

Newcastle-under-Lyme Active Lifestyles Strategy 2023 to 2028

Foreword

Being physically active can give a huge boost to our health and wellbeing. We want to work together to ensure people of all ages in our Borough have the opportunity to access informal and organised activity.

The provision of active spaces is not just about providing high quality leisure facilities but spaces in our communities where our residents can enjoy activity. We want to support residents to make choices to actively travel and take part in active leisure. Whether this is walking the dog or taking the children to the playground.

Within the borough there are a wide range of public and private facilities which people can benefit from. We want to work in partnership to ensure these facilities are good quality and residents have the choice of leisure activity. The Council has supported the Community with the reopening of Kidsgrove Sports Centre and is working with a range of sporting groups to utilise our community assets.

We welcome this strategy to outline how we will work with our communities and partners to deliver opportunities.

From Cllr Tagg and Cllr Waring

Council Plan

The Council Plan 2022-2026 sets out the Council's priorities:

- One Council Delivering for Local People
- A Successful and Sustainable Growing Borough
- Healthy, Active and Safe Communities
- Town Centre for All

With one of the outcomes that Everyone has the opportunity to be active, healthy and fulfilled.

We will ensure everyone enjoys a safe environment and access to a wide range of facilities and activities to support and improve their health and quality of life.

Our Successes over the last 4 years have included:

Delivered the refurbishment and reopening of Kidsgrove Sports Centre. The centre has been transferred to a local trust and is now once again serving the community.

Delivered a new BMX Pump Track and new 3G football pitches in Kidsgrove for community use.

Delivered improvement to Jubilee 2, including the renewal of all gym equipment and addressing legacy issues concerning build quality, ready to support more residents in achieving their fitness goals. Development of the Wellness Hub with assisted exercise machines to support a range of customers with health needs.

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Worked in partnership to deliver the Queens Baton Relay events as part of the Commonwealth Games celebrations.

Established a robust school swimming service, after the cancellation of the County service.

The first Local authority to be Water Wellbeing accredited leading to being a finalist in Swim England Awards and awards for the Health Impacts of the Good Boost programme.

Exercise and mindful movement programme accessible to all set up for the Covid pandemic and now available to local residents and beyond

Installation of the Poolview drowning detection system increasing safety and resulting in revenue savings of circa £60,000 per year.

Successful pilot of the long covid programme to deliver health outcomes

GP referral scheme established for the NHS Cardiac Team

Successful delivery of the SPACE programme in partnership with the Police to deliver outcomes relating to anti-social behaviour and youth engagement

Secured funding from the Lawn tennis Association to enhance tennis facilities at Westland's Tennis Centre and Wolstanton Park.

Improved insight concerning the delivery of services through Sport England's Moving Communities platform.

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Intro

Overall Benefits of an active lifestyle

Active leisure involving physical activity delivers health and well-being benefits to the individual. There are many different type of active lifestyles and this strategy seeks to support our residents to take part in activity of their choice to support them having a more healthy lifestyle. It is also recognised that when people are able to have an active lifestyle then they are more likely to have a happier lifestyle.

Regular exercise can reduce the risks of significant health issues including dementia, depression, diabetes and some cancers. It also boosts self-esteem and mood, improves sleep quality and energy levels, reducing the risk of chronic stress.

The impacts of a healthy active lifestyle not only benefit the individual but have wider social economic benefits to employers, and the health sector as a whole.

Working together

The Council is a direct provider of facilities to support residents to have an active lifestyle, however the provision of centres including gyms, sports halls and informal recreation is also delivered by a wide range of private companies and sporting groups, many of whom are charities or community led.

This strategy sets out ow the Council seeks to increase participation both through direct provision and working together with other organisations.

Borough Profile

The Borough of Newcastle-under-Lyme is the most northerly part of Staffordshire which includes pockets of severe deprivation. This district covers some 81.5 square miles with a population of 123,399 according to the 2021 census. The main urban areas are Newcastle-under-Lyme and Kidsgrove.

Key statistics 2021:

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| Female 51% Male 49% | The largest age band is 40-59 year olds | 64.4 % of adults class themselves as physically active | 36.7% of year 6 pupils are over weight or obese |
| 69.2% of adults are overweight or obese | Life expectancy females 81.4 males 78.7 years | 80.1 % describe their health as either good or very good | 20.1% residents class themselves as being disabled |

Some headline facts about sport and physical activity in the Borough.

Nationally Sport England undertakes two surveys per year, Active Lives Adult, (16 years +) and Active Lives Children and Young People (5-16 years), which is published annually. Both give a unique and comprehensive view of how people are getting active at a local and national level. For the borough of Newcastle under Lyme the latest survey identified

Children aged 5-16

Physical activity levels

- 42.75% are physically active on average for 60 minutes or more per day
- 22.70% are physically active on average for 30-59 minutes per day
- 34.70% are physically active less than 30 minutes per day

Swimming ability

- 60.41% are able to swim 25 metres unaided

Attitude towards sport and physical activity

- 74.4% find exercise and sport easy (3- 11 years)
- 80.8% feel confident when they exercise or play sport (3-11 years)
- 100% understand why exercise and sport is good for them (3-11 years)

Volunteering

- 17.9% have volunteered at a sport club at least twice in the past twelve months

Adults 16 years and over

Participation sport and physical activity

- 59.5% are physically active for over 150 minutes per week (Active)
- 11.6% are physically active for 30-149 minutes per week (Fairly active)
- 28.8% do less than 30 minutes of physical activity per week (Inactive)

Volunteering in sport

- 12.8% of the population regularly volunteer in sport

Attitudes and motivation to sport and physical activity

- 70.11% feel that sport and exercise is enjoyable and satisfying
- 74.10 % feel that sport and exercise is important to them
- 66.4% feel that they have the opportunity to be physically active
- 61.6 % exercise to relax and worry less about things.

Strategic Context

Over the past decade there has been increasing evidence of the benefits that physical activity has on an individual's health and well-being. There is more evidence that in children and young people that take part in regular exercise that there is an improvement in learning attainment, better mental health, and contributes to lower obesity levels. In adults there is evidence that physical activity can have a positive impact on a range of health conditions including coronary heart disease, type 2 diabetes, mental health issues and social isolation. In addition, regular physical activity has other benefits including reducing costs in the health care system, provides wider social benefits for communities, and can have a positive impact on the environment through maximising active travel.

Time, cost and availability are often cited as the main barriers to being active. The council wants to work with partners to create opportunities for all people to be active every day, whether that be weaving incidental activity into our daily lives, taking the opportunity for short trips on foot, by bicycle or on public transport, or doing whatever exercise, dance, leisure or sport we enjoy.

There are differences in the levels of physical activity across the Borough and this is an important determinant of health inequalities. The Council wish to address barriers stopping people accessing leisure provision for residents who would arguably benefit most from becoming more physically active. Along with our partners we need to work to provide an attractive offer in our leisure and sporting centres, maximising memberships for full price payers and supporting those who need concessionary rates or additional support.

Links to local and national Strategy,

To support individuals to become more physically, in 2019 the UK Chief Medical Officer CMO published revised physical activity guidelines:

Under 5s

Infants less than 1 year: at least 30 minutes of physical activity per day

Toddlers 1-2years/pre-schoolers 3-4 years at least 180 minutes of physical activity per day

Children and young people 5-18 years

At least sixty minutes of physical activity per day.

Adults 19 years and over

Up to 150 minutes per day dependent of the degree of intensity

In addition to the CMO Public Health England also recognise the positive impact the physical activity has on an individual's health and well-being. To support this in their strategy a key message was "if we want everyone to be active every day, physical activity needs to be made easy, fun and affordable. To deliver their Vision PHE identified action would be required across three focus areas at a local and national level:

- **Active Society** – changing attitudes so that physical activity becomes the norm
- **Moving professionals** – creating networks to influence/develop/create physical activity opportunities.
- **Active Environments** – creating the right spaces for physical activity

In Sport England’s Strategy “Uniting the Movement” identifies that social inequality still today creates barriers to participation in sport and physical activity. To break down some of these barriers and create opportunities for all it is therefore vital that organisations move away from traditional delivery approaches. As part of their strategy Sport England have identified five key issues that need to be addressed:

- **Recover and reinvent** – re-defining how sport and physical activity is provided to meet the needs of all.
- **Connecting communities** – using the energy of sport and physical activity to bring people together.
- **Positive experiences for children and young people** – making sure that physical activity is a fun and encourages lifelong participation
- **Connecting with Health and Wellbeing** – places a great emphasis on the need strengthen connections with health providers.
- **Active Environments** – creating and protecting spaces that make it easy for people to be active.

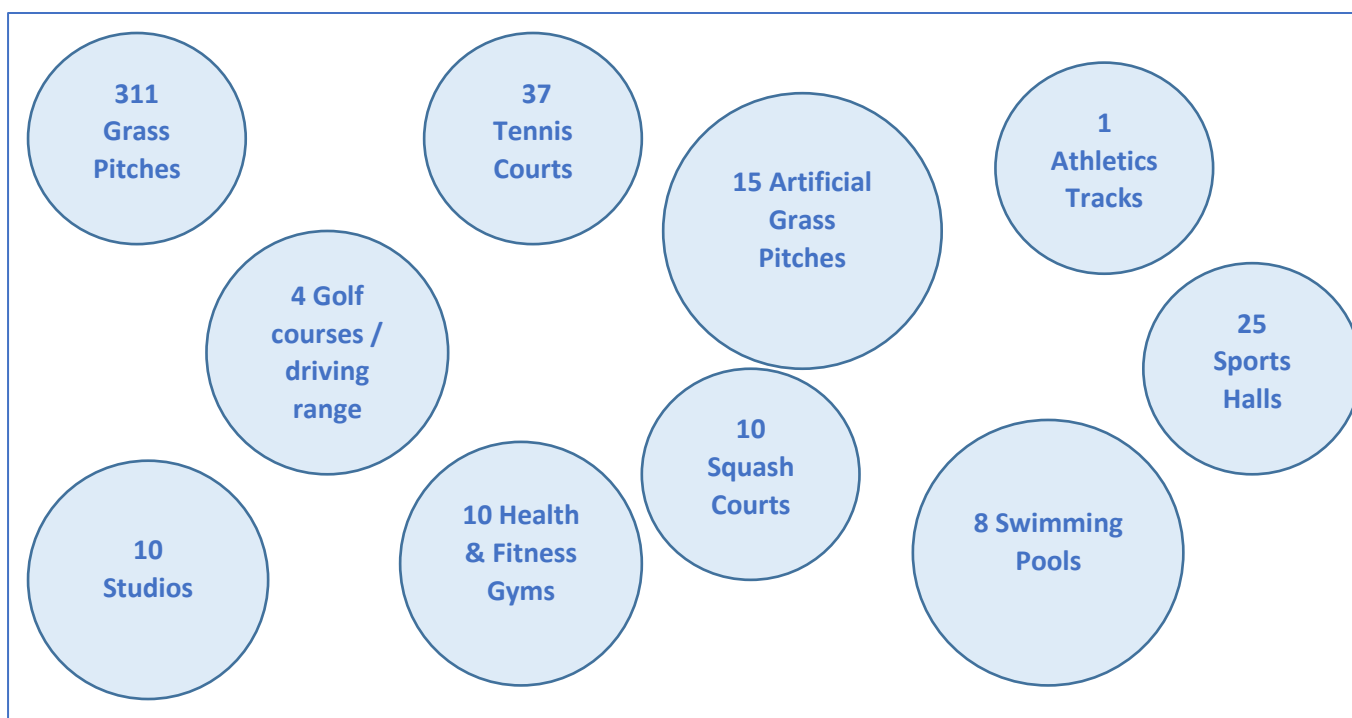
This strategy will work with, enhance, develop and complement existing local strategies, such as the Staffordshire County Councils Health and Wellbeing Strategy 2022-27, and the Councils Open Space, Playing Pitch Strategy, Sport the Arts & Cultural Strategy, Economic Development Strategy, Community Safety, as well as the overarching Council’s Corporate Plan 2022-2026.

This Strategy has been developed with reference to the national and local context with a focus on longer and healthier lives, through sustaining and creating with a focus with partners on delivering physical activity opportunities for all.

As a signatory to the Staffordshire Armed Forces Covenant we also commit through this strategy to working with our armed forces community and partners to identify opportunities to improve access to leisure opportunities for our currently serving and former Armed Forces Personnel and their families.

Our Offer

Information on the leisure facilities in the borough (data from Active Places Power 2023 based on open facility meeting their criteria and accessible to the public)



Case studies of a few people using our activities

We seek to provide family centred activity from family swim to parkinsons exercise. Here are a few case studies of our activities / users

When Sally started dancing she was quite a shy child and lacked in confidence. As a parent I have been able to stay with my daughter, thi smade all the difference and the teacher creating a relaxed and friendly atmosphere. The 'pay as you go' structure and not needing to wear specific ballet clothes meant that we could give Sally a go without having to commit to it.

Sally has had the opportunity to take part in some 'mini' showcase demonstrations. She has grown in confidence, so proud of herself and enjoyed the performance. The encouragement she has received from the instructor and the friends that she has made in the class has enabled her to flourish. Seeing her happy and enjoying being physically active and part of a group is fantastic, as a parent, I could not ask for more.

'When I peeped into the studio about 6 years ago, curious to see what the ballet class involved I was cordially welcomed and this was the start of a fascinating journey. I have since gone on to take part in shows at Newcastle College, the Brampton plus public displays in Newcastle-under-Lyme town centre.

The benefits are tremendous – my posture is 100% better. I am stronger and more flexible. At an age when many are slowing down I am learning to dance 'en pointe'. The mix of different dance styles plus the stretch and conditioning classes optimise physical progress.

The mental benefits are also obvious, there is always something new to learn, some progress to be made and something to look forward to.

Six years ago I had never danced in my life, now thanks to the dance programme I cannot imagine my life without dancing.'

Sarah Age 73

A few feedback comments from J2 Wellness Room:

I have been coming to the wellness room for 8 weeks and lost inches off my waist, and reduced my pain in my legs.

I have been exercising in the wellness room equipment and 1 month and have strengthened my muscles in preparation for my hip operation.

I am a member of Jubilee 2 and have Sciatica. I have used the Wellness Room equipment for 3 weeks and can walk better with less pain after exercising.

During my usage of the equipment in the Wellness Room over the last two months, I have increased my leg strength for my daily activities.

I have been using the Wellness Room equipment and I have Fibromyalgia, and on a bad days the machines ease my pain & mobilises my joints. I also have found that it easier to bend down to pick up objects of the floor.

Our Vision and Aims

Vision

To provide a range of opportunities for residents to enjoy a more active lifestyle

Aims

To enable residents to participate in regular activity, including sports centres, informal sports settings and outdoor space.

To provide opportunities and targeted support for those with health needs.

To work in partnership to provide a wide range of quality sustainable leisure and sporting opportunities.

Aim 1 - To enable residents to participate in regular activity, including sports centres, informal sports settings and outdoor space.

Continue to review the aquatics offer to maximise the opportunities for more people to benefit from aquatic activities.

Expand the learn to swim programme so that more children and adults have the opportunity to learn the essential life skills and enjoy the activity of swimming

Work with schools to enhance the School Swimming Programme increasing the number of children who can swim 25 metres by year 7

To invest in technology to ensure the operation of the J2 offer not only meets customers' expectations of easy digital access but to also minimise administration costs ensuring staff time is dedicated to supporting customers. This includes improvements to the booking systems and use of livestreaming. Focus to improve the website, introduction of an APP for improved booking and kiosk in reception for efficient quicker access for those able to use it.

Utilising MoveTech through Gladstone membership to give access to live stream and on demand.

Use technology in J2 to promote personal goals and achievements, thus motivating further activity.

Improved communications to promote the health benefits of exercise and the opportunities available in the borough, including the updating of the website and increased social media offer. Recognising the nudge effect of encouraging people to do more activity and the outcome of moderate investment in promotional marketing.

To invest in our staff to have good up to date qualifications and expertise in their field

Actively encourage and engage local residents in dance related activities for a healthy lifestyle and healthy minds

Support local dancers to achieve their goals in the arts

To produce an inclusive dance event performed by local residents in partnership with Newcastle and Stafford College Group to celebrate the 850th anniversary of the signing of the charter of Newcastle-under-Lyme.

To promote the use of well-maintained public open space for the leisure use, including the four green outdoor equipment areas of Whitmore, Bathpool, Clough hall and Lyme Valley.

To develop options to utilise open space to support the health and wellbeing of our residents.

To use robust data to inform our future delivery of leisure opportunities.

Aim 2 - To provide opportunities and targeted support for those with health needs

To raise awareness of the health benefits of active lifestyles both to the person and to health professionals.

To develop social prescribing pathways with partners ie weight loss programmes.

Promote and develop, both targeted health referrals and self-referrals to our services and general activity / sports.

Promote the use and benefits of the Well Being facilities and the assisted exercise technology.

Review & expand the current range of wellness activities (ie Goodboost) o to maximise the number of residents that can benefit from this.

Delivery of focussed sessions such as Action Arthritis and Escape Pain to give support on the management of health conditions.

Delivery of Bump Boost (Aqua Natal) sessions and promotion through the local maternity teams to ensure pregnant women access targeted sessions.

Investigate opportunities with Keele University to develop/expand exercise pathways and learning opportunities.

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Aim 3 - To work in partnership to provide a wide range of quality sustainable leisure and sporting opportunities.

To work towards the delivery of carbon efficient facilities at J2, including investment in replacement of equipment such as the solar panels and new investment subject to the business case.

Seek to work in partnership with local providers to promote targeted events that align to national or international events such as Women's World Cup

In supporting residents to have an active lifestyle recognising that walking or cycling as part of their daily travel is beneficial, to work with the County Council to support their programme of Active travel.

To continue to maintain high quality facilities at J2 with the regular replacement of products and equipment.

To support where needed clubs to remain sustainable over this time of challenging cost of living rises, utilising the specialist expertise of the sporting bodies.

Recognising the opportunities that Community Centres provide for individual or smaller operators to provide active and sporting clubs seek to support their continuation through the cost of living challenges.

Seek to work with education providers such as Keele University and Newcastle and Stafford College to develop volunteering and employment pathways for those wanting to enter or enhance their career in leisure.

Develop a Training Programme with Royal Life Saving Society and Swim England to increase the number of local people with these skills able to volunteer and work in the leisure sector

To support local providers to access funding from external sources including sporting bodies to deliver improved facilities so that within the borough there are opportunities for residents to access a wide range of well-maintained sporting and leisure venues. Within the Borough there are a range of schemes currently being planned: new 3G pitch at Roe Lane, new Sports Pavilion at The Whammy, new Pavilion at Madeley White Star Football Club, Tennis refurbishments at Westlands and Wolstanton, possible athletic re-provision at Kidsgrove should the school develop.

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Investigate ways to encourage schools to open their facilities to grass roots clubs to enable very local provision of a range of sports including activities such as Badminton, yoga or mindfulness classes.

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Performance and Management

As part of the consultation on this draft strategy the Council will seek partner organisations and resident views. This will include further information concerning residents' physical activity characteristics and insight into their opinions. Partner views on how they wish to contribute and engage with the Strategy will also be vital to ensuring the delivery and direction of the strategy.

It is recognised that to maintain and improve and sport and physical opportunities it is important to monitor our performance and manage the overall delivery of the strategy and key actions.

The Council has a range of internal performance indicators for the Council operated services. In addition to these indicators as part of the consultation process views on additional indicators for the overall strategy will be sought.