an increase in the ownership of vehicles with more households owning four or more cars and a decrease in those owning only one car. In Buckinghamshire only 13% of households don't have access to a car compared with 27% nationally, reflecting the economic affluence and rural nature of much of the county.

According to the 2011 Census, the majority of journeys to work in Buckinghamshire are made by car. Approximately 43% of people travel to work by car, higher than the national average of 35%.

Driving to work by car has increased by 8% since 2001; however, there has also been an increase in use of other transport modes for journeys to work with use of public transport seeing a significant increase of 35% and a modest increase in cycling and walking of 6%. Buckinghamshire has only 6% of people travelling to work by sustainable transport compared to 9% in the South East region. Data from 2013-14 shows that Buckinghamshire has similar rates of adults cycling once per week for recreational purposes to the South East average (6.5% compared to 6.4%); but lower rates of adults cycling once a week for utility purposes (3.8% compared to 5.6%). For utility purposes, rates of cycling are highest in Wycombe and lowest in Chiltern (5.4% and 2.1%) and for recreational purposes, rates are highest in South Buckinghamshire and lowest in Wycombe (10.3% and 4.6%).

Schools across the county are encouraged to promote safe and sustainable travel to pupils and families on the school journey through a variety of ways. School travel planning work has led to an increase in active travel on the school journey from 40% in 2010 to 54% in 2014.

Buckinghamshire County Council and the 4 District Councils work closely together to try to ensure all new developments encourage safe walking, cycling and physical activity.

Examples of this include cycle routes around Marlow, along the Aylesbury Arm of the Grand Union

Canal, work on the High Wycombe to Bourne End Bridleway and planning to ensure appropriate access and facilities for walkers and cyclists at the new railway station at Winslow.

The cycle network across the county continues to grow, ranging from on-road routes such as the Chilterns Cycleway and Sustrans National Cycle Network to the Gemstone Routes off-road network which covers Aylesbury Town.

Councillor Mark Shaw, Cabinet Member for Transportation says *“Cycling and walking are key modes of travel for shorter journeys, not only to improve the health and wellbeing of our residents but also to help reduce congestion and the negative impact on air quality within Buckinghamshire. We are working hard to promote and facilitate increased walking and cycling through providing new and improved infrastructure, training and incentives. We have recently secured government funding which will see over £3 million of new shared used paths implemented over the next 2 years to create safe routes to rail stations. We have a number of other exciting bids in development and hope to deliver even more positive schemes in the future to help ensure that walking and cycling become a regular form of people’s daily travel behaviour”.*

Green spaces in Buckinghamshire

Buckinghamshire has a rich and varied landscape offering lots of opportunities to be active in beautiful surroundings. This includes the Chilterns Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty, the Colne Valley Regional Park and the rolling scenery of the Vale of Aylesbury and several Royal Hunting Forests e.g. Bernwood Forest and Whaddon Chase. Opportunities to be active in “blue spaces” include the River Thames and Grand Union Canal.

There are over 3000 kms (2000 miles) of public footpaths, bridleways and byways, in Buckinghamshire and over 800 acres of beautiful park land in our country parks. Currently only 28.8% of Buckinghamshire residents aged 16+ access areas of local green space for health and/or exercise reasons. Due to the wealth of opportunities across Buckinghamshire to access green space, there is clearly scope to increase this proportion through accessible, attractive, fun opportunities to be active locally and publicising more widely the opportunities that already exist.



Councillor Warren Whyte, Cabinet Member for Planning and Environment says *“Being a rural county with the Chilterns Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty at its heart, Buckinghamshire has a lot of green space for its residents to enjoy.*

We have an abundance of green infrastructure ranging from formal parks, Rights of Way, canals and rivers, and we are working to ensure that these are well-connected to communities so that they are easily accessible. We are working very closely with developers so that new developments across Buckinghamshire incorporate active environments within their design, and also link into existing green spaces which surround them. It is vital that our residents have the opportunity to lead active lifestyles, our current (and future) green infrastructure across the county provides the environment for this to happen.”

Green space means health project

People living in the most deprived urban areas are less likely to live near green spaces and may therefore have fewer opportunities to experience the health benefits of green space compared with people living in less deprived areas.

The Buckinghamshire and Milton Keynes Natural Environment Partnership (NEP) worked with the Buckinghamshire Public Health Team and key officers from each of the district councils, to develop a project to help increase use of green spaces in urban areas in Buckinghamshire. Three areas of green space were selected: Aylesbury Riverside Walk (Aylesbury), Windsor Road Recreation Ground (Chesham), Gomms Wood Local Nature Reserve and Highfield and Hangingcroft Woods (High Wycombe).

Working with residents, the sites were assessed to highlight strengths and opportunities for improvement. Key points raised by local residents to increase usage included:

- ★ Improved awareness of local opportunities to be more active
- ★ Increased opportunities to be active in the green spaces that enable increased community cohesion (e.g. community events) and increased physical activity
- ★ Increased provision in the green spaces that enable residents to be more active in their own time (e.g. measured distance markers; activity trails)
- ★ Encourage greater walking and cycling as a means to access the green spaces and as part of group activities starting from/ending at/within local green spaces
- ★ Continue to engage local residents around key areas of green space to ensure provision continues to reflect local need
- ★ Deliver activities that provide tailored approaches to engaging specific inactive groups
- ★ Local action plans have been developed for each area, some of which will be addressed through the Active Bucks project (see Active Communities, page 42).

Opportunities to be active outdoors in Buckinghamshire

There are many opportunities to be active outdoors in Buckinghamshire suitable for a wide range of preferences and abilities only a few are highlighted below.

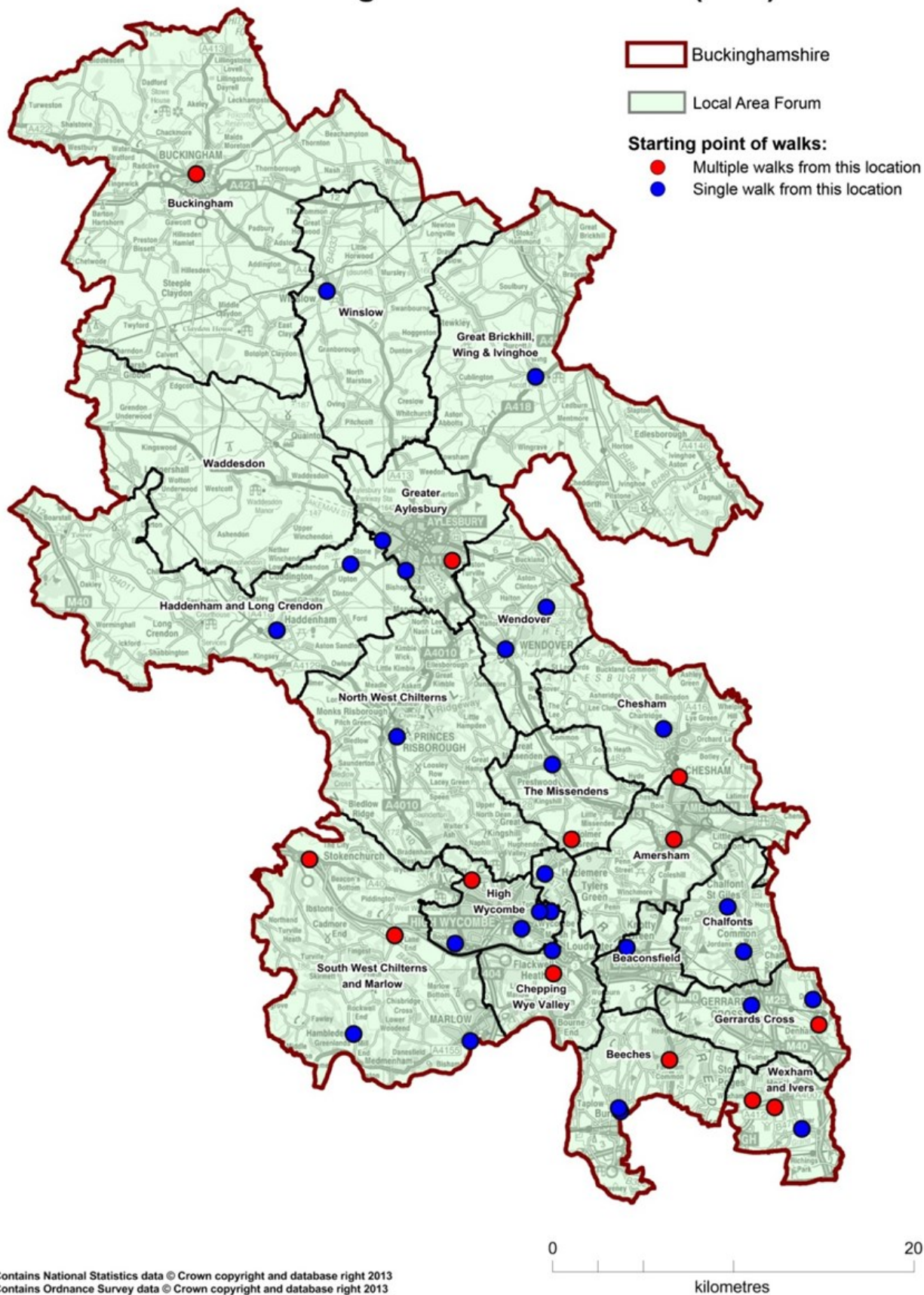
Simply Walk

Walking has been described as near perfect exercise. It is free, acceptable to most people, requires no special equipment, can be incorporated into everyday life and has significant health benefits. Simply Walk is a programme of over 60 volunteer-led health walks for adults in order to get them active and connect with other people. The walks run throughout the year with over 500 walkers taking part every week. Between 1st April 2014 and 31st March 2015 2,260 people walked with Simply Walk - a 6% increase on the previous year.

Approximately a quarter of Simply Walk participants are aged 45-64 years and half are over 65 years old.

The following map shows where the walks are located (start points) in relation to the 19 Local Area Forum (LAF) areas across Buckinghamshire. More information can be found on the Simply Walk webpage (www.bucksc.gov.uk/simplywalk) and several new walks will be starting as part of the Active Bucks project in the following 7 LAF areas, to take place in venues and on days/times that don't duplicate existing walks: Chepping Wye Valley, Great Brickhill, Wing and Ivinghoe, High Wycombe, The Chalfonts, Waddesdon, Wendover, Winslow.

Buckinghamshire Simply Walk Locations showing Local Area Forums (LAF) Boundaries



Simply Walk in Buckinghamshire

Simply Walk—Julia's story

"I had long wanted to express my appreciation for the Simply Walk programme. Three years ago I was fit and active, in work and a member of the Ramblers, walking 7-10 miles every Sunday. In April 2013 I injured my back and have been off work since then, having to resign from my job last summer as I was (and still am) unable to sit down without considerable pain and discomfort.

Since the injury I became incredibly depressed, frightened and in pain, spending most of my time housebound and lying down. However one day last April, feeling slightly better I tentatively joined the Tuesday Bedgrove Health Walk (wearing my TENS machine) I was made very welcome, and continued with these walks for a few weeks until progressing to the Friday ones and also the Wendover, Stone and Haddenham ones.

Sometime after than I was able to join some of the shorter ramblers' walks. I still have pain, which fluctuates, but my general wellbeing has improved greatly. The benefits of walking in the countryside and the friendship of the other walkers all contribute to this. All the leaders are very kind, caring and welcoming and I am extremely grateful.

So again, many thanks for such a brilliant scheme."



Simply Walk—Jean's story

"By taking such an interest I feel you have given me back a bit of myself. Having a chronic illness and being severely deaf with the horrible tinnitus noise in my head can be very isolating. Walking helps me relax too and I forget the noise.

As I told you I think a walk helps us mentally as well as physically and my spirits were lifted by people taking an interest in the poetry. We forget our problems and get stronger at the same time."

Chiltern Rangers

Chiltern Rangers delivers practical woodland management and advice in Buckinghamshire. The scheme works with local communities to conserve and enhance the local environment. It operates in and around the Chilterns Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty. The programme manages 13 woodlands, including 3 Local Nature Reserves for Wycombe District Council.

The scheme benefits the volunteers, communities and the environment. Studies have shown that volunteers benefit from improved physical and mental health and it can help improve employment prospects. Communities benefit from an improved natural environment and reduced flooding risk.

There are many opportunities to volunteer with Chiltern Rangers, for example: working in practical conservation, office administration, marketing, social media and other areas. If you would like to volunteer some of your time please visit <http://www.chilternrangers.co.uk/>.



Chiltern Rangers volunteers in woodlands (Source: Chilterns Rangers)

Lindengate

Lindengate is a Buckinghamshire-based charity that offers specialised gardening activities from their base in Wendover to help those with mental health needs in their continuing recovery. Lindengate offers a wide range of gardening/horticulture activities so that users can spend time in a managed, calm and safe environment, either singly or in small groups, working towards recovery.

Alongside professional and self-referrals, Lindengate actively recruits volunteers to support service delivery. More information can be found by visiting: <http://www.lindengate.org.uk>



(Source: Lindengate website photo courtesy of <http://davidpoolephotographer.com/>)

Berks, Bucks and Oxon Wildlife Trust

The Berks, Bucks & Oxon Wildlife Trust protects wildlife and enhances iconic landscapes across the three counties. They look after 86 nature reserves, run events, speak up for wildlife and inspire thousands of children to discover the joys of the natural world.

Many of the opportunities on offer involve being physically active, including work on allotments with local communities, conservation activity and cycling.

More information can be found on their website: <http://www.bbowt.org.uk/>



Pond Dipping with Berks, Bucks and Oxon Wildlife Trust, by Robert Lewis

Walking Football

Walking football is aimed at those who are over 55 years of age. It has the same rules as normal football, except players are not allowed to run. The game relies on accurate passing, good positional play, and strong tactical knowledge.

Walking football takes place in various locations across Buckinghamshire and, along with details of other activities, can be found by visiting the Leap website and accessing their online activity search – www.leapwithus.org.uk.



(Source: Image from the Department of Health and Make Sport Fun <http://www.makesportfun.com>)

Parkrun

Parkrun are fun, free weekly events organized by volunteers. They are open to everyone and are safe and easy to take part in. The course is 5000 m (5 km) long. Park Runs are available in: Aylesbury, Buckingham, Rushmere, Wycombe Rye and Black Park. Further information is available on <http://www.parkrun.org.uk/buckingham/>.

Junior Parkrun is a series of 2 km runs for children aged 4 to 14 years old held in areas of open space around the UK. They are open to all, free, and are safe and easy to take part in. The courses are marshalled so that children will be in sight of at least one marshal at all times. Junior Parkrun takes place in Buckingham and Aylesbury.

Further information can be found by contacting Buckingham-juniorsoffice@parkrun.com and aylesbury-juniorsoffice@parkrun.com.

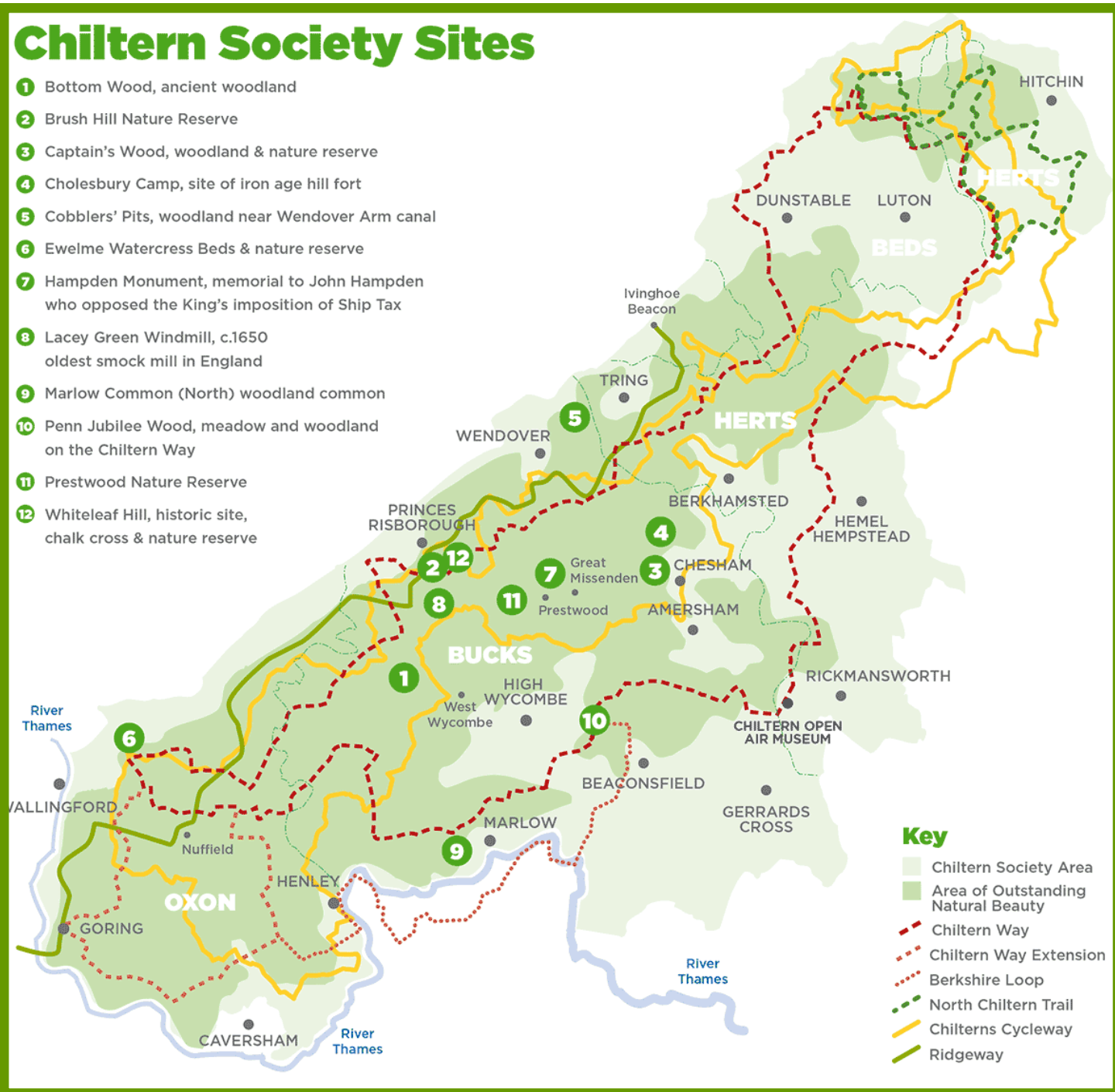


(Source: R. Denley)

For more details of physical activity opportunities in Buckinghamshire visit the Leap website www.leapwithus.org.uk.

Chilterns Cycleway project

The Chilterns Cycleway is a 170 mile (274 km) circular route in the Chilterns Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty, linking attractions, market towns and places of interest. The route is on road, mostly on quiet lanes and clearly signposted to encourage cycling amongst the population.



(Source: Chilterns Cycleway 2015)

Active Communities

We know that one of the best ways to get more people more active is if it becomes part of the fabric of everyday life and part of the “social norm” in all communities. To do this takes time and a huge shift in attitudes but change on such a scale is possible. To change attitudes and behaviour at a local level it is crucial that we involve all communities in Buckinghamshire. The evidence shows that the best ways to achieve sustainable change is to listen to the ideas of residents and involve them in helping to design solutions to increase activity levels.

Different communities across Buckinghamshire have different health needs and aspirations and so as far as possible we need tailored solutions for each community. If we want to change behaviours in communities we also know the most successful agents of change are those from the communities themselves.

This evidence has guided the approach to the design of our Active Bucks programme which aims to get more people engaged in physical activities in the communities in which they live.

Councillor Martin Phillips, Cabinet Member for Community Engagement and Public Health says *“I’m a firm believer in the strength of our communities and the importance of physical activity so I’m delighted to be supporting a community oriented approach to improving physical activity in Buckinghamshire. Being more active is one of the best things we can do for ourselves, our families and our communities so I would urge our residents to get out there and have some fun being active. I would also encourage people to join in the activities we have commissioned as part of the Active Bucks project and even volunteer to be community champions for physical activity.”*

Active Bucks

The Active Bucks programme aims to increase levels of activity in all communities in Buckinghamshire, particularly the least active. It aims to harness the ideas of local residents about what would work in their community to help more people to be more active and respond to these ideas by commissioning more local opportunities to be active.



It also provides residents with opportunities to become more involved in helping people become more active by becoming community champions for activity. Community champions receive training and can help promote activities in their local area or even volunteer to lead activities if they wish.

The first phase of the programme took place from May to September 2015 when we worked closely with our 19 Local Area Forums (LAFs – see map page 36) and other partners across Buckinghamshire to ask local residents about their levels of activity, what currently stops them being as active as they could be and what would help get them more active. A process of asset mapping was also undertaken to identify existing assets in each LAF area so that we could build on these.

The residents’ ideas were then used to help decide on what new activities would be delivered in each of the 19 local areas.

Between May and September 2015, 2,063 residents were engaged through surveys and conversations at interactive workshops and public events. A wide range of people responded the following infographic shows the breakdown of age groups of those who responded.



19% of respondents had a disability or long term condition. 16% responding said they did less than 30 minutes physical activity a week and 55% did more than 30 minutes but less than the recommended 150 minutes a week.

When we asked residents what was stopping them being more active more than 90% of residents said access to suitable opportunities was a barrier, more than two thirds of residents said time was a barrier and more than 60% of residents said cost was a barrier. Residents also identified potential solutions to these issues. Residents suggestions for improving access included more information about local activities, more activities for beginners, activities that welcome new people, activities with people of own age/ability and activities that helped with childcare. The most popular solutions addressing time barriers were shorter activities and activities after 5pm and to address cost were low cost activities and pay as you go activities. This information was used to commission the new activities.

One of the main aims for this project is to encourage inactive people (ie those undertaking less than 30 minutes activity per week) to be more active, as this is where the greatest health gains can be made. The solutions identified by this group were similar to the findings overall. This group identified that shorter activities and those happening after 5pm, low cost activities and pay as you go activities and activities aimed at beginners would be of most value.



The top 5 activities residents said they would like to participate in were community group walks, activities in the park, yoga/pilates, dance, and swimming. The top 5 were similar among different groups but inactive residents also favoured community led cycling rides. Black and minority ethnic groups also favoured a similar top 5 with the addition of community gardening and conservation. The top 5 activities young people would like to engage in were team sports, activities in the park, swimming, martial arts/self defence and running/jogging group sessions.

The top 5 motivations cited by residents for being more active were to feel fitter, get healthier, enjoyment/fun, feel better about myself and lose weight. The top 3 motivations for young people were enjoyment/fun, get healthier and opportunity to meet others.

The Active Bucks programme has a multi-agency steering group that includes District Councils, Buckinghamshire County Council transport, social care and communities services and our County Sports Partnership Leap to help ensure we can maximise the opportunities to get residents moving more and feeling great.

Based on residents' responses, each LAF has chosen activities to be delivered in its area. The table below sets out the activities identified that will start from May 2016 in each area:

LAF	Chosen Activity
Amersham	Activities for children and young people
Beaconsfield	Activities for children and young people
Beeches	Walking football
	Tea dance
Buckingham	Activity in the parks
Chepping Wye Valley	Community group walks
Chesham and Chiltern Villages	Activity in the parks
Gerrards Cross and Denham	Yoga/Pilates
	Community group walks
Great Brickhill, Wing and Ivinghoe	Community group walks
Greater Aylesbury	Activity in the parks
Haddenham and Long Crendon	Activities for children and young people
High Wycombe	Community group walks
	Activity in the parks
North West Chilterns	Dance
SW Chilterns and Marlow	Gentle exercise (yoga/pilates/tai chi/seated)
The Chalfonts	Community group walks
The Missendens	Activity in the parks
Waddesdon	Community group walks
Wendover	Community group walks
Wexham and Ivers	Activity in the parks
Winslow and District	Community group walks
	Yoga/Pilates

In addition to the LAF activities above, based on the feedback from residents and the strong evidence base for increasing physical activity through better use of local green spaces, there will be a range of fun and engaging projects delivered from May 2016 to September 2017 with a focus on green spaces.

Details of all activities will be available on the Active Bucks pages of the Buckinghamshire County Council website, as well as on the [Leap online activity search](#). More information about the Active Bucks project can be found by visiting www.buckscc.gov.uk/activebucks

To help us engage less active residents in physical activity, we also carried out two projects funded by the Department for Communities and Local Government. One project worked with people aged 60-70 years and the second project worked with Asian women to identify key messages that people from these communities thought would help encourage their peers to be more physically active and these messages will be used to help promote physical activity to these groups.

There are many other opportunities for people to be active in Buckinghamshire and we cannot provide an exhaustive list in this report. Leap www.leapwithus.org.uk has a list of searchable opportunities and District Councils also have a key role in providing sport and leisure opportunities to residents.

Other opportunities to be active

District Councils:

Aylesbury Vale

Aylesbury Vale District Council (AVDC) offers a wide range of opportunities to be more active, whether through their 3 local leisure centres, or various projects to engage key target groups.

Their broad offer can be found at:

<https://www.aylesburyvaledc.gov.uk/section/sports-clubs>

AVDC were successful in securing funding from Sport England to deliver the 3 year Active Vale project - helping women and girls aged 14-40 across the Vale to be more active, more often. Based on local research undertaken, Active Vale will deliver a range of activities across the area starting with netball, swimming and gym-based activity from early 2016.

More information can be found at:

<https://www.aylesburyvaledc.gov.uk/active-vale-active-women>

Chiltern and South Bucks

Chiltern District Council and South Bucks District Council, through Greenwich Leisure Limited (GLL), deliver a number of opportunities for residents to engage in regular physical activity. Whether it is at their 7 local leisure centres, team sports, extreme sports or activities for older people, there is something for everyone.

GLL also offer exercise referral programmes for patients with a long term health condition, and support residents aged 65+ that have had a fall through use of Postural Stability Instructors as part of the Better Balance programme.

More information can be found at:

<http://www.chiltern.gov.uk/article/897/Sport-Physical-Activity-and-Leisure>

Wycombe

Wycombe District Council offer a range of opportunities for residents to get active, including through their 4 local leisure centres (including the brand new Wycombe Leisure Centre) and a wide range of provision offered by Active-In, a team commissioned by Wycombe District Council to increase activity levels of residents across the district.

One element offered by Active-In is their support to local sport and activity providers, particularly through their Sport Education Week which supports the sport and physical activity workforce across Wycombe.

More information can be found at:

<http://www.wycombe.gov.uk/council-services/leisure-and-culture/sports.aspx>

Summary and Recommendations

It is clear from this report that if we could increase physical activity levels across Buckinghamshire there would be a huge range of benefits to residents' health and quality of life, communities, businesses, the environment and the taxpayer. Buckinghamshire would be healthier, happier, wealthier, safer and greener.

To increase physical activity we need action across a wide range of organisations and settings in Buckinghamshire – local government, the NHS, schools and colleges, businesses, communities and residents themselves. We need to ensure that we promote physical activity at all ages starting in the earliest years and right through to old age. It is particularly important to encourage those who are inactive (doing less than 30 minutes physical activity a week) to become more active as this group will see the greatest benefit.

My recommendations to help achieve this are set out below and will form the basis for ongoing discussions with partners about how we can bring about the best results for the residents of Buckinghamshire.

Recommendations

Active environments

Local government and partners should work to ensure that:

- ★ We make active travel a safe and attractive option for Buckinghamshire residents so they can easily build being active into their busy lives
- ★ The design of the built environment promotes physical activity for all ages and abilities including provision of safe green spaces for play and recreation close to where people live
- ★ New housing developments should be designed to promote physical activity and active travel
- ★ Green spaces in urban areas are maintained or improved, especially in areas where there is poorer access to high quality green space and higher health needs
- ★ Opportunities to be active throughout Buckinghamshire are widely promoted to residents and visitors.

Active communities

- ★ Continue to work with communities to explore how best to make physical activity part of the social “norm” for that community, ensuring community ownership and engagement that can help bring about the changes needed.

Communities can also help by supporting and participating in local activities to help ensure they are sustainable. People can also become physical activity Community Champions as part of the Active Bucks programme to help promote physical activity opportunities in their community.

More information on Community Champions is available at:

<http://www.buckscc.gov.uk/community-champions>

- ★ Local organisations and other bodies such as housing trusts and parish councils should consider whether there are more ways they could help their communities be more active.

Children and young people

- ★ Buckinghamshire County Council, early years centres and schools should continue to work together to ensure all settings are able to deliver physical literacy skills to 3-7 year old children.
- ★ Buckinghamshire County Council should continue to work with young people and their families, schools and other partners to ensure more children and young people are physically active particularly in the teenage years.

Working age adults

- ★ Local businesses and employers should explore whether they could help more employees become more active e.g. through increasing active travel, greater awareness of opportunities to be active, participation in the Workplace Challenge initiative or by volunteering to support community activities. NHS organisations and local government as very significant local employers have a key role in this area.

Older adults

- ★ Local organisations should continue to develop more opportunities for older adults to access regular group-based physical activity opportunities as a vital way to maintain health and independence and social networks.
- ★ Ensure design of the built environment supports older people to be more active.
- ★ Ensure that more residential care settings develop more opportunities for older adults to participate in regular evidence based physical activity that will help prevent falls and maintain physical and mental health.
- ★ Social care services and commissioners should consider how best to support frontline staff in encouraging older people to be more active.

Health services

Ensure the promotion of physical activity is a major part of the “radical upgrade in prevention” that the NHS has to deliver by:

- ★ Ensuring physical activity is a key part of the care planning discussions with patients and that patients can be signposted to appropriate local physical activity opportunities
- ★ Commissioning clinical services that offer consistent physical activity advice as part of the treatment discussions with patients including services for people with diabetes, heart disease, cancer and musculoskeletal conditions
- ★ Continuing to commission appropriate clinical services such as cardiac rehabilitation and pulmonary rehabilitation with evidence based physical activity components.
- ★ Ensure appropriate training for the workforce to ensure they are skilled and confident in brief behaviour change advice, motivational interviewing and providing advice about physical activity to the people they are caring for.

Residents

- ★ Residents should consider how they could build more activity into their daily routine to reap the benefits of a more active life.

