



**DARLINGTON**

Borough Council

# Health and Wellbeing Board Agenda

3.00 pm

Thursday, 5 December 2024

Council Chamber, Town Hall, Darlington. DL1 5QT

**Members of the Public are welcome to attend this Meeting.**

1. Introductions/Attendance at Meeting.
2. Declarations of Interest.
3. To hear relevant representation (from Members and the General Public) on items on this Health and Well Being Board Agenda.
4. To approve the Minutes of the Meeting of this Board held on 12 September 2024 (Pages 5 - 8)
5. Health and Wellbeing Strategy – Report of the Director of Public Health (Pages 9 - 32)
6. SEND Strategy 2025- 2029 – Report of the Assistant Director – Education and Inclusion (Pages 33 - 50)
7. Darlington Physical Activity Strategy – Report of the Director of Public Health and Assistant Director Community Services (Pages 51 - 82)
8. SUPPLEMENTARY ITEM(S) (if any) which in the opinion of the Chair of this Board are of an urgent nature and can be discussed at the meeting.
9. Questions.



**Luke Swinhoe**  
**Assistant Director Law and Governance**

**Wednesday, 27 November 2024**

**Town Hall**  
**Darlington.**

**Membership**

Councillor Roche, Cabinet Member for Health and Housing, Cabinet Member with Health and Housing Portfolio

Councillor Harker, Leader of the Council, Leader of the Council

Councillor Holroyd

Councillor Tostevin

Cllr Mrs Scott

James Stroyan, Group Director of People

Lorraine Hughes, Director of Public Health

David Gallagher, Executive Director of Place-Based Delivery - Central and Tees Valley, North East and North Cumbria Integrated Care Board

Martin Short, Director of Place - North East and North Cumbria Integrated Care Board, North East and North Cumbria Integrated Care Board

Brent Kilmurray, Chief Executive, Tees, Esk and Wear Valley NHS Foundation Trust

Sue Jacques, Chief Executive, County Durham and Darlington Foundation Trust

Jackie Andrews, Medical Director, Harrogate and District NHS Foundation Trust

Joanne Dobson, NHSE/I Locality Director for North East and North Cumbria, NHS England, Area Team

Alison MacNaughton-Jones, Joint Clinical Director, Darlington Primary Care Network

Sam Hirst, Primary Schools Representative

Dean Lythgoe, Principal, St Aidan's Academy, Secondary School Representative

Carole Todd, Darlington Post Sixteen Representative, Darlington Post Sixteen Representative

Michelle Thompson, Chief Executive Officer, Healthwatch Darlington

Ptolemy Neoptolemos, Acting Head of Department of Nursing & Midwifery, Teesside University

Andrea Petty, Chief of Staff, Durham Police and Crime Commissioner's Office

If you need this information in a different language or format or you have any other queries on this agenda please contact Olivia Hugill, Democratic Officer, Resources and Governance, during normal office hours 8.30 a.m. to 4.45 p.m. Mondays to Thursdays and 8.30 a.m. to 4.15 p.m. Fridays e-mail [olivia.hugill@darlington.gov.uk](mailto:olivia.hugill@darlington.gov.uk) or telephone 01325 405363

## HEALTH AND WELLBEING BOARD

Thursday, 12 September 2024

**PRESENT** – Councillor Roche (Cabinet Member with Health and Housing Portfolio) (Chair), Councillor Harker (Leader of the Council) (Leader of the Council), Councillor Holroyd, Councillor Tostevin, Dean Lythgoe (Principal, St Aidan's Academy) (Secondary School Representative), Carole Todd (Darlington Post Sixteen Representative) (Darlington Post Sixteen Representative), Michelle Thompson (Chief Executive Officer) (Healthwatch Darlington), Andrea Petty (Chief of Staff) (Durham Police and Crime Commissioner's Office) and Councillor Mrs Scott

**ALSO IN ATTENDANCE** – Curry (Cabinet Member for Adults)

**APOLOGIES** – James Stroyan (Executive Director People) and Martin Short (Director of Place - North East and North Cumbria Integrated Care Board) (North East and North Cumbria Integrated Care Board)

### **HWBB8 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST.**

There were no declarations of interest reported at the meeting.

### **HWBB9 TO HEAR RELEVANT REPRESENTATION (FROM MEMBERS AND THE GENERAL PUBLIC) ON ITEMS ON THIS HEALTH AND WELL BEING BOARD AGENDA.**

No representations were made by Members or members of the public in attendance at the meeting.

### **HWBB10 TO APPROVE THE MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THIS BOARD HELD ON 20 JUNE 2024**

Submitted – The Minutes (previously circulated) of the meeting of this Health and Well Being Board held on 20 June 2024

**RESOLVED** – That the minutes for the meeting of this Health and Well Being Board held on 20 June 2024 be approved.

### **HWBB11 DIRECTOR OF PUBLIC HEALTH ANNUAL REPORT 2023-24**

The Director of Public Health presented board members with this report. The Women's Health Strategy for England, published in 2022, recognised that the health system has historically taken a 'men as default' approach in areas such as clinical trials, education and policy. With this in mind, this year's annual report has considered key areas of women's health, with the aims of highlighting inequalities that girls and women face and understanding what this means for Darlington.

Thematic issues and areas of concern were highlighted including rates of self-harm and increasing suicide rates in women.

Questions from board members included as to whether external agencies can be employed in relation to suicide prevention with confirmation that a number of agencies are available to provide support and engagement.

A board member also queried healthy life expectancy for women and it was stated that, on average, a women will spend 20 years in 'ill health' with averages in the North East being worse than other areas.

Board members also noted that their respective agencies are also happy to assist in providing data in areas such as sexual abuse and mental health aspects.

It was also clarified that data may seem to be "out of date" due to checks and validations required to ensure the data is of the highest quality possible and that certain datasets can be retrieved and verified in shorter timeframes than others.

**RESOLVED** – That members received and supported the subject matter and that it is useful for stakeholders and the public alike.

## **HWBB12 HEALTH AND WELLBEING STRATEGY**

The Chair of the Health and Wellbeing Board and the Director of Public Health introduced board members to the draft Joint Local Health and Wellbeing Strategy (JLHWS).

The JLHWS sets out the local priorities for improving the health and wellbeing of the population of Darlington. The development of the Strategy has been informed by the Joint Strategic Needs Assessment (JSNA) and a series of workshops with members of the Health and Wellbeing Board and wider partners.

The JLHWS has adopted a life course approach, with the themes of Best Start in Life - Children and Young People, Staying Healthy – Living Well and Staying Healthy – Ageing Well.

The overarching priorities for each theme are:

- a) Best Start in Life - Children and Young People: pregnancy and early years; mental health and resilience
- b) Staying Healthy – Living Well: making smoking history; mental health and wellbeing
- c) Staying Healthy – Ageing Well: minimise time in ill health; maximise independence
- d) Healthy Places - workplace health and good work; healthier environments

It was also highlighted that joint work with board members' agencies will be welcomed in order to establish pathways to tackle the above and also to support children and young people and establish key priorities and impacts.

Board members expressed their approval of the workshop sessions that contributed to the formation of the strategy.

Discussions were held which included a board member expressing that focussed efforts are required to realistically maintain any positive results in areas such as smoking and oral health with officers confirming that oral health and toothbrushing schemes, alongside the new Oral Health Strategy will have positive results in these areas and confirming that tackling smoking remains a focus.

Discussion was held around "healthy ways of working" with clarification that a good job / work environment has a large impact on someone's health, and it is important to work with employers to help them get the most from their employees and assist the economy as a result.



Board members provided feedback on the strategy that included a suggestion that more positive language would be helpful, that “joining the dots” between partner agencies would yield the most positive results with minimal overlap. Board members expressed their general approval and support for the strategy.

**RESOLVED** – That board members note the content of the draft Joint Local Health and Wellbeing Strategy, including the overarching priorities identified to improve the health and wellbeing of the population of Darlington.

**REASON** - It is a statutory duty of the Health and Wellbeing Board to develop a Joint Local Health and Wellbeing Strategy

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**HEALTH AND WELLBEING BOARD  
5th DECEMBER 2024**

ITEM NO.

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**JOINT LOCAL HEALTH AND WELLBEING STRATEGY 2025 - 2029**

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**SUMMARY REPORT****Purpose of the Report**

1. To receive the Joint Local Health and Wellbeing Strategy (JLHWS).

**Summary**

2. The JLHWS sets out the local priorities for improving the health and wellbeing of the population of Darlington. The development of the Strategy was informed by the Joint Strategic Needs Assessment (JSNA) and a series of workshops with members of the Health and Wellbeing Board and wider partners.
3. A draft JLHWS was shared with the Health and Wellbeing Board, Health and Housing Scrutiny Committee and senior officers within Darlington Borough Council, for review and comment. All comments have been considered in the development of the final version of the Strategy.
4. There was lots of positive feedback about the JLHWS and suggestions for additional areas of focus to strengthen the Strategy. A summary of the changes made is set out below:
  - (a) Additional detail added on the wider determinants of health and drivers of health inequalities.
  - (b) Thematic ambitions have been revised.
  - (c) The key themes from the workshops have been reviewed.
  - (d) Minor changes to wording, as part of the ongoing proof reading processes.
  - (e) Since the draft JLHWS was circulated some of the national public health outcome data sources have been updated, the relevant data has been updated in the document.
  - (f) Given the planned publication date the time period of the Strategy has changed to 2025 to 2029.
  - (g) Explicit reference made to some of the other strategies and plans that have interdependencies with the JLHWS.
  - (h) Additional point added under Healthy Ways of Working, to focus on challenging racism and discrimination (reflecting the Marmot Objective 7).
  - (i) Additional point added under the priority of pregnancy and early years to focus on unintentional and deliberate injuries in children.
  - (j) Life course map now included.

- (k) Reworded the description of alcohol harms and the text describing the CDOH action.
  - (l) Changed 'a good death' to 'dying well'.
  - (m) Under the healthy places theme additional detail has been added on the building blocks of health.
  - (n) Additional detail added about the opportunities available through the planning system to increase access to healthy environments.
  - (o) Inclusion of a 'next steps' section.
5. Progress against the identified priorities will be shared through a regular cycle of update reports presented at the Health and Wellbeing Board, allowing an opportunity for reflection and discussion.

**Recommendation**

6. It is recommended that the Health and Wellbeing Board: -
- (a) Receive the Joint Local Health and Wellbeing Strategy.
  - (b) Note the content of the Joint Local Health and Wellbeing Strategy, including the overarching priorities identified to improve the health and wellbeing of the population of Darlington.

**Reasons**

7. The recommendations are supported by the following reasons: -
- (a) It is a statutory duty of the Health and Wellbeing Board to develop a Joint Local Health and Wellbeing Strategy.

**Lorraine Hughes**  
**Director of Public Health**

**Background Papers**

None

Lorraine Hughes extension 6203

Council Plan	The report supports the Council Plan priority of Living Well as it focuses on the health and wellbeing of the population.
Addressing inequalities	The report considers health inequalities and poor health outcomes experienced in Darlington, identifying key actions to be taken forward.
Tackling Climate Change	There are no implications arising from this report.
Efficient and effective use of resources	This report has no impact on the Council's Efficiency Programme as actions delivered will need to be contained within agreed budgets.

Health and Wellbeing	The report sets out the priorities of the Joint Local Health and Wellbeing Strategy, to improve the health of the population.
S17 Crime and Disorder	There are no implications arising from this report.
Wards Affected	All
Groups Affected	The population of Darlington.
Budget and Policy Framework	This report does not recommend a change to the Council's budget or policy framework.
Key Decision	No
Urgent Decision	N/A
Impact on Looked After Children and Care Leavers	This report has no impact on Looked After Children or Care Leavers

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# Darlington Joint Local Health and Wellbeing Strategy



2025 - 2029

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# Foreword

It cannot be right that a man living in one area of the Borough of Darlington can expect to live 12 years less on average, than a man in another area of the Borough. Unfortunately, this is just one example of the health inequalities that exist. This strategy seeks to focus collective efforts on how we can tackle these health inequalities and bring better health and wellbeing for all residents of our Borough.

The strategy outlines priority areas that the evidence and partners have identified as causing the greatest issues to poor health and inequality. Priorities we can work together on to make the most difference to people's lives.

This focus on priorities means that the strategy doesn't include the huge numbers of ways that local partners are improving health and wellbeing in our Borough every day. Staying focused, good quality partnership working and listening to those with first-hand experiences will be critical to our success.

I would like to thank all those who have contributed to this strategy, including all the members of the Darlington Borough Health and Wellbeing Board.

I would also like to thank Lorraine Hughes, Darlington Borough Council Director of Public Health, for leading on the production of this report in collaboration with all our partners.



**Cllr Matthew Roche**

Chair, Health and Wellbeing Board

# Acknowledgements

Thanks are given to everyone who has contributed to the development of Darlington's Joint Local Health and Wellbeing Strategy. Particular thanks

are given to members of the Health and Wellbeing Board and those individuals who attended one or more of the workshops held in May and June 2024.

## Endorsement

The following organisations have endorsed the content of Darlington's Joint Local Health and Wellbeing Strategy.

- County Durham and Darlington NHS Foundation Trust
- Darlington Borough Council
- Darlington Post-16 Education
- Darlington Primary Care Network
- Darlington Primary Schools
- Darlington Secondary Schools
- Durham Police and Crime Commissioner's Office
- Harrogate and District NHS Foundation Trust
- Healthwatch Darlington
- NHS England and Improvement
- North East and North Cumbria Integrated Care Board (NENC ICB)
- St Teresa's Hospice
- Tees, Esk and Wear Valleys NHS Foundation Trust
- Teesside University

## Introduction

Sadly, many people in the Borough of Darlington die earlier and have longer years of ill health than they should. There is also too much inequality in health between different areas and communities in the Borough.

Our Joint Local Health and Wellbeing Strategy (JLHWS) sets out the local priorities for improving the health and wellbeing of the population of Darlington. The development of the strategy has been informed by the Joint Strategic Needs Assessment (JSNA) <sup>1</sup> and a series of workshops with members of the Health and Wellbeing Board and wider partners.

A life course approach has been taken in the development of the JLHWS, with the themes of *Best Start in Life - Children and Young People*, *Staying Healthy - Living Well and Staying Healthy - Ageing Well*.

Adopting a life course approach is helpful for promoting health and reducing avoidable health inequalities, as it recognises that each stage of a person's life impacts on the next stage of their life. Many factors can influence a person's health and wellbeing over their lifetime, positively and negatively. Understanding what can help to protect someone's health and taking action to increase such opportunities, for example by providing access to a safe and pleasant environment which supports a person to be physically active on a day-to-day basis or opportunities for good work which allows the working age population to have a job which is secure and provides a good income, will help to improve overall health.

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<sup>1</sup> Darlington Joint Strategic Needs Assessment - <https://www.darlington.gov.uk/your-council/council-information/documents/darlington-joint-strategic-needs-assessment-2024/>

At the same time, by understanding the risk factors which contribute to worse health outcomes, we can be proactive in our efforts to reduce the likelihood of the risk occurring in the first place whilst also supporting individuals and communities to reduce or remove the risk factors.

Whilst it is true that some of this action can only be taken at a national level, like it was with previous interventions such as removing advertising of tobacco products, raising the cost of products and increasing the age of sale, there are still lots of actions we can take in Darlington to reduce the impact of risks.

For example, continuing with the theme of tobacco, specialist stop smoking services are available to support people who smoke and want to quit. We need to make sure we are reaching as many people as possible and making it easy for them to come forward for help, whilst reducing the number of people who take up smoking in the first place.

It is important that as a Borough we take action to improve the wider determinants of health as these are the building blocks of good health and are essential if we want to have better health and wellbeing for all of our communities in Darlington, as not everyone has the same opportunities to live long and healthy lives.<sup>2 3</sup> Poverty, poor housing, low paid or insecure jobs, no access to affordable, nutritious food, poor educational opportunities, a lack of healthy, outdoor spaces and barriers to accessing health and social care services can all impact on people's physical and mental health.

Many of the actions needed to strengthen these building blocks for good health have already been identified as a priority in other strategies and plans, including the Council Plan, Darlington Local Plan, North East and North Cumbria Integrated Care Strategy and Tees Valley Place Plan. There is a focus on issues such as job creation and continuing to grow the economy, provision of affordable and secure homes, high quality and inclusive education for our children and young people, increased access to healthy and safe environments and

reducing inequalities in access to health and care services and improving health outcomes.

It is the intention that the JLHWS will not duplicate actions which are being driven through other strategies and partnerships, especially as many of them are outside the direct remit of the Health and Wellbeing Board. However, this strategy does recognise that the Board and its members have a key role in influencing and promoting positive change to the wider determinants of health. In addition, the wider determinants of health will also be considered as action plans are put together for each of the strategy's priorities. Through the thematic priority of Healthy Places in particular, the JLHWS will ensure there is a focus on healthier environments in Darlington, to support better health and wellbeing for all.

It is important to note that this JLHWS is not designed to outline all of the aims and actions of members of the Darlington Borough Health and Wellbeing Board in relation to health and wellbeing. There is a whole range of work that will continue to be undertaken to improve health and wellbeing in the Borough that is not described in the JLHWS. Rather, this strategy is designed to identify the main priorities for health and wellbeing that partners of the Darlington Borough Health and Wellbeing Board and beyond can work on together.

The JLHWS also emphasises the importance of listening and acting on the views of the community and those with lived experience of the issues we are seeking to address.

Through these joint efforts we have a real opportunity to improve the health and wellbeing of the population in Darlington, allowing people to be born well and grow, live, work and age well.

We also need to make sure that our efforts are focused on reducing the health inequalities which exist within Darlington, many of which have widened over time.

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<sup>2</sup> The Health Foundation. 16 May 2024. Accessed 29 May 2024. <https://www.health.org.uk/news-and-comment/charts-and-infographics/what-builds-good-health#download%20resources>.

<sup>3</sup> The Health Foundation. July 2024. Accessed 17th July 2024. <https://doi.org/10.37829/HF-2024-HL02>

<sup>4</sup> World Health Organization (2018) The life-course approach: from theory to practice. Case stories from two small countries in Europe. <https://www.who.int/europe/publications/i/item/9789289053266>, accessed 20th August 2024.

## Our Vision

Our vision is that Darlington is a place where everyone has the opportunity to thrive and live well.

## How Will We Work Together?

The Health and Wellbeing Board have agreed an approach to support *Healthy Ways of Working*, which will help to deliver the vision, shared ambitions, priorities and actions set out in the JLHWS.

### Healthy Ways of Working

We will work together to:

- Make the best use of resources to achieve the greatest impact, including ensuring there is always a focus on seeking to understand and reduce health inequalities
- Build upon what we already have in place and do well
- Embed an approach of early support and prevention
- Challenge racism, discrimination and their outcomes
- Develop a culture of high support and high challenge
- Celebrate successes
- Use data and evidence to develop our priorities, including maintaining the JSNA so data is good quality and provides a picture of health inequalities in Darlington
- Listen to what our communities tell us, including hearing the voice of lived experience and co-producing programmes of work and interventions, where it is possible and appropriate to do so
- Share learning from engagement surveys, service user feedback and community leaders
- Adopt a 'think family' approach in all of our work
- Monitor progress being made against our priorities
- Seek to understand if we are making a difference
- Be willing to try new things to help build the evidence base when it is not there, making sure we reflect and learn

# Marmot Principles

In the 2010 Marmot Review 'Fair Society Healthy Lives' <sup>5</sup> six evidence based policy objectives were identified for action to reduce health inequalities. In 2020 'Health Equity in England: The Marmot Review 10 Years On' <sup>6</sup> was published, highlighting the continued importance of the policy objectives. Since then, two additional objectives (7 and 8) have been included.

Whilst some of the policy objectives are of greater relevance than others to the JLHWS they highlight the importance of a 'Health in All Policies' (HiAP) approach <sup>7</sup> and the contribution which can be made through the work of the Health and Wellbeing Board and delivery of the strategy.

1. Giving every child the best start in life
2. Enabling all children, young people and adults to maximize their capabilities and have control over their lives
3. Creating fair employment and good work for all
4. Ensuring a healthy standard of living for all
5. Creating and developing sustainable places and communities
6. Strengthening the role and impact of ill-health prevention
7. Tackle racism, discrimination and their outcomes
8. Pursue environmental sustainability and health equity together

<sup>5</sup> Marmot M, Allen J, Goldblatt P, Boyce T, McNeish D, Grady M (2010) Fair Society, Healthy Lives: The Marmot Review. London. [Fair Society Healthy Lives \(The Marmot Review\) - IHE \(instituteofhealthequity.org\)](#), accessed 17th July 2024.

<sup>6</sup> Marmot M, Allen J, Boyce T, Goldblatt P, Morrison J (2020) Health equity in England: The Marmot Review 10 years on. London: Institute of Health Equity. [Marmot Review 10 Years On - IHE \(instituteofhealthequity.org\)](#), accessed 17th July 2024

<sup>7</sup> LGA (2016) Health in All Policies: a manual for local government, [health-all-policies-hiap--8df.pdf \(local.gov.uk\)](#), accessed 29th August 2024. A HiAP approach provides a framework for local authorities to take into account the health implications of decisions.

# A walk through the life course in Darlington

Key	
Darlington	
Best	Worst
North East	
England	





# Themes

The themes, priorities and actions have been informed by the JSNA and the output from three workshops, which had a total of 58 participants. The workshops considered the topics of:

- Best Start in Life - Children and Young People
- Staying Healthy - Living Well
- Staying Healthy - Ageing Well
- Healthy Places and Ways of Working.

The development of the JLHWS provides an opportunity to set out the agreed priorities and actions for partners to address the identified health and wellbeing needs of the population

of Darlington, supporting a regular process of assessing need through the JSNA and local intelligence and agreeing actions to meet the needs identified. <sup>8</sup>



<sup>8</sup> <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/health-and-wellbeing-boards-guidance/health-and-wellbeing-boards-guidance>  
Accessed 17th July 2024

# Best Start in Life (Children and Young People)

Giving our children and young people the best start in life is about establishing those important early foundations for a healthy life, from pre-conception to young adulthood.

When there is a need for support providing this as early as possible, using a 'think family' approach and hearing the voice of the child, will give the greatest opportunity for making a difference to the child and family.

## Ambition

We want to support children to thrive - reducing inequalities and improving health and wellbeing outcomes for children and families.

## What is the local need?

There are many examples of collaboration and delivery already happening in Darlington to improve maternal and child health outcomes, these efforts will continue. Evidence from the JSNA and information gathered through the workshops highlights the following areas of concern in Darlington:

- around 1 in 10 (10.6%) of pregnant women smoke during pregnancy (smoking status at time of delivery)
- the percentage of all births recorded with low birth weight and very low birth weight has increased between 2017 and 2021
- whilst overall rates of breastfeeding have improved in Darlington there is variation across wards
- supporting children to develop good communication skills and be ready for school

- reducing levels of tooth decay in children
- increasing the number of children who are a healthy weight
- reducing the impact of alcohol harms and substance misuse
- improving the mental health and resilience of children and young people
- reducing hospital admissions caused by unintentional and deliberate injuries

## Priorities

- Pregnancy and early years
- Mental health and resilience





# What is the difference we want to see?

We will focus first on:

## *Pregnancy and early years*

- Reduction in the proportion of mothers who are recorded as smokers at the time of delivery
- Address the health inequalities in rates of smoking during pregnancy across Darlington
- Fewer women returning to smoking after they have had their baby, to reduce the risk of harm from second hand smoke
- Build upon the momentum of increasing rates of breastfeeding in Darlington, to ensure this includes the wards which have the lowest rates of breastfeeding currently
- Undertake an audit of hospital admission data for unintentional and deliberate injuries in children, to understand the cause and develop a local plan of action
- Increased levels of school readiness in children as measured at the end of reception, including for children who have free school meal status and children with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND)

## *Mental health and resilience*

- Reduction in the rate of hospital admissions as a result of self-harm in young people (aged 10 - 24 years)
- Halt the increase in hospital admissions as a result of self-harm in girls and young women
- Reduction in the rate of hospital admissions for mental health conditions in young people under the age of 18 years
- Young people who need support for mental health and wellbeing know what services are available for support and how to access them
- Through the continued provision of mental health support teams in education settings a greater number of children and young people will be able to access NHS-funded mental health services



# Staying Healthy: Living Well

Creating healthy environments that actively support good health, and ensuring local services are accessible for those who need to use them, can help people to stay well and healthy for longer and prevent or delay the onset of illness.

Staying healthy in adulthood has many benefits, including helping people to participate in day to day activities, go to work, socialise, do things they enjoy in their spare time and support good mental health and wellbeing.

## Ambition

We want to support people to live well in more resilient communities - supporting better physical and mental wellbeing, increasing average life expectancy and narrowing the gap in life expectancy across the Borough of Darlington.

## What is the local need?

Many different services are available in Darlington to support people to stay healthy and live well, including sexual and reproductive health provision, specialist support for people to stop smoking or get help with drug and alcohol conditions, NHS Health Checks, leisure services, health screening and immunisation and primary and secondary care services for people who have illnesses and diseases such as mental ill health, diabetes, chronic obstructive pulmonary disorder (COPD) and high blood pressure.

Life expectancy is a measure of the average number of years a person would expect to live at the time of birth. Data shows that life expectancy has been declining in Darlington (a trend also seen in the North East and England), after a sustained period over recent decades of increasing life expectancy.

How healthy we are and how long we live is influenced by many different things, including our socioeconomic conditions, access to healthcare, the physical environment in which we live and health behaviours.

The theme of Staying Healthy: Living Well is concerned with health behaviours, risk factors and healthcare..

Evidence from the JSNA and information gathered through the workshops highlights the following areas of concern in Darlington:

- Life expectancy for men has fallen from a peak of 78.7 years to 77.2 years
- Life expectancy for women has fallen from a peak of 82.5 years to 81.3 years in women
- Within Darlington life expectancy can vary significantly, with data showing an average difference in life expectancy between the best and worst off areas in Darlington of 11.6 years for men and 8.9 years for women. These inequalities have widened over time
- Healthy life expectancy, a measure of the number of years a person can expect to live in 'good' health, has been reducing in Darlington over the last 5 to 10 years for men and women
- Increasing rates of the chronic health conditions of diabetes and hypertension
- Declining rates of uptake of breast and cancer screening amongst eligible women
- It is estimated that 9,200 adults in Darlington smoke<sup>9</sup>
- Obesity in adults has been rising steadily, with 1 in 3 adults in Darlington categorised as obese
- Rates of suicide have increased over time for men and women
- An increasing burden of harms from alcohol, including alcohol dependancy and ill health



<sup>9</sup> [https://ashresources.shinyapps.io/ready\\_reckoner/](https://ashresources.shinyapps.io/ready_reckoner/), accessed 29th August 2024.

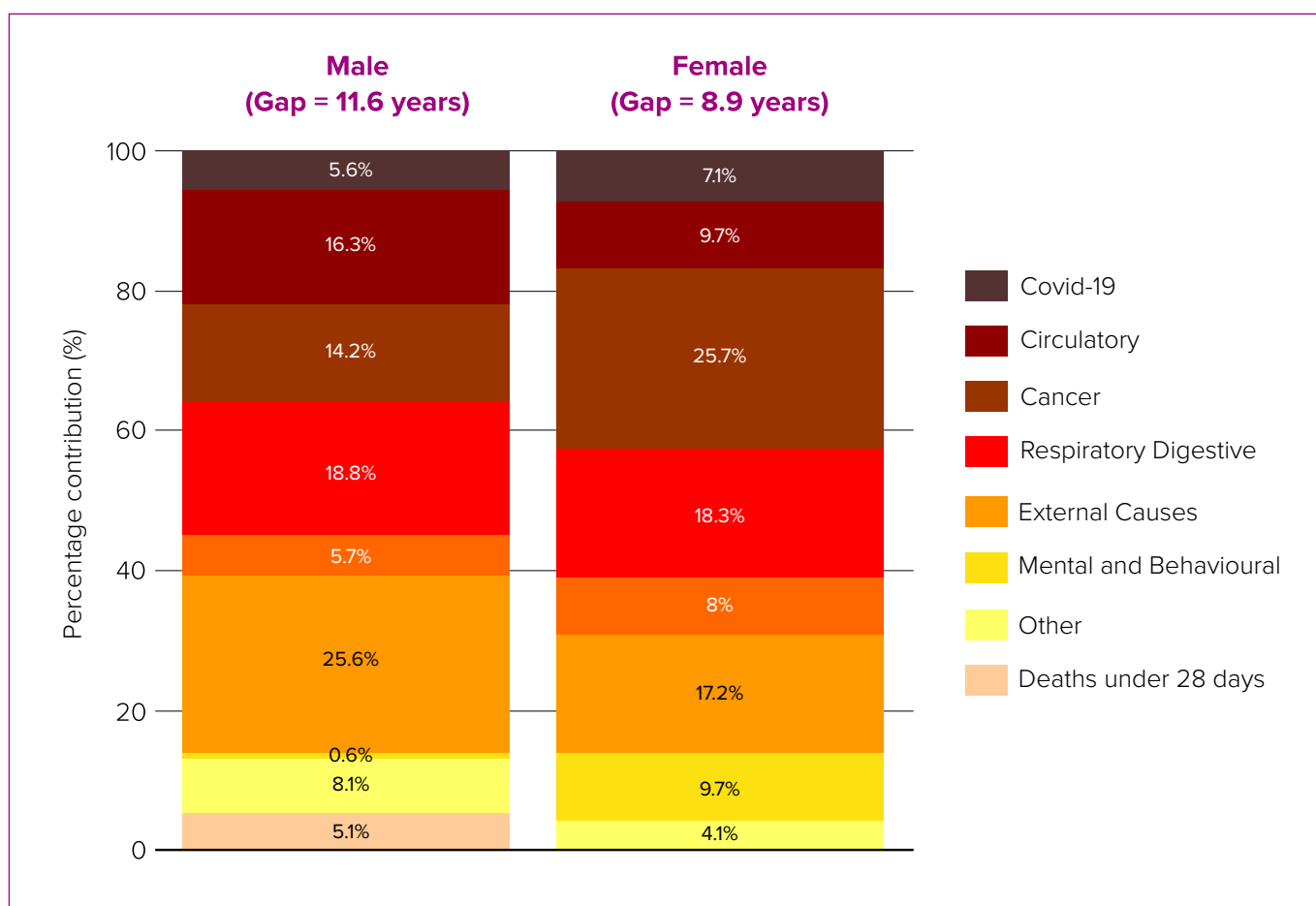
Through understanding more about the causes of death which are driving inequalities in life expectancy across Darlington it is possible to take action to address the risk factors which have the greatest impact. This approach will support efforts to reduce health inequalities.

The charts below show that in 2020-21 the 4 leading causes of death for males in Darlington were external causes (deaths from injury, poisoning and suicide), respiratory diseases (COPD, flu and pneumonia), circulatory (heart disease, stroke) and cancer (particularly lung cancer). Overall, in this time period there were 254 deaths in the most deprived areas of Darlington, 127 (50%) of which would have been avoided if the areas had the same mortality rate as the least deprived areas.

In the same period, the leading causes of death for females in Darlington were cancer (there has been an increase in the number of deaths from lung cancer), respiratory diseases, external causes, circulatory and mental and behavioural (dementia and Alzheimer’s disease). Overall, in this time period there were 237 deaths in the most deprived areas of Darlington, 103 (43%) of which would have been avoided if the areas had the same mortality rate as the least deprived areas.

This highlights that increasing efforts to reduce rates of smoking and support good mental health and wellbeing could have a positive impact on health outcomes and reducing inequalities.

## Gap in Life Expectancy (years) - 2020/2021



**Source:** Office for Health Improvement and Disparities based on ONS death registration data and 2020 mid year population estimates, and Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities Index of Multiple Deprivation, 2019

## Priorities

- Making smoking history
- Mental health and wellbeing

## What is the difference we want to see?

We will focus first on:

### *Making smoking history*

- Reduce rates of smoking in Darlington to 5% or less by 2030
- Reduce rates of smoking in routine and manual workers
- Address the health inequalities in rates of smoking across Darlington

### *Mental health and wellbeing*

- Reduce rates of suicide in men and women
- Increase the number of people with drug and alcohol dependency accessing treatment
- Increase the number of people with drug and alcohol dependency successfully completing treatment
- Support the work of Darlington Mental Health Network to enable greater collaboration and partnership working, using the learning which emerges to strengthen preventative approaches and inform the future commissioning and delivery of mental health services.

## Staying Healthy: Ageing Well

In Darlington men and women are spending an increasing period of their lives in poor health, which means they may often struggle with day to day tasks, can no longer do things they used to enjoy, are less likely to be able to continue to work and will be suffering from illness or disability. All of this has a very real impact on people, for example not being able to spend quality time with family and loved ones, having less money to spend on bills, essentials and hobbies, being unable to provide informal care giving to others or needing care and support themselves.

This does not have to be the case, if we can enable people to maximise their health going into the period of older age it will be possible to start to shift this trend and reduce the length of time people spend in periods of ill health. Through actions to promote healthy ageing and prevent disease it is possible to reduce or delay the experience of ill health and disability and prolong independence, so people can continue to do the things they enjoy and have a good quality of life. <sup>10</sup>

Loneliness and isolation can also have a big impact on health and wellbeing. Supporting people to stay well for longer can make a big difference, as people will be able to continue to socialise and access local services and activities for longer, as they get older.

Dying well (often described as a good end of life experience) is important for individuals at end of life and their families and carers, and it could be argued a reflection of how as a society we care for the most sick and vulnerable. Whilst there are specialist NHS and palliative services which provide this very important support it continues to be the experience of many that we don't have the right language to talk about death and this can sometimes get in the way of making sure people get the right support for them as they approach the end of life. Through people providing care asking about peoples wishes and taking these into account we can help people at end of life care to live as well as possible until they die, and to die with dignity.

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<sup>10</sup> Chief Medical Officer's annual report 2023: health in an ageing society, Chief Medical Officer's annual report 2023: [health in an ageing society](https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/118242/cmo-annual-report-2023-health-in-an-ageing-society.pdf) - GOV.UK ([www.gov.uk](https://www.gov.uk)), accessed 21st August 2024.

# Ambition

We want to support people to enjoy a healthy and independent older age.

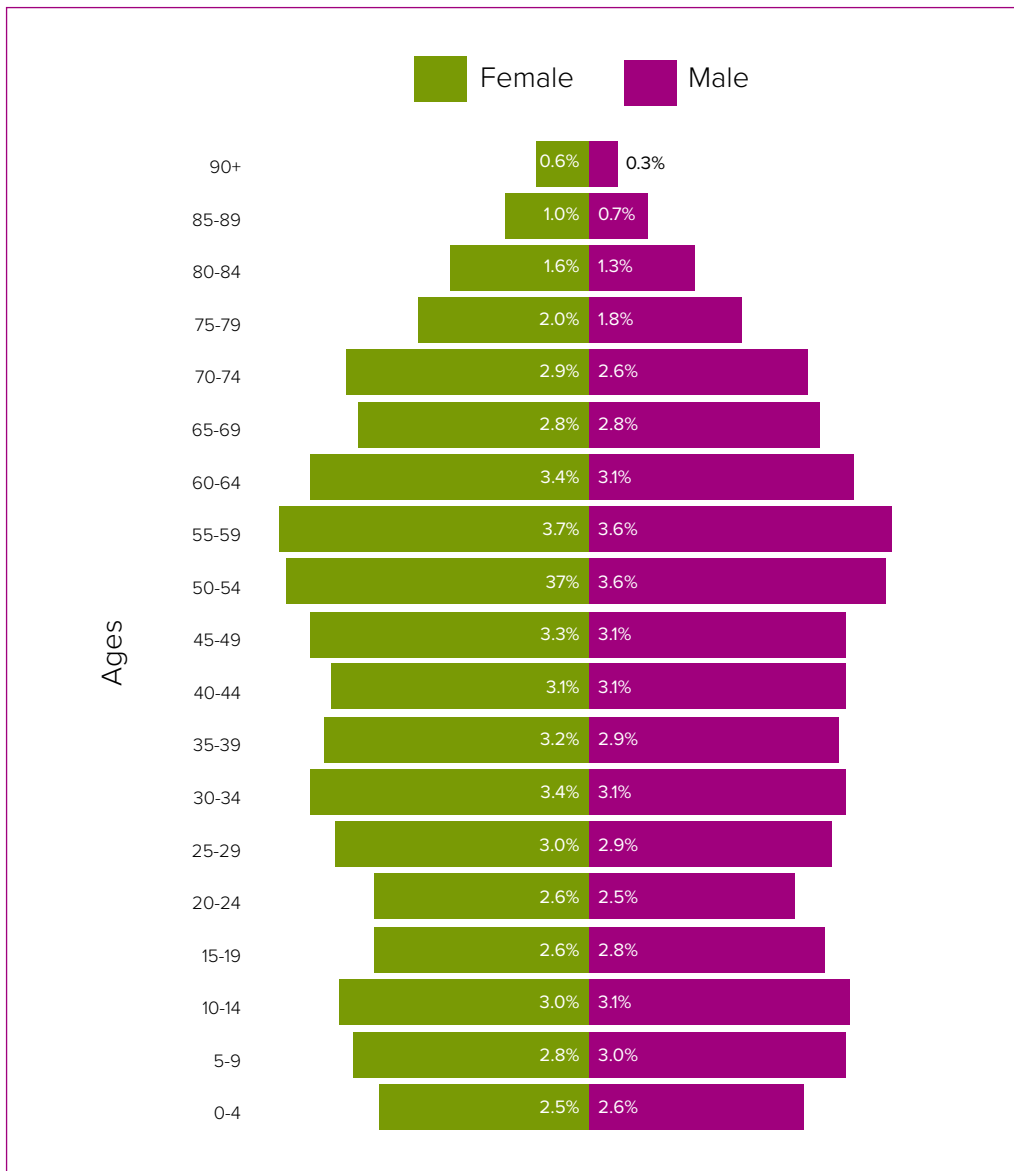
## What is the local need?

Census data <sup>11</sup> shows that Darlington has an ageing population, the impact of which if nothing else changes would be increased levels of health and social care need. This makes it more important than ever that people are able to stay as healthy as possible for as long as possible, in adulthood and through most of their older age.

Between 2011 and 2021 the average age of a resident in Darlington increased by two years, from 41 to 43 years of age. Over this same time period there has been:

- a decrease of **2.5%** in children (477) aged under 15 years
- a decrease of **1.2%** in people (848) aged 15 to 64 years
- an increase of **11.7%** in people (2,449) aged 50 to 64 years
- an increase of **19.9%** in people (3,663) aged 65 years and over
- an increase of **15.8%** in people (1,378) aged 75 years and over

## Darlington Age Profile



<sup>11</sup> Darlington population change, Census 2021 - ONS



Evidence from the JSNA and information gathered through the workshops highlights the following areas for action:

- Healthy life expectancy at 65, a measure of the average number of years a person aged 65 years would expect to live in good health, has been reducing over time in Darlington for men and women, although the last data point shows an improvement for men from 8.6 years to 10.5 years.
- Disability-Free Life Expectancy at 65, a measure of the number of years a person can expect to live free from a limiting long-term illness or disability, has been reducing over time in Darlington, for both men and women.
- Life expectancy at 65 shows a small reduction for men and not much change for women.
- Falls are the biggest cause of emergency hospital admissions for older people, and significantly impact on long term outcomes.
- Falls and fractures in those aged 65 and over account for over 4 million bed days per year in England alone, at an estimated cost of £2 billion in England.
- The rate of hospital admissions for falls in all those over 65 years has been increasing over the last 10 years in Darlington.
- The rate of those requiring hospital treatment due to a fall increases with age, with the eldest (over 80 years) having the highest rates of admission.
- Support people at end of life to have a good death.

## Priorities

- Minimise time in ill health
- Maximise independence

## What is the difference we want to see?

We will focus first on:

### *Minimise time in ill health*

- Making Every Contact Count (MECC) embedded within the health and social care sector in Darlington
- Increase in the number of older people accessing health improvement services, including stop smoking support and drug and alcohol services
- Review the offer and uptake of NHS Health Checks to support increased uptake in wards with the greatest levels of need

### *Maximise independence*

- Develop an integrated falls prevention strategy, for the purpose of reducing falls in older people and minimising the impact of a fall on a person's health and independence
- Increase awareness of the importance of supporting people to have a good death and help those working in health and social care to increase their confidence in having conversations about dying and death



# Healthy Places

A healthy place is somewhere it is easy to be healthy. This includes a physical environment which encourages active lifestyles, such as having access to green open spaces, walking routes and integrated cycle lanes, good local employment, good quality housing and being able to eat well. These are some of the building blocks of good health.

We also know that advertising and marketing of unhealthy products can be harmful to people's health, and we need to do more to reduce this influence.

## Ambition

We want to support healthier environments that promote better health and wellbeing for all.

## Priorities

- Workplace health and good work
- Healthier environments

## What is the difference we want to see?

We will focus first on:

*Workplace health and good work*

- Develop a Darlington offer for workplace health, including a wellbeing pledge
- Continue to expand the Making Every Contact Count (MECC) approach to local workplaces, to support health promoting behaviours and reduce health inequalities

### *Healthier environments*

- Take action on the commercial determinants of health to reduce the negative health impacts of commercial products, such as tobacco, alcohol and ultra processed foods.
- Work with council officers and developers to ensure the Darlington Borough Local Plan requirements for a Health Impact Assessment are met, to support the evaluation of the impacts of proposed developments on health and wellbeing
- Use opportunities within the planning system to develop and increase access to healthy environments, including improving access to green spaces and exploring criteria for restricting new hot food takeaways
- The Good Food Local programme is taken forward in Darlington, working with Sustain and the North East Public Health network, to prioritise good food and commit to action on a breadth of food issues



# Turning this Strategy into Action

For each of the next four years, partners from the Darlington Borough Health and Wellbeing Board and beyond will take two of the eight priorities in the JLHWS - undertaking a thorough review of them. These reviews will map existing services and gaps, consider how partners can better work together and include new initiatives to fill gaps and bring better outcomes. This will allow action plans to be put together, which will be discussed, reviewed and monitored by the Darlington Borough Health and Wellbeing Board.

In addition, the JLHWS will be reviewed every year, to review progress and impact, as well as to ensure that it remains relevant. In the final year of the JLHWS the Darlington Borough Health and Wellbeing Board will focus on reviewing the overall impact of the strategy, learn from what has worked well and not so well, and use all of this to develop the next JLHWS.





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**HEALTH AND WELLBEING BOARD  
5 DECEMBER 2024**

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**SEND STRATEGY 2025-2029**

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**SUMMARY REPORT**

**Purpose of the Report**

1. The purpose of this report is to present the draft Special Educational Needs and Disability (SEND) Strategy 2025-2029. It details the key elements of the Strategy and the planned implementation with partners.

**Summary**

2. The SEND Strategy establishes our strategic approach to the delivery of SEND services for children and young people in Darlington, ensuring the offer is coordinated and responsive to the needs of our community. The strategy sets out our shared local area vision, principles, and priorities to ensure that partners across the Darlington local area are working together effectively to identify, assess and meet the needs of children and young people with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) from birth to the age of 25. The SEND Strategy has been coproduced with partners across the borough, and is fundamental to implementing partners responsibilities under the Children and Families Act 2014. It reflects the ambitions and priorities of the Council Plan and other key strategic documents.

**Recommendation**

3. It is recommended that the Health and Wellbeing Board notes the priorities outlined in the strategy and supports the current public consultation.

**Reasons**

4. The recommendations are supported by the following reason; the strategy is produced in the context of the statutory requirements set out in the Children and Families Act 2014 together with the guidance in the SEN Code of Practice that was issued alongside the 2014 Act. These provisions include the duty to keep under review the educational provision, training provision and social care provision made in its area for children and young people who have special educational needs or a disability and made outside its area for children and young people for whom it is responsible who have special educational needs or who have a disability (section 27 of the 2014 Act).

**Tony Murphy**  
**Assistant Director - Education And Inclusion**

## Background Papers

No background papers were used in the preparation of this report.

Tony Murphy: Extension 5637

Council Plan	The strategy supports the commitments for children and young people-supporting the best start in life, realising potential and raising aspirations.
Addressing inequalities	This strategy sets out our local plan for addressing inequalities faced by young people with special education needs and disabilities (SEND) and ensuring that they can receive access to high quality educational provision and outcomes.
Tackling Climate Change	The effective delivery of this strategy will support the council's Climate Change priorities.
Efficient and effective use of resources	The strategy supports the commitments in the council's Safety Valve Agreement to ensure efficient use of the Designated School Grant High Needs Block.
Health and Wellbeing	Health lifestyles of children and young people is a key component of the SEND strategy.
S17 Crime and Disorder	There are no specific elements of the strategy which address crime and disorder.
Wards Affected	All wards are affected.
Groups Affected	Children, young people families and key stakeholders.
Budget and Policy Framework	2014 Special Educational Needs and Disability (SEND) Code of Practice.
Key Decision	Yes.
Urgent Decision	No.
Impact on Looked After Children and Care Leavers	The effective delivery of the strategy will positively benefit looked after children and care leavers.

## MAIN REPORT

### Information and Analysis

5. Darlington Council and its partners, including parents, schools, colleges, health and the voluntary sector, are ambitious for all children and young people and are committed to supporting them to achieve their best outcomes. For children and young people with special educational needs aged 0-25, this requires partners, to work together to ensure that there is high quality, integrated and inclusive education, and support that is flexible and responsive.
6. The SEND Strategy provides the framework for partners to work together to achieve the vision and outcomes for SEND in Darlington. The draft strategy has been extensively co-produced with children and young people, the Darlington Parent Carer Forum and the Integrated Care Board (ICB). In addition, professionals from the council and education

providers have contributed to the development of the strategy. The voices of children and young people have been central to developing both the strategic objectives and outcomes in the strategy.

7. An extensive engagement exercise has been undertaken with young people. Officers have met with over 70 young people in early years, primary, secondary, Further education and specialist settings to ensure that young people's priorities have shaped the development of the strategy. The overarching themes included in the strategy have largely come directly from these discussions. In developing this strategy, what is important to children and young people and what they want to do and achieve in their lives now, and in the future, has been considered.
8. The Darlington Special Educational Needs and Disability (SEND) Strategy 2025–2029 describes the partners' collective vision and aspirations for children and young people with special educational needs and provides a framework for partners to collaborate to deliver shared priorities for the next four years and sets out how they will be implemented.
9. During the period of the Strategy there will be further changes to meet children's needs going forward, the context will evolve as the new government's priorities become clearer and the landscape of schools and providers will develop. The Strategy therefore needs to have sufficient flexibility to ensure that different or emerging issues can be incorporated.
10. Darlington has experienced an increase in the number of pupils with SEND, particularly those with EHCPs. There has been a 13.5% rise in requests for assessment compared to this same period in Dec 2022. The largest growth is in the under-fives and post 16/18 age groups. This growth mirrors the regional picture. All the local specialist provision is at capacity. The Council is working productively with local partners and national government to expand specialist capacity in Darlington and maintain a positive financial position through the implementation of the Safety Valve agreement to address the historic deficit on the High Needs Block.
11. The vision for SEND is ambitious and aspirational, it stretches beyond the boundaries of the Local Authority to all partners and children and young people with SEND, with or without an EHCP.
12. The implementation of the SEND Strategy will be guided by the following principles:
  - (a) Maximising the potential of a continuum of local provision in Darlington for children, young people and young adults from 0 to 25 years of age.
  - (b) Further developing partnerships with health, other agencies and parents/carers to ensure effective collaboration to meet the needs of children, young people and young adults.
  - (c) Developing an integrated approach in the development and delivery of personalised provision, that includes joint decision-making processes between education, social care and health.
  - (d) Prioritising early assessment of need and ensuring timely intervention and support.

- (e) Every provider, school, college or other setting, in Darlington to have good or outstanding provision for children, young people and young adults with additional needs and have access to high quality professional development and support.
  - (f) Using all data available effectively to identify issues to inform the strategy and monitor its effectiveness over time.
  - (g) Including parents/carers and young people's voice in the development of the strategy.
  - (h) Ensuring that current and future SEND Reforms are an integral element of the SEND Strategy and progress towards implementation is monitored by appropriate bodies.
13. Five key areas, building on the preparation for adulthood outcomes as outlined in the Code of Practice 2015, were used as headings in the consultation and form the framework for this strategy. This approach will encourage a more effective pathway into adulthood and enable young people to build on life skills and support their aspirations:
- (a) Being as healthy as possible;
  - (b) Having good education, training and opportunities;
  - (c) Family, Friends and Relationships;
  - (d) Into Adulthood towards independence;
  - (e) Darlington - our town, community and environment.

### **Financial Implications**

14. The Council is delivering the outcomes outlined in the Safety Valve Agreement with the Department for Education to address the historic deficit on the Dedicated School Grant High Needs Block. The Council is on track to meet the projected deficit target in 2024/25. Based on current projections the council is on track to achieve a £0 DSG deficit by the end of the agreement, but this is subject to any increased demand pressures in the future.

### **Legal Implications**

15. The Council also has duties under the Children and Families Act 2014 to make special educational provision for children and young people whose needs cannot reasonably be met from the resources normally available to schools and post-16 institutions. The Council has additional statutory duties under section 19 of the Education Act 1996 to provide education for pupils needing alternative education and under the Children and Families Act 2014 to meet the needs of pupils and young people up to the age of 25 with special educational needs. Approval of the SEND Strategy contributes to the fulfilment by the Council of these obligations.

### **HR Implications**

16. There are no direct HR implications associated with this report.

### **Estates and Property Advice**

17. There are no direct estates implications associated with this report.

### **Procurement Advice**

18. There are no direct procurement implications associated with this report.

### **Carbon Impact and Climate Change**

19. The effective delivery of this strategy will support the council's Climate Change priorities. Specifically, by reducing the need to access specialist provision through the continued development of early intervention models. Specialist out of area provision often requires significantly longer travel to school.

### **Equalities considerations**

20. Children and young people with SEND often experience inequalities of access and outcomes across the country. Each of the key priorities aims to address the inequalities experienced by children, young people and families. The core work, in strengthening mainstream provision will enhance the principles of inclusion and providing nurturing environments for all, regardless of their needs.

### **Consultation**

21. Initial consultation on this strategy took place with a range of partners through 2024. The SEND Strategy has been co-produced with key stakeholders including children and young people and parents/carers. Plans are in place to start a conversation with the wider population, this will include further conversation with parents, carers, children, and young people and stakeholders about how best they can be supported to achieve the co-produced vision and outcomes. The consultation process will use a combination of electronic and online consultation and engagement events.

### **Outcome of Consultation**

22. A public consultation to gather views on the strategy opened on 25 October 2024 and is due to finish on 31 December 2024. Following analysis of the consultation responses a final version of the strategy will be brought to a future cabinet for decision.

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Darlington Local Area Partnership  
Special Educational Needs & Disabilities  
**SEND Strategy**  
2025-2029



Consultation  
Document

This refreshed Darlington local Area SEND Strategy sets the Local Area’s priorities for the next 4 years.

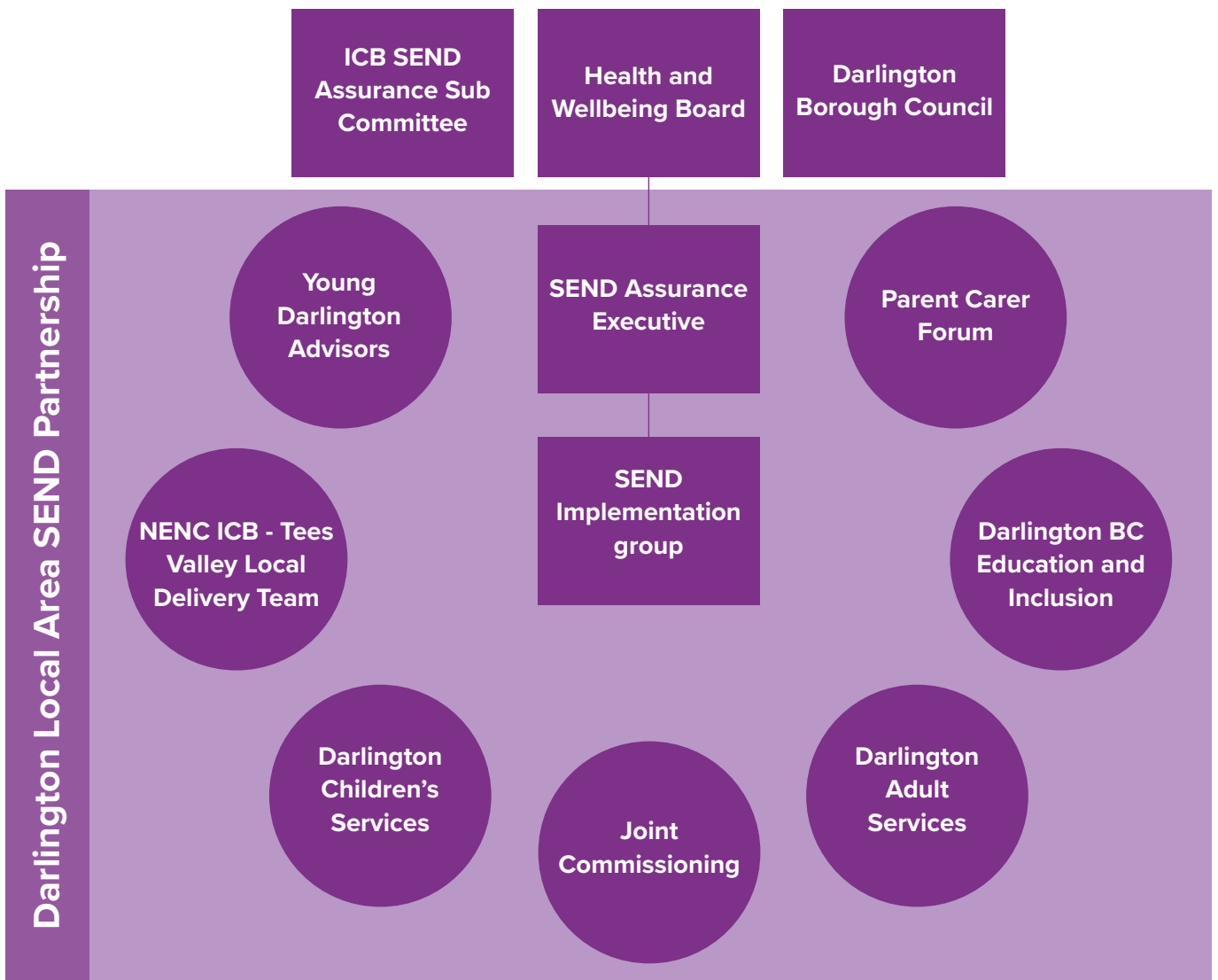
In Darlington we are committed to working in partnership across our local area to coordinate support, care and learning for SEND children, young people, and their families, so they are able to fulfil their ambitions and to thrive.

The Strategy builds on existing good practice and addressing those areas where services need to be strengthened. This includes:

- improved access to and experience of therapeutic, mental health, and physical health services;
- supporting more children and young people to attend an inclusive setting or school in Darlington where needs are met earlier; and
- broadening access to a wide range of short breaks and local community activities.

We are proud of the quality of the schools and early years provision in Darlington: we know our schools and settings work hard to deliver good outcomes for children and young people. We know however, that we need to work hard to improve some areas of our services and that we need to improve our communication with children, young people, parents and carers to improve our understanding of their experiences and to involve them more closely in the design and delivery of the services which support them.

## Local governance



# Darlington context

## General

### Population



Population growth (2012-2022) **+4.0%**

Number of households



Household growth (2014-2024)

**+9.2%**

## Economy



**£530.50**

Median weekly full time earnings for residents

**85.9%**

Workers earning the living wage

Economically active residents



**81.6%**

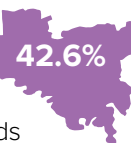


**86.4%**

Child poverty in Darlington

**25.2%**

Inequality in child poverty across Darlington wards



## People

EHC Plans



**285**



**791**



**80.6%**

of EHC assessments completed in 20 week period

Data March 2024



**80.7%** with no identified special education needs

**16436**

pupils on Darlington schools roll

**13.9%** identified with special education needs

**5.4%** pupils with an Education, Health and Care Plan

## Place

**32** villages and hamlets surrounding a historic town centre



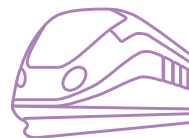
**16** Parks

**10** Nature Reserves

**2** Rivers

**4** train stations

Darlington, North Road, Dinsdale and Teesside Airport



Teesside International Airport



# National and local drivers

This strategy is informed by related key national documents such as the Children and Families Act (2014), SEND Code of Practice (2015), National Autism Strategy (2021), the National Disability Strategy (2021) and the NHS Long Term Plan.

It is consistent with the values and ambitions outlined in the Darlington Council Plan 2024-2027.

## Co-producing the strategy

Darlington’s Local Area SEND partnership has developed this strategy for children and young people with Special Educational Needs and/or Disabilities (SEND) through co-production. It has been co-created by children and young people; parents and carers; and those who work with them across the partnership. The following set of priorities has been shaped into a clear set of actions the shared thoughts, words and phrases of children, young people, parents and carers (via the Darlington Parent Carer Forum), and strategic partners.

The priorities directly respond to the ambitions for children and young people in Darlington identified through a series of events and consultations undertaken in the last year, involving children and young people, their parents and carers, and those who support young people. Five key areas, building on the preparation for adulthood outcomes were used as headings in the consultation and form the framework for this strategy. It was agreed that this approach will encourage a more effective pathway into adulthood and enable children and young people to build on life skills and support their aspirations.

The voice of children and young people has been clear. This is their borough. They want their voices to be heard in shaping the future of Darlington.



# Strategy framework

The strategy framework sets the Local Area's priorities for the next 4 years.

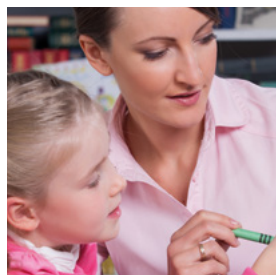
It is set out across the five key areas

## Five key areas

- 1. Being as healthy as possible
- 2. Having good education, training and opportunities
- 3. Family, friends and relationships.
- 4. Into adulthood towards independence
- 5. Darlington - our town, community and environment

Each Key area is presented across the following four headings:

What Children and Young People said is important to them	What Parents and Carers said is important to them	What we will do	The Difference this will make
This is a summary of what Children and Young people said was most important to them when thinking about each key area.	This is a summary of what Parents and carers said was most important to them when thinking about each key area.	This is an expression of the commitments that the Local Area Partnership has made to children and young people with SEND in Darlington.	This sets out the difference the strategy looks to deliver for children and young people, parents and carers.



## Being as healthy as possible

What Children and Young People said is important to them	What Parent and Carers said is important to them	What we will do	The difference this will make
<p>Having good mental health is important: Being able to talk to people who listen, understand and support you helps.</p> <p>To be healthy It's important to have a balanced diet, healthy eating habits and to drink lots of water - not focusing purely on fruit and vegetables but having a mix of everything, as well as a good nights sleep.</p> <p>Exercise in whatever way suits you best is good for your mental and physical health e.g. the gym, walking, sporting clubs, dancing, swimming.</p> <p>Not focusing on unrealistic health expectations from media.</p>	<p>Maintaining positive mental health and physical health is important.</p> <p>Effective and timely access to mental &amp; physical health support.</p> <p>Having suitable education provision is important in ensuring good physical and mental health.</p> <p>It can be difficult to maintain a healthy diet, particularly where sensory needs impact this.</p> <p>Communication between health and education services needs to be improved.</p> <p>More inclusive opportunities for exercise and social inclusion are needed.</p> <p>Independence in respect of healthy lifestyle choices.</p>	<p>We will improve inclusive opportunities to be active in Darlington.</p> <p>We will support community organisations and community facilities to be more inclusive of children and young people.</p> <p>We will effectively manage waiting lists for health appointments especially access to mental health services.</p> <p>We will ensure the new public health strategy is fully inclusive of children and young people with SEND.</p>	<p>I will know when, where and how to access support if I am physically or emotionally unwell.</p> <p>I will be able to access support and advice in a timely way.</p> <p>I will be able to make a healthy meal or snack.</p> <p>I will be able to choose from and access a range of activities either independently or with support to help keep me as active as possible.</p> <p>People supporting me will talk to each other and work with me and my family/carers to plan my support together.</p>



## Having good education, training and opportunities

What Children and Young People said is important to them	What Parent and Carers said is important to them	What we will do	The difference this will make
<p>'Need to be learning about real life issues, so we can know how to handle them when it happens.'</p> <p>Prefer practical/'fun' learning.</p> <p>More extra-curricular learning e.g. clubs, groups, after school activities.</p> <p>More support to help me plan my future: qualifications, further and higher education, advice and guidance on accessing different jobs (childcare, police, army, beauty therapist YouTuber, robotics etc).</p> <p>More volunteer/work experience opportunities needed from a younger age.</p> <p>No Bullying, including online.</p>	<p>Suitable education in a suitable school environment.</p> <p>To feel included, respected, valued and safe while at school.</p> <p>Availability and accessibility of information in relation to SEND support, improved and consistent SEND offer in schools and training / upskilling of school staff in respect of SEND.</p> <p>Skills for independence to be included consistently in education.</p> <p>Ensuring early identification of needs that are met flexibly, effectively and consistently through thorough and coordinated planning to prevent emerging needs escalating including for emotional, social &amp; mental health needs.</p> <p>Choice and flexibility regarding appropriate, supported and fulfilling education and employment opportunities.</p>	<p>We will launch an Inclusion Charter across all Darlington education settings.</p> <p>We will work with education settings to address barriers to attendance for children and young people with SEND.</p> <p>We will work with education settings to include developing skills for independence as part of their offer.</p> <p>We will develop and implement a multi-agency strategy for Emotionally Based School Avoidance (EBSA) to support children and young people, families and educational settings.</p> <p>We will make sure that Preparation for Adulthood is central to all Education, Health and Care Plans and individual SEN plans.</p>	<p>I will feel safe, happy and valued in my nursery, school or college.</p> <p>I will go to my local nursery, school or college and my teachers will know how to support me to achieve my goals.</p> <p>I will enjoy my early years, school or college setting and will have good attendance.</p> <p>I will be able to achieve good qualifications to help me get a good job or higher education.</p> <p>I will know where and how to access information on jobs, courses and volunteering opportunities.</p> <p>I will be confident that I have the skills I need to move on to the next phase in my journey to adulthood.</p>

## Family, friends and relationships

What Children and Young People said is important to them	What Parent and Carers said is important to them	What we will do	The difference this will make
<p>Love, care and support.</p> <p>Recognising that families are all different. Being loved and cared for as well as stability, security, trust and safety are important.</p> <p>Stability, security, trust, safety, communication, listening.</p> <p>Making friends is important.</p> <p>Healthy relationships are important e.g. friendships, family, school.</p> <p>Being provided for e.g. food, Wi-Fi, pocket money, shelter.</p> <p>Independence support.</p>	<p>Positive relationships with friends and family.</p> <p>To develop reciprocal relationships/ lasting friendships.</p> <p>Support to develop confidence and self-acceptance.</p> <p>Child/young person's voice is listened to.</p>	<p>We will support schools, education providers and health services to offer education on healthy relationships.</p> <p>We will work as a partnership to support individuals and families to greater empowerment.</p> <p>We will make sure that there is a range of high quality local short break opportunities available for eligible children and young people with SEND.</p> <p>We will hold regular events for Parents and Carers to discuss current SEND issues with local area Leaders. We will find a way to expand this to a children and young person's opportunity.</p> <p>We will listen to, and support, children and young people with SEND to raise their aspirations and achieve their ambitions.</p>	<p>I will know what a healthy relationship is and know how to manage my relationships with different groups of people.</p> <p>I will be able to access places and activities in the community where I can make and maintain friendships.</p> <p>We will be involved in more local decision making.</p> <p>My family/carers will be supported to support me achieve my dreams.</p> <p>We will be more aware of what is, and what isn't, happening in Darlington.</p> <p>I will have a better choice of short breaks available locally.</p>



## Into adulthood towards independence

What Children and Young People said is important to them	What Parent and Carers said is important to them	What we will do	The difference this will make
<p>More support with independence from an earlier age.</p> <p>Help with transitions.</p> <p>More support with taxes, budgeting and finances.</p> <p>More work opportunities for under 18's.</p> <p>Life skills - knowing how to move into adulthood.</p> <p>Being able to do things on your own (not relying on anyone), walking to school yourself, cooking own meals, doing laundry yourself.</p>	<p>Improved preparing for adulthood support from an earlier age learning skills for managing finances, transport/travel training opportunities, support to develop confidence and self-acceptance.</p> <p>Choice and flexibility regarding appropriate, supported and fulfilling education and employment opportunities.</p> <p>Increase/improvements in the local post 16 offer.</p> <p>To be as independent as possible.</p> <p>That young people are appropriately supported to become active and contributing members of society.</p> <p>That young people's voices continue to be heard and listened to.</p> <p>Supported opportunities in respect of independent living skills including safe and appropriately supported housing options.</p>	<p>We will make sure that there are clear pathways into adulthood that have been co-produced.</p> <p>We will make sure good quality information and guidance is available for individuals, and their families, as they move from childhood to adulthood. This will include advice on:- finance; benefits; adult services in the NHS and Darlington BC; getting a job; getting a place to live; and adult rights and independence.</p> <p>We will make sure there are clear pathways into employment and opportunities for all.</p> <p>We will make sure that local housing and independent living opportunities are available for those who meet the relevant eligibility criteria.</p> <p>We will work with local +16 education setting to provide better life skills training.</p>	<p>I will know how to manage money and take care of myself.</p> <p>I feel confident to travel safely wherever I want to go.</p> <p>My views are listened too, I will be able to make decisions about the support I need.</p> <p>I will be able to choose where I live, who I live with and will feel supported to live as independently as possible.</p> <p>I will have better support towards work and if I have a job.</p>

## Darlington - our town, community and environment

What Children and Young People said is important to them	What Parent and Carers said is important to them	What we will do	The difference this will make
<p>Having a variety of activities that they enjoy. The Dolphin Centre, parks and sports are popular and they enjoy activities such as bowling, shopping, gaming and funfairs as well as groups like Scouts, Brownies &amp; Rainbows.</p> <p>They would like to see less crime and a calmer, cleaner environment with more nature spaces, more play areas with green spaces and more events for teenagers.</p> <p>More youth centres and a wider variety of shops/centres e.g. comic shops, gaming centres, youth centres</p> <p>Safer &amp; better public transport with buses that run after 6pm</p> <p>Less potholes</p>	<p>Increased social &amp; leisure opportunities for those with similar interests including for those with the highest need</p> <p>Safe and inclusive meeting spaces/ places to check in within the community.</p> <p>Increased understanding and acceptance from the whole community with inclusive community opportunities for all ages.</p> <p>To feel valued and to have a sense of belonging and involvement in the community.</p>	<p>We will create and develop a new Local Offer for Darlington. Making sure it is the main information and communication point for SEND locally</p> <p>We will work with local clubs and organisations to support children and young people with SEND to be included in activities and opportunities available across Darlington.</p> <p>We will make sure that community safety works on inclusion of children and young people with SEND, including looking a safe spaces in the local community.</p> <p>We will make sure children and young people with SEND are involved in service development and commissioning activity</p> <p>We will work with local transport providers to make sure public transport is more inclusive and welcoming</p>	<p>I will be able to choose from a variety of activities in Darlington that interest me</p> <p>I know that staff in youth clubs, leisure centres and shops will understand me and know how to communicate with me</p> <p>I can make friends at Inclusive Youth events across Darlington</p> <p>I will feel safer when I am out and about in Darlington</p> <p>I will be asked for my views and be able to change and shape services and facilities in Darlington for me</p> <p>I will be able and supported to use public transport in Darlington</p>



## How will we know we have made a difference?

This Strategy will be underpinned by a detailed delivery plan created from the commitments we have made in this strategy.

We will measure impact through performance data gathered across schools, the local authority and the NHS. We will measure this against national and/or local data wherever possible.

The voices of children, young people and parents and carers will be captured through feedback received as part of the quality assurance and review process of both EHC plans and SEN support planning in Schools.

An annual survey and/or engagement sessions in schools and settings will provide the opportunity to gather evidence of impact on the experiences of children and young people.

We will work closely with Darlington Parent Carer Forum, and others, to ensure the voice of parents and carers is heard and understood.

The strategy and plan will be delivered through the SEND Implementation Group and monitored by the SEND Assurance Executive with updates submitted regularly to the Health and Wellbeing Board.

An annual report to the Health & Wellbeing Board will outline our collective achievements as well as any challenges encountered and joint solutions developed which will be publicly available.

## Darlington Local Area Partnership

Through these commitments the Local Area SEND partnership looks to offer opportunities for children and young people with SEND to thrive and become active and valued members of the Darlington community.



**HEALTH AND WELLBEING BOARD**  
**5<sup>th</sup> December 2024**

ITEM NO.

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**Darlington Physical Activity Strategy**  
**2025 - 2035**

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**SUMMARY REPORT****Purpose of the Report**

1. The purpose of the Physical Activity strategy is to improve participation and engagement in physical activity and sport in Darlington and support people to get active and move more across the whole life span.

**Summary**

2. When we are young being active helps our bodies develop properly, with a strong heart, healthy bones, muscles and brain development. As we get older, regular exercise reduces our risk of illness - from heart disease, stroke, colon and breast cancer to obesity and osteoporosis, among other conditions. National data shows that every year leading an active lifestyle prevents 900,000 cases of diabetes and 93,000 cases of dementia (the leading cause of death in the UK) – a combined saving of £7.1 billion to the UK economy. Around 1 in 3 men and 1 in 2 women are not achieving recommended levels of activity for good health.
3. The most recent Darlington data (November 22/23) shows that in Darlington we have 19.7% of adults who are being active for more than 150 minutes per week, with higher participation rates than our regional neighbours and national benchmarks. However, we also have 18.1% of our population who are inactive; not doing any physical activity at all. This is lower than our regional neighbours but higher than the national average. As per the UK Chief Medical Officers' guidelines, adults should be aiming for 150 minutes of moderate activity per week.
4. Our delivery plan is broken down into the sections from the "Eight Investments That Work for Physical Activity" as advised by the International Society for Physical Activity and Health. This reflects the process we undertook for consultation, engaging with a multitude of stakeholders.
5. The 8 key themes of the delivery plan are Healthcare, Active Travel, Sport and Recreation for All, Active Urban Design, Community Wide Physical Activity, Schools, Workplaces and Public Education and Mass Media. These inform the themes of the action plan, which details actions ranging from short, medium and long term. These actions have been created in collaboration with an assigned Public Health Consultant and local stakeholders in their relevant areas of expertise.

## Recommendation

6. It is recommended that: -
- ( ) The Health and Wellbeing Board note and consider the content of the Physical Activity Strategy.
  - ( ) The Health and Wellbeing Board endorse the Sector Led Improvement approach for multiagency working, to support the implementation and delivery of the action plan with measurable outcomes.

## Reasons

7. The recommendations are supported by the following reasons: -
- ( ) The Physical Activity Strategy supports priorities identified in the Council Plan, Health and Wellbeing Strategy and Darlington Joint Strategic Needs Assessment.

**Lorraine Hughes – Director of Public Health**

**Ian Thompson – Assistant Director Community Services**

## Background Papers

Darlington Physical Activity Strategy

Joanne Hennessey extension 6205

Council Plan	This report supports the Council Plan priorities of Living Well and Tackling Climate Change.
Addressing inequalities	The strategy provides a detailed action plan
Tackling Climate Change	There is an action plan around transport, and sustainable travel.
Efficient and effective use of resources	N/A
Health and Wellbeing	This proposed collaborative project will provide improvements for health and wellbeing of residents with prevention and management of a multitude of health conditions.
S17 Crime and Disorder	There are no implications arising from this report.
Wards Affected	All
Groups Affected	All
Budget and Policy Framework	N/A
Key Decision	N/A

Urgent Decision	N/A
Impact on Looked After Children and Care Leavers	The same as the rest of the population of Darlington.

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# Darlington Physical Activity Strategy 2025 - 2035



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# Foreword

Physical activity is critical for promoting good health. It improves wellbeing and the number of years that people can live healthily. Our Darlington Physical Activity strategy 2025 - 2035 sets out our ambitions for those who live, work and visit Darlington to have access and support to engage in appropriate physical activity that promotes better health and wellbeing. I would like to thank everyone that took part in the consultation and helped develop it.

The strategy has been put together after 10 plus years during which inequalities across our communities have worsened. The inequality in life expectancy between the best and worse areas across Darlington is 10.6 years for women and 13 years for men. This strategy will support the Council and other organisations in addressing rising inequalities in our communities at a time of financial challenge. It is important that this strategy acknowledges this.

So, there is no quick fix but with the right values and commitment we will help more people across our communities to access physical activity, give them the freedom to get moving and the opportunity to stay healthy for longer.

**Cllr Matthew Roche**

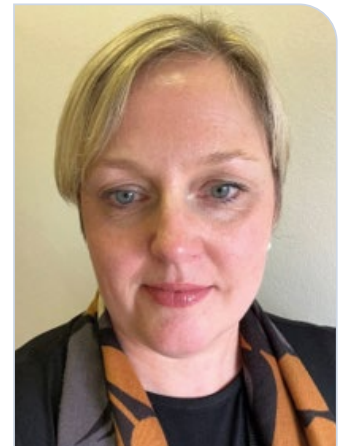
Darlington Borough Council Cabinet Portfolio Holder for Health and Housing



In September 2022, the Association of Directors of Public Health North East approved the sponsorship of a regional programme of Sector Led Improvement (SLI) for physical activity. With the support of national funding from the Office of Health Improvement and Disparities (OHID) the regional programme included the development of a self-assessment tool, based upon the 'Eight Investments That Work for Physical Activity' developed by the International Society for Physical Activity and Health.

The 8 themes within the self-assessment tool are set out below:

Workplaces	Healthcare
Sport and Recreation for All	Community Wide Physical Activity
Schools	Active Travel
Urban Design	Public Education and Mass Media



Darlington engaged with the SLI programme, carrying out a large-scale consultation across sectors. The outputs of the consultation have been used to inform the development of this Physical Activity Strategy, utilising the framework of the Eight Investments. More information on this process can be found in appendix 2.

I welcome the development of this Physical Activity Strategy, as we know being physically active has huge benefits for people. This of course includes the many physical benefits gained from becoming more active, including preventing and managing long term health conditions, whilst also supporting people to age well and maintain their independence for longer. Physical activity also has benefits for a person's mental health and wellbeing including socialising and meeting new people, managing stress, improving mood, helping with sleep and connecting with nature and the outdoors.

Encouraging and providing opportunities for everyone in Darlington to be more active, whether that is through day-to-day activities, promoting active travel or taking part in formal sessions or a sport they enjoy, will make a big difference in supporting good health and wellbeing for all.

**Lorraine Hughes**

Darlington Borough Council Director of Public Health

# Our Plan for Darlington

Darlington is a vibrant town, with thriving communities and a lively town centre. It is a great place to live, work, learn and have fun.

We believe physical activity has a big role to play in improving the physical and mental health of our town, supporting the economy, reconnecting communities and rebuilding a stronger society for all.

The Council Plan illustrated below outlines the councils long term ambitions for Darlington and its priorities over the next three years (2024-2027). It gives strategic direction to the council and council services making clear what we will do and how we will do it. Darlington Physical Activity Strategy describes our approach to help meet the ambitions and priorities for health and wellbeing.

## Core Principles

Addressing inequalities

Efficient and effective use of resources

Tackling climate change

## Vision for the Borough

Darlington is one of the best places to live, learn, work and invest in the UK, with a strong and sustainable economy, healthy thriving communities and opportunities for all

## Our Ambitions

Inclusive and sustainable economy

Living well and staying healthy

Thriving places and connected communities

## Our Priorities

<b>Economy</b>  A strong sustainable economy and highly skilled workforce with opportunities for all	<b>Homes</b>  Affordable and secure homes that meet the current and future needs of residents	<b>Living Well</b>  A healthier and better quality of life for longer, supporting those who need it most	<b>Children and Young People</b>  The best start in life, realising potential and raising aspirations	<b>Communities</b>  Safer, healthier, and more engaged communities	<b>Local Environment</b>  A well-connected, clean and sustainable borough
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## Our Approach

Collaborate and work in partnership

Data driven and intelligence led

Embed core principles in decision-making

Deliver through key strategies and plans

Model our core values in our work and behaviours

Share key challenges and celebrate success





# What are the benefits of physical activity

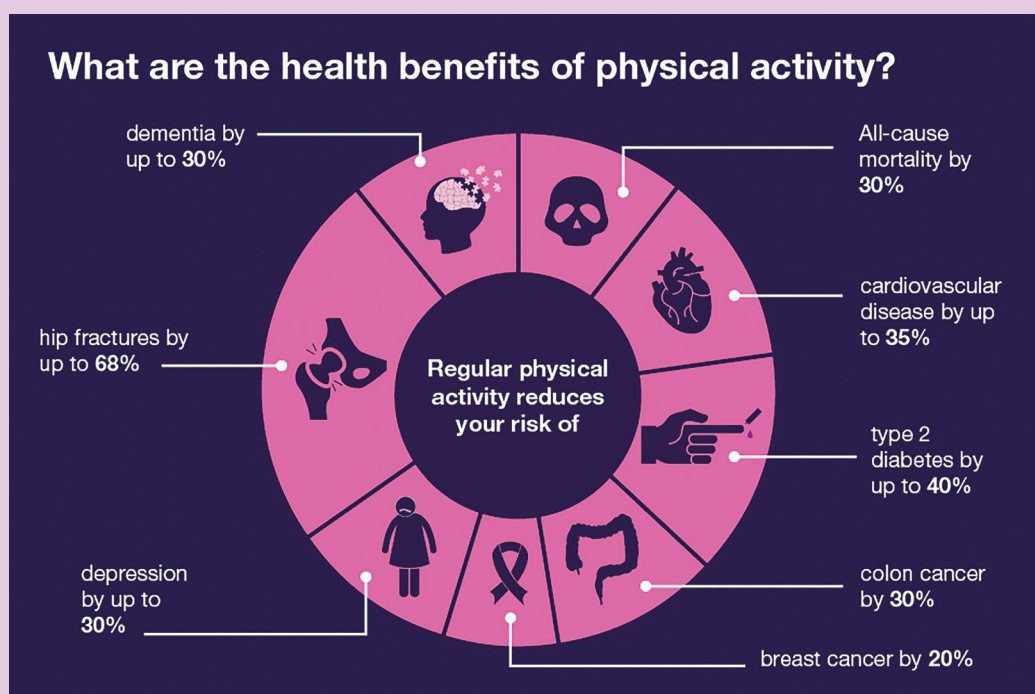
## The World Health Organisation defines physical activity as:

“Any bodily movement produced by skeletal muscles that requires energy expenditure. Physical activity refers to all movement including during leisure time, for transport to get to and from places, or as part of a person’s work or domestic activities.”

## Movement has astonishing benefits for our physical health (Sport England 2023)

When we’re young, being active helps our bodies develop properly, with a strong heart, healthy bones, muscles and brain development.

As we get older, regular exercise reduces our risk of illness - from heart disease, stroke, colon and breast cancer to obesity and osteoporosis, among other conditions. Every year, leading an active lifestyle prevents 900,000 cases of diabetes and 93,000 cases of dementia (the leading cause of death in the UK) – a combined saving of £7.1 billion to the UK economy.



## Movement makes us happier (Sport England 2023)

The evidence shows that people who get active have greater levels of happiness, life satisfaction and feeling worthwhile. They’re also less likely to feel anxious. For many of us, this is thanks to the social interaction involved in sport and activity – as we meet and make new friends and share uplifting moments together, whether playing a game in a park, or being part of a team in a local league – while for others it’s about discovering a greater sense of self-worth and resilience, or a combination of these and other positive factors.

When researchers at Sheffield Hallam University valued the role of sport and physical activity to the nation’s wellbeing, they calculated it as £42bn per year – more than three times the total NHS spending on mental health in England.

Guidance on physical activity levels is captured in the images below (as of Autumn 2024). Full information can be found in Appendix 3.

### Physical activity for early years (birth – 5 years)

Active children are healthy, happy, school ready and sleep better

- BUILDS RELATIONSHIPS & SOCIAL SKILLS
- IMPROVES SLEEP
- MAINTAINS HEALTH & WEIGHT
- DEVELOPS MUSCLES & BONES
- CONTRIBUTES TO BRAIN DEVELOPMENT & LEARNING
- ENCOURAGES MOVEMENT & CO-ORDINATION

#### Every movement counts

Aim for at least **180 Minutes per day** for children 1-5 years

**Under-1s** at least 30 minutes across the day

Activities: TUMMY TIME, OBJECT PLAY, SWIM, WALK, MESSY PLAY, DANCE, SCOOT, BIKE, JUMP, CLIMB, GAMES, PLAY, THROW/CATCH, SKIP.

**Get Strong. Move More. Break up inactivity**

### Physical activity for children and young people (5 – 18 Years)

- BUILDS CONFIDENCE & SOCIAL SKILLS
- DEVELOPS CO-ORDINATION
- IMPROVES CONCENTRATION & LEARNING
- STRENGTHENS MUSCLES & BONES
- IMPROVES HEALTH & FITNESS
- MAINTAINS HEALTHY WEIGHT
- IMPROVES SLEEP
- MAKES YOU FEEL GOOD

#### Be physically active

Spread activity throughout the day

Aim for an average of at least **60 minutes per day across week**

All activities should make you breathe faster & feel warmer

Activities: PLAY, RUN/WALK, SWIM, SKATE, SKIP, CLIMB, BIKE, ACTIVE TRAVEL, SPORT, PE, WORKOUT, DANCE.

**Get strong** (vs. INACTIVITY) | **Move more**

Find ways to help all children and young people accumulate an average of at least 60 minutes physical activity per day across the week

UK Chief Medical Officers' Physical Activity Guidelines, 2019

### Physical activity for adults and older adults

- Benefits health
- Improves sleep
- Maintains healthy weight
- Manages stress
- Improves quality of life
- Type II Diabetes -40%
- Cardiovascular disease -35%
- Falls, depression etc. -30%
- Joint and back pain -25%
- Cancers (colon and breast) -20%

Reduces your chance of

Some is good, more is better | Make a start today: it's never too late | Every minute counts

#### Be active

at least **150 minutes** moderate intensity per week OR at least **75 minutes** vigorous intensity per week

**Build strength** to keep muscles, bones and joints strong

on at least **2 days a week**

Activities: Swim, Brisk walk, Cycle, Gym, Yoga, Carry heavy bags, Stairs, Sport, BOWLS, Tai Chi, Dance.

**Minimise sedentary time** Break up periods of inactivity

**Improve balance** For older adults, to reduce the chance of frailty and falls 2 days a week

UK Chief Medical Officers' Physical Activity Guidelines 2019

### Physical Activity for Disabled Adults

Make it a daily habit

**Disabled adults**

Physical activity makes you feel good | Being inactive is harmful to health

Improves mental health and quality of life | Makes maintaining a healthy weight easier

Creates opportunities to meet new people and feel part of the community | Makes daily tasks easier and increases independence

Helps to prevent chronic disease | Don't be still for too long (Even a little movement is better than nothing)

Strengthens muscles and bones | Improves mobility and balance | Improves fitness

Do strength and balance activities on at least two days per week | For substantial health gains aim for at least 150 minutes each week of moderate intensity activity

Remember the talk test: Can talk, but not sing = moderate intensity activity | Difficulty talking without pausing = vigorous intensity activity

UK Chief Medical Officers' Physical Activity Guidelines, 2019

# Vision

We want all Darlington residents and those visiting and working here to have access to appropriate physical activity opportunities that positively supports their health and wellbeing.

# Mission

We want to ensure that being active is a right and not a privilege, for those living, working and visiting Darlington to experience the associated benefits to their physical and mental health.

In keeping with the Chief Medical Officers messaging on physical activity, 'Some is good, more is better', we will work together using a whole systems approach to ensure opportunities to be physically active are embedded into our systems. Physical activity will be used as a tool in prevention of poor health as well as treatment pathways.



# Aims

- To support wider strategies addressing inequalities, efficient and effective use of resources and tackling climate change.
- Embed physical activity into health care pathways as a means of prevention and treatment of ill health. Equip health care professionals to direct clients to appropriate physical activity opportunities.
- Increase public awareness and knowledge of the benefits of physical activity and how to embrace local opportunities to be more active.
- Enable incidental and purposeful physical activity as part of everyday life through best practice in workplaces and sympathetic urban policy and design.
- Celebrate and support the organisations and clubs in Darlington that already make provision for physical activity either through structured sport or recreational programmes.
- Ensure our education system gives young people an active learning experience to establish lifelong healthy habits.
- Host a variety of events that celebrate participation and success in sport and physical activity.
- We will prioritise areas of deprivation and high need with funding opportunities made available, such as the recently released Sport England place expansion funding.
- Darlington Borough Council are facing significant financial challenges. We will commit to making the most of opportunities presented through external funding and partnership working to deliver our action plan.

Our aims are led by local insight, evidence and multi-agency consultation. They will seek to impact most significantly on areas of social deprivation which currently experience some of the lowest levels of physical activity.

# Current position

Figure 1 shows the most recent (November 22/23) comparison of adult levels of physical activity across Darlington, the Tees Valley and England. The graphs show that we do have a good percentage of adults who are being active for more than 150 minutes per week, with higher participation rates than our regional neighbours and national benchmarks. However, we also have 18.1% of our population who are inactive; not doing any physical activity at all. This is lower than our regional neighbours but higher than the national average. As recommended by the Chief Medical Officer, adults should be aiming for 150 minutes of moderate activity per week.

Figure 1: **Levels of activity per week** (November 22-23)

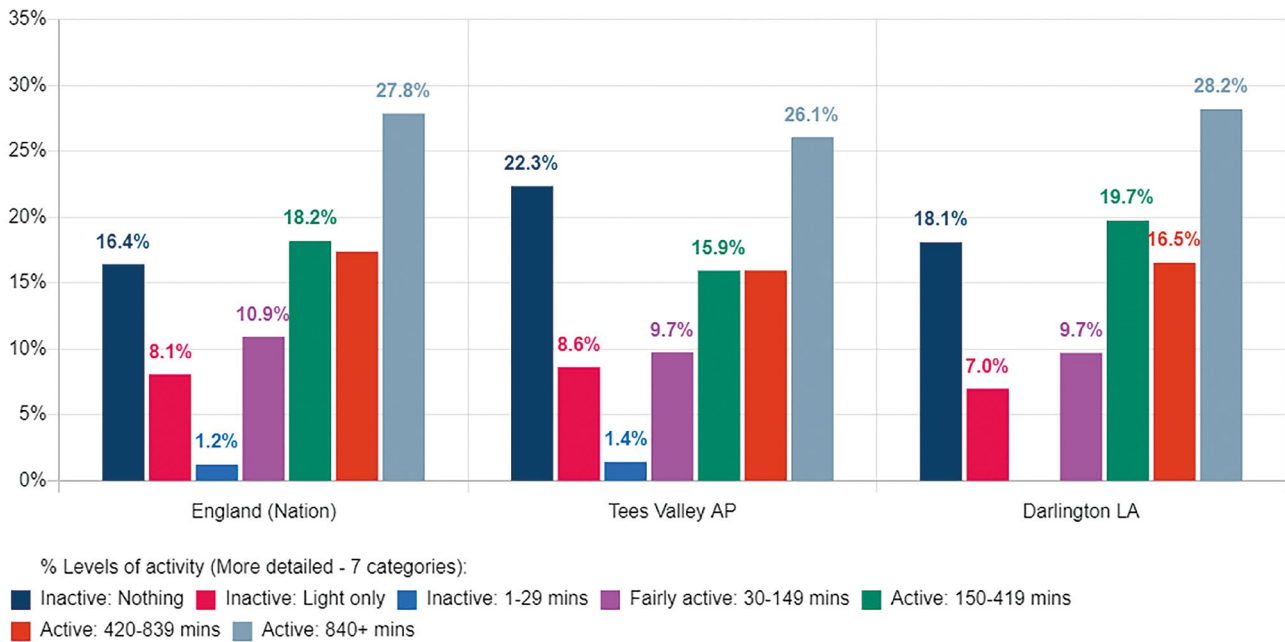
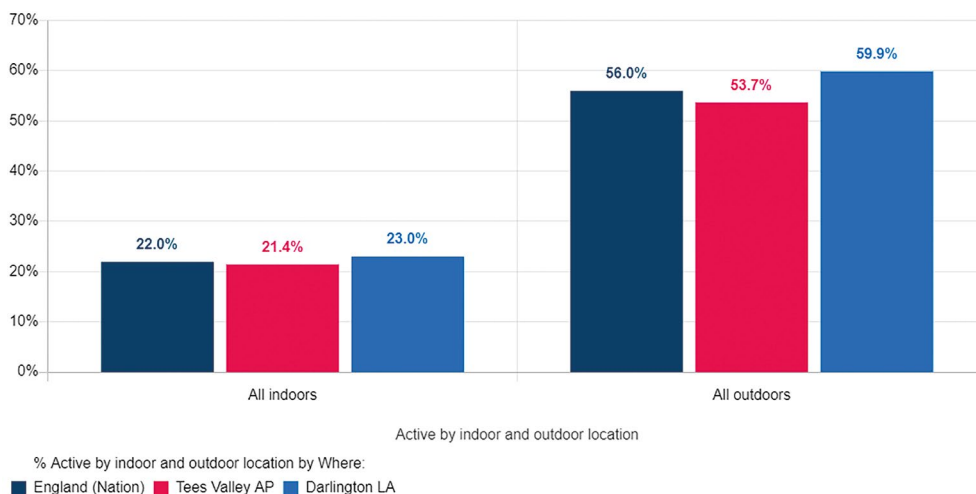


Figure 2 shows the most recent (November 22/23) comparison of the activity levels for indoor and outdoor locations across Darlington, the Tees Valley and England. Our results reflect the other areas in showing more people are active outdoors than indoors.

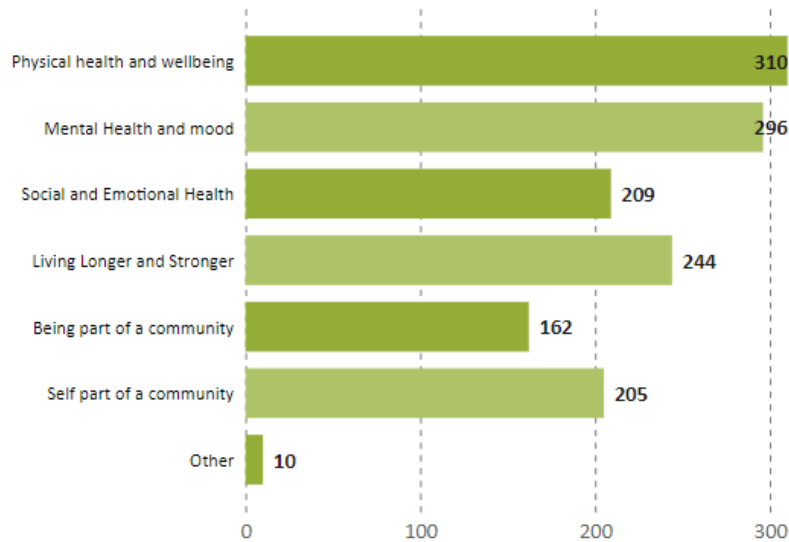
Figure 2: **Active by indoor and outdoor location** (November 22-23)



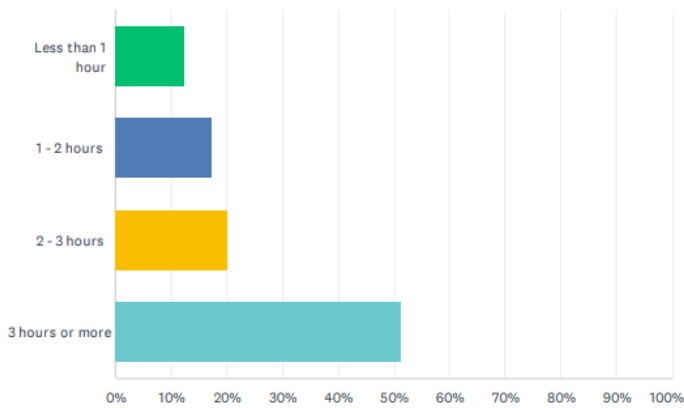
In Autumn 2023 we surveyed our residents via our communication channels to ask how active they are, why they are active and what they enjoy doing. We had 332 responses, for which we are grateful. The below images highlight and celebrate the responses.



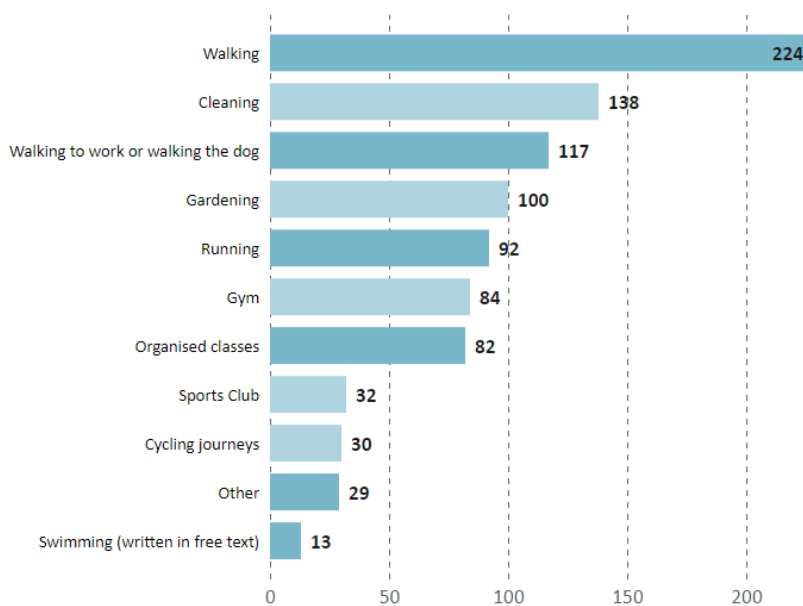
## Which of the following do you think physical activity helps with?



## How much physical activity do you do per week in hours?



## What physical activity do you do?



# Our population and assets

In Darlington we are lucky to boast an extensive number of assets that enable us to be active. The following image captures some of these. More information on this can be found on the council Move More web pages.



# What we will do

Extensive research has been carried out by Sport England online, in communities and in the Houses of Parliament to identify issues that have the greatest potential for preventing and tackling inequalities in engagement with sport and physical activities. The Five Big Issues are listed below and have influenced our delivery plan.

## Recover and reinvent

Recover from the damage of covid-19 and reinvent as a vibrant network of organisations providing sport and physical activity opportunities that meet the needs of different people.

## Connecting communities

Focusing on sport and physical activity's ability to make better places to live and bring people together.

## Positive experiences for children and young people

An unrelenting focus on positive experiences for all children and young people as the foundations for a long and healthy life.

## Connecting health and wellbeing

Strengthening the connections between sport, physical activity, health and wellbeing so more people can feel the benefits of, and advocate for an active life.

## Active environments

Creating and protecting the places and spaces that make it easier for people to be active.

# Delivery Plan

Our delivery plan is broken down into the sections from the “Eight Investments That Work for Physical Activity” (Appendix 2) as advised by the International Society for Physical Activity and Health. This is the summary of our delivery plan in the eight key areas.

## Healthcare

Working with health and social care professionals to develop their confidence in physical activity as a tool in prevention and treatment. We will do this by offering opportunities to increase their knowledge, training opportunities and ensure they are up to date with the local signposting options.

## Active Travel

Working in partnership with key stakeholders to encourage making cycling and walking the natural choice for travel. Raising awareness of opportunities within community, workplace and residential settings to encourage access, increase awareness and confidence on active travel.

## Urban Design

Our policies and plans will support equitable access to parks, local amenities and good walking and cycling infrastructure. Making being active more accessible and appealing.

## Workplaces

Provide workplaces in Darlington advice, guidance, and examples of best practice that they can use to develop and promote an active workplace including active travel to the workplace and homeworking.

## Public Education and Mass Media

Make marketing and media a priority theme within this strategy to promote and celebrate physical activity opportunities in Darlington. Signpost clubs, community groups and voluntary groups to the resources available to them to help promote their physical activity offer.

## Sport and Recreation for all

Provide and support equitable access for the residents of Darlington to formal and informal sporting opportunities across the lifespan of the strategy.

## Schools

Work with all education providers and partners in Darlington to support a wide range of physical activity opportunities within and beyond the curriculum.

## Community Wide Physical Activity

Offer a multi-faceted approach to engage the residents of Darlington in physical activity. We will work with a wide range of stakeholders ensuring a whole systems approach in promoting and providing community wide physical activity opportunities.







# How we will measure impact

We will be able to measure our success by use of data and insight, and measures against our action plan. Utilising Sport England Active Lives survey data to inform a Darlington physical activity insight tool. We will engage with the residents via our annual survey using the Darlington Borough Council communications channels. This will measure attitudes, participation and types of physical activity that our residents are doing. This will be benchmarked against our first survey in 2023.

We will continue to monitor responses to our schools Healthy Lifestyles survey where we will analyse responses from pupils in years 5, 6, 7 and 8 across Darlington, capturing their attitudes towards physical activity and their own activity levels.

We will form a Physical Activity steering group to ensure a whole systems approach is being used to implement the action plan. This will ensure we continue to focus on increasing physical activity across the eight sectors involved in the design and delivery of this strategy. The action plan can be seen at Appendix 1.

We will commit to sharing key challenges and celebrating success. We will be open in our communication with residents, businesses and stakeholders to help everyone stay informed.

## A timeline of the process is outlined below

### Delivery Phases

#### Year 1

- Establish structures
- Undertake system mapping
- Produce delivery plans
- Design measurement framework

#### Years 2-4

- Short term actions delivered - Review action plan alongside Council Plan review

#### Years 4-6

- Medium term actions delivered

#### Years 6-9

- Long term action and delivery

#### Year 9-10

- Evaluation
- Consultation on next strategy

# Appendix 1 - Action Plan

SHORT	MEDIUM	LONG
2 - 4 YEARS	4 - 6 YEARS	6 - 9 YEARS

## Healthcare

TERM	ACTION	LEAD BODY
<b>S</b>	Review existing physical activity training packages and programmes for health care professionals. Consolidate and standardise the training offer to support standardisation of learning. Increase the availability of online formats so that healthcare professionals can access more flexibly. (Training offer to consider - GPCC, MECC, MI, Stroke Rehabilitation, PACC.)	Darlington Primary Care Network (PCN) and Darlington Borough Council Public Health Team.
<b>S</b>	Move away from over emphasis of the medical model and clinical language and terminology, better equipping healthcare professionals to relay information to clients and patients.	Darlington PCN
<b>S</b>	Physical activity training should highlight and sign post locally provided opportunities and case studies. Imagery should be representative of the wider Darlington community.	Darlington PCN and Darlington Borough Council Public Health Team.
<b>S</b>	Improve the signposting of local physical activity provision to the personalised healthcare offer made by Social Prescribers, Health Coaches and Care Co-ordinators. These links should be established and validated by the PCN.	Darlington PCN
<b>S</b>	Increased physical activity and reduction of inactivity to be considered as an intervention for most presenting clients either as a main or secondary support mechanism.	Darlington PCN
<b>M</b>	Promote the good practice currently taking place with specific health related groups such as Exercise on Referral, Cancer Prehabilitation/Rehabilitation and Exercise. After Stroke. Capture the participant experience and journey through video (to be used as a promotional tool but also as a guide to new participants - i.e. what will it be like, what do I need to bring with me, who will be leading the class etc.)	Darlington Borough Council Communications, Move More and Public Health teams.
<b>M</b>	Create case studies of local people to capture best practise and impact of physical activity on health care. Support a shift away from cure, towards prevention and early intervention. To be utilised on service websites and via social media channels.	Darlington Borough Council Public Health and Communications team. Primary Healthcare Darlington (PHD).
<b>M</b>	Review the pathways into existing physical activity interventions to identify opportunities to make these services more inclusive, accessible and consistently signposted.	Darlington PCN
<b>M</b>	Encourage the development of 'Active GP Practices' across Darlington. Establish a pilot with one practice to share findings.	Darlington Public Health and Tees Valley Sport.
<b>L</b>	Work with health and social care to establish the most impactful approach to promoting the local physical activity offer.	Darlington Public Health and Tees Valley Sport.
<b>L</b>	Optimise the use of available technology both in terms of promotion of opportunity and enabling self service where appropriate. Increase awareness of physical activity apps and programmes (such as Couch to 5k and We are undefeatable )	Darlington PCN



## Public education and mass media

TERM	ACTION	LEAD BODY
<b>S</b>	Create a marketing and media plan to promote physical activity benefits and opportunities to be active in Darlington. Link with national campaigns and resources.	Darlington Borough Council Move More and Communications teams.
	Through Darlington Borough Council facilities, website and the marketing and media plan, encourage families to utilise local and national guidance and support with getting and staying active. Local examples include the Growing Healthy Darlington app. National examples include the NHS Better Health campaign resources.	Darlington Borough Council Move More and communications teams.
<b>S</b>	Recognise and celebrate high level performers and the clubs and organisations that support their progression to elite level through Darlington Sports Winners Awards and Future Champions scheme.	Darlington Borough Council Move More and Communications teams.
<b>M</b>	Encourage physical activity providers and community groups to sign up to Sport Englands Digital Hub which provides access to a series of resources aimed at improving the digital marketing skills of the sport and physical activity sector.	Darlington Borough Council Move More and Communications teams.
<b>M</b>	Offer a digital marketing support service to physical activity providers in Darlington. This may include support in designing media content, signposting services and hosting guides on the Move More website.	Darlington Borough Council Move More and Communications teams.
<b>M</b>	Build on the success of Darlington's existing events and supplement these with broader physical activity offers to encourage higher levels of sustained participation associated with the main event - e.g. spin off events for the Darlington 10k, Move More Days and Active Parks.	Darlington Borough Council Move More and Events Team
<b>L</b>	Create a digital guide to physical activity opportunities in Darlington that can be promoted via the marketing and media plan. This can also be downloaded by developers to include in welcome packs for new homeowners and developments.	Darlington Borough Council Move More and Communications teams.



## Workplace health

TERM	ACTION	LEAD BODY
<b>S</b>	Signpost organisations to work with Sustrans to introduce active travel into the workplace.	Darlington Borough Council Communications Team, Sustrans.
<b>M</b>	Develop the Darlington Borough Council Employee Wellbeing Programme. This should include referral to physical activity opportunities as well as corporate discounts. Prepare this as a template of 'good practice' to share with local businesses.	Darlington Borough Council Human Resources and Move More Teams.
<b>M</b>	Produce a secure cycle storage, shower and changing facilities map for Darlington to encourage active travel to the workplace and leisure activities.	Sustrans and Darlington Borough Council Communications Team
<b>M</b>	Prepare guidance on opportunities to be active at work including walking meetings, standing desks, lunch time walks and active commuting as part of the wellbeing offer. This should be representative of sectors with lower paid jobs, part time jobs, and shift work.	Darlington Borough Council Human Resources and Public Health Teams.
<b>M</b>	Make guidance available on being active whilst working from home as part of the wellbeing offer.	Darlington Borough Council Human Resources and Public Health Teams.
<b>L</b>	Explore a workplace health & wellbeing award for Darlington. Recognise and celebrate best practice through Darlington Sports Awards or the Stronger Communities Awards.	Darlington Borough Council Human Resources, Public Health and Move More Teams.



## Active travel

TERM	ACTION	LEAD BODY
<b>S</b>	Darlington Transport Strategy 2022 - 2030. Objective 1. Reduce Transport's impact on the environment and support Health and Wellbeing. Our aim is to support these proposals and work to maximise positive impact of the local plan in terms of reducing physical inactivity. (sections 1.8.1 and 5.3.1).	Darlington Borough Council Transport team
<b>S</b>	Include active travel campaigns within the physical activity marketing and media plan e.g. promote cycling and walking as greener, healthier and less costly ways to travel for shorter journeys or the benefits of active travel using climate change & sustainability as alternative motivations.	Darlington Borough Council Transport team
<b>M</b>	Darlington Active Travel Hub 2024 - 2027 (subject to funding) will provide a variety of opportunities within community, workplace and residential settings to increase access, awareness and confidence on active travel. We will support this work through the physical activity marketing and media plan and within Council venues.	Sustrans and Darlington Borough Council Communications Team.
<b>L</b>	Develop the existing Joint Strategic Needs Assessment (JSNA) to incorporate insight on active travel rates in Darlington.	Darlington Borough Council Public Health team
<b>L</b>	Consider integrating active travel into holiday activity programmes. This would include teaching children in Darlington how to independently travel to the town centre to access leisure facilities such as the Dolphin Centre and other physical activity assets.	Darlington Borough Council Move More Team
<b>L</b>	To explore the School Streets initiative. A scheme that restricts traffic outside schools during pick up and drop off times, reducing congestion, boosting safety and enabling more pupils to walk, wheel or cycle.	Darlington Borough Council Transport, Public Health and Highway teams.





## Sport and recreation for all

TERM	ACTION	LEAD BODY
<b>M</b>	Survey sports clubs on capacity and access to facilities. This will establish opportunities for growth and demand on facilities. We will continue to work with education facility providers to encourage ease and consistent access to school sports facilities for local clubs and communities. Extend this to private providers as well as local authority and voluntary sports clubs. This should inform the imminent sports facility and playing pitch strategy refresh.	Darlington Borough Council Move More Team
<b>M</b>	Explore the Play Streets initiative which involves neighbour led short road closures to enable safe spaces to play.	Darlington Borough Council Public Health and Highways Teams. And PSAG.
<b>M</b>	Produce a swim development plan linked with the Dolphin Centre and wider community pools. Looking to increase engagement and access.	Dolphin Centre and School Academy Trusts.
<b>M</b>	Seek to attract high profile sports events to the town and sub region, to raise awareness, provide role models and encourage participation. A recent example being British Cycling National Championships 2024.	Darlington Borough Council Events team
<b>M</b>	Continue to recognise and celebrate high level performers and the clubs and organisations that support their progression to elite level. Provide local role models to inspire people of Darlington.	Darlington Borough Council Move More and Communications teams.
<b>M</b>	Create a network to support the promotion and provision of active ageing. To support people to live longer and stronger. Linking with provider services to support opportunities and provide guidance.	Darlington Borough Council Public Health Team, Tees Valley Sport and NHS.
<b>L</b>	Continue to invest in key assets such as the Dolphin Centre and Eastbourne Sports Complex to widen participation in recreation and leisure facilities.	Darlington Borough Council Leisure services
<b>L</b>	Consider developing more place based activities that focus on deprived areas. Working with families and priority groups in those areas to co-design the physical activity offer using the Houghton Matters project as an example of good practice. We will target funding from Sport England to target placed based work in our deprived wards in Darlington.	Darlington Borough Council Move More and Public Health Teams.

## Community wide physical activity

TERM	ACTION	LEAD BODY
<b>S</b>	Identify real and perceived gaps in physical activity provision (activities wise and geographically). Capture this information on the annual public survey and any additional data collection required. Use the information to shape future provision and marketing.	Darlington Borough Council Move More and Public Health Teams.
<b>S</b>	Provide an advisory service for good practice on club and community group governance, community based delivery and facility management through the Darlington Move More Team.	Darlington Borough Council Move More team
<b>M</b>	Explore developing a network or forum that brings together voluntary community organisations, sports clubs and other stakeholders to share good practice and promote the integration of physical activity into broader wellbeing interventions. This could be web based, online, email or in person.	Darlington Borough Council Move More team
<b>M</b>	Support a volunteer pathway for clubs, community groups and events to increase capacity for delivery. We will work alongside National Governing Bodies, Active Partnerships, School Games and wider national voluntary networks to implement.	Darlington Borough Council Move More team
<b>M</b>	Publish a website page dedicated to providing up to date funding opportunities available to community groups to enable local physical activity opportunities and programmes to be delivered for example Haughton matters.	Darlington Borough Council Move More team
<b>L</b>	Identify opportunities to expand community outreach programmes in priority areas of the town, subject to funding opportunities and requirements.	Darlington Borough Council Move More team



## Active urban design

TERM	ACTION	LEAD BODY
<b>S</b>	Continued commitment in Darlington Local Plan 2016-2036 to consider the impact urban design has on health and wellbeing. Darlington Public Health will provide advice and recommendations on the best ways to impact health and wellbeing through urban design (WHO guidance). See 1.8.1 and 5.3.1 of the local plan.	Darlington Borough Council Planning Teams.
<b>M</b>	Create a digital guide to physical activity opportunities in Darlington. This can then be downloaded by developers to include in welcome packs for new homeowners and developments.	Darlington Borough Council Move More and Communications Teams.
<b>M</b>	Work with the planning team to understand what statutory and non statutory processes are in place in relation to consultation in the local plan and in relation to planning applications.	Darlington Borough Council Public Health and Planning Teams.
<b>M</b>	Explore funding and partnership opportunities to enable initiatives such as Play Streets and Park Play. These primarily target areas of high deprivation or where there is limited green space. Examples include the Sport England place based fund.	Darlington Borough Council
<b>M</b>	Ensuring Health Impact Assessments (HIA's) are produced and submitted by the developer for relevant new developments in Darlington. Working collaboratively we will maximise the opportunities for healthy design and physical activity. Considering approaches such as 20 minute neighbourhoods and the healthy streets approach.	Darlington Borough Council - Public Health and Planning teams.
<b>M</b>	We will link urban design into the Darlington Playing Pitch and Facilities strategy action plan refresh. This will maximise opportunities on any new or existing sport and physical activity capital projects.	Darlington Borough Council - Move More team



## Schools

TERM	ACTION	LEAD BODY
<b>S</b>	Schools to adopt a whole school approach to physical activity before, within and beyond the curriculum, offering a broad range of activities and opportunities including high quality physical education and develop pathways to community providers which are inclusive for all.	Schools
<b>S</b>	Work with the School Games Organiser to offer leadership opportunities from primary through to secondary and beyond.	Schools and School Game Organiser.
<b>S</b>	Work with the School Games Organiser on the Darlington School Games, offer targeting specific groups who would most benefit from taking part. Consider the different motivations for young people to take part in physical activity and sport e.g. social, mental, emotional as well as physical.	Schools and School Game Organiser.
<b>S</b>	Widen access to eligible children to the Holiday Activities and Food programme which focuses on health, wellbeing and raising aspirations.	Schools and Darlington Borough Council Move More Team.
<b>S</b>	Make the Healthy Early Years award (which includes physical activity criteria) available to all pre school provider settings. The awards offers advice on active settings and opportunities for activity throughout the day.	Darlington Borough Council Education and Public Health Team.
<b>M</b>	Active School examples, good practice and case studies to be shared across Darlington schools through network opportunities.	Tees Valley Sport, Darlington Public Health Team and Schools.
<b>M</b>	Engage with initiatives to support and encourage active travel, such as WOW (Living Streets) and the Sustrans Big Walk and Wheel and promote active classrooms across all schools for opportunities to be active throughout the day.	Schools
<b>M</b>	Encourage the opening of school facilities for community use, to meet the needs of local community.	Schools
<b>M</b>	Promote participation in positive activities. Building on the strong links made with local colleges, where students are facilitating consultation and engagement on our service's behalf with young people as part of their curricular activity. Implement student champions as the voice of Darlington Borough Council leisure services.	Schools, Dolphin Centre.
<b>L</b>	Use pupil voice as a mechanism to understand the barriers to young people being physically active. Involve them in the co - creation and design of activities and plans.	Schools and Darlington Borough Council Education Team.
<b>L</b>	Consider the use of a range of PE schemes and resources to support the delivery of high quality PE, such as Teach Active, Complete PE , Real PE and the PE Hub.	Schools
<b>L</b>	Raise Key Stage 2 swimming attainment levels in Darlington schools through ongoing delivery, monitoring and engagement in swimming.	Schools, Dolphin Centre.
<b>L</b>	Explore opportunities to link the water education journey of young people in Darlington with career pathways into leisure.	Schools, Dolphin Centre.
<b>L</b>	Ensure that all pre - school and school aged actions are adapted and shared with those who are educated outside of a school setting. This will encourage access and develop an understanding of the benefits of physical activity.	Darlington Borough Council Education Team.



# Appendix 2 - Sector Led Improvement approach

## Regional Physical Activity Collaboration in the North East using a Sector Led Improvement (SLI) Approach

We want all Darlington residents and those visiting and working here to have access to appropriate physical activity that positively supports their health and wellbeing.

- Sector-led improvement (SLI) is the approach to put improvements in place by local authorities and is a framework set out by the Local Government Association since 2011
- SLI takes the view that the responsibility and regulation of improvement in local government should stay with councils and is underpinned by the following key principles:
  - Councils are responsible for their own performance and improvement
  - Councils are primarily accountable to local communities
  - Councils have a collective responsibility for the performance of the sector as a whole
  - Coordinate across the local system.

### Outline line of decision-making process:

- Scoping meetings between Chair of NE Association of Directors of Public Health (ADPH) Healthy Weight and Physical Activity (PA) Network and regional Office of Health Improvement and Disparities.
- Established a regional leadership group with representation from Office of Health Improvement and Disparities, Active Partnerships, Sport England and local authorities.
- Agreed a Sector Led Improvement (SLI) approach using International Society for Physical Activity & Health - Eight Investments That Work for Physical Activity
- NE ADPH network – approval and sponsorship for PA SLI regional programme secured in September 2022.
- National funding secured in November 2022 to help develop the SLI physical activity self assessment tool

### The SLI physical activity tool:

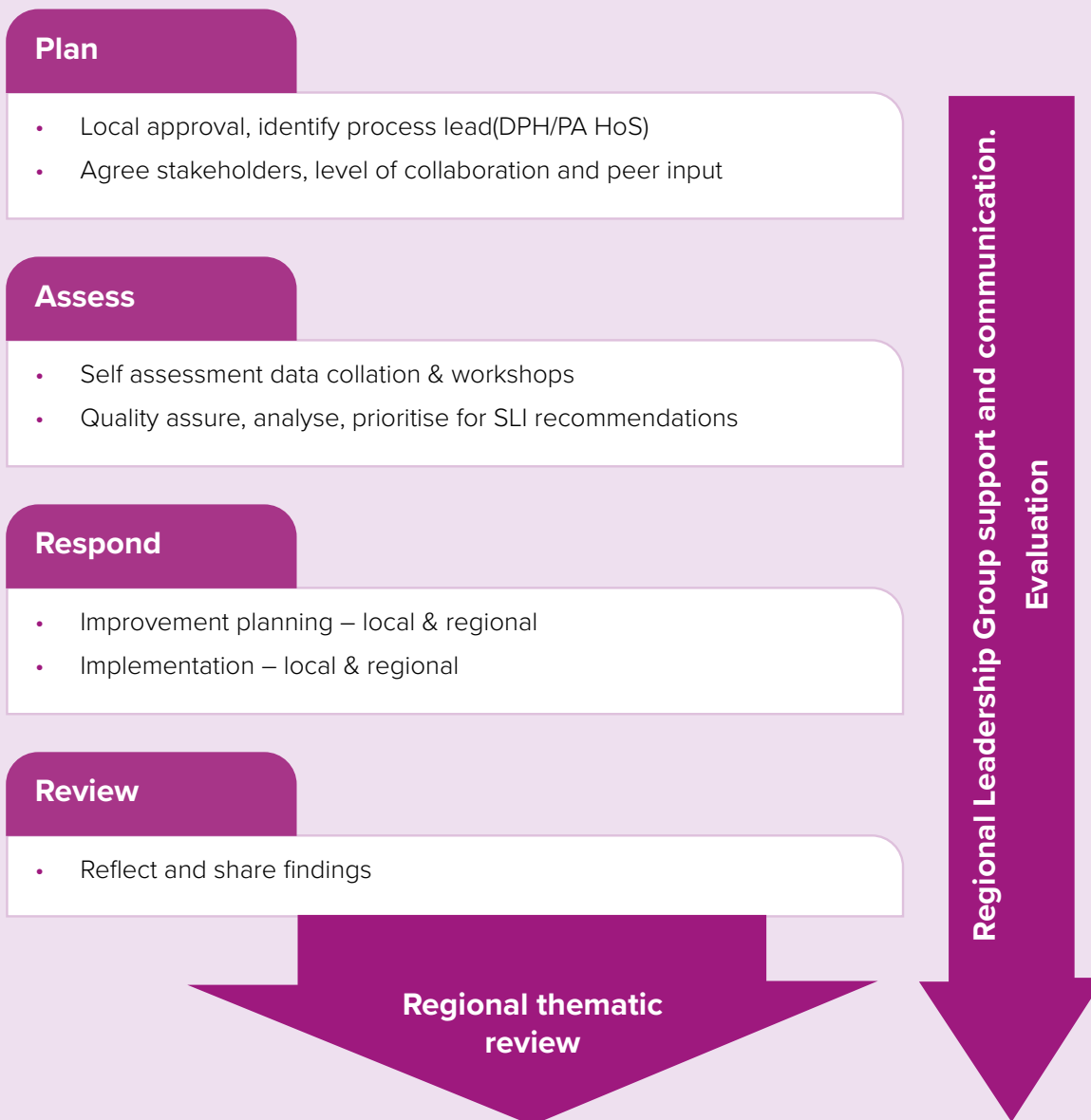
- Is based on the ISPAH Eight Investments that Work for Physical Activity which will help us better understand what is going on across the local and regional physical activity system
- Looks at all activities through an inequalities lens to determine how inequalities are being tackled
- Incorporates other evidence (National Institute for Health and Care Excellence, Sport England etc) to provide evidence-based questions
- Looks to capture evidence of impact; local priorities & evidence and opportunities to do more at local or regional level





- Is at pilot stage so there are opportunities to inform its future development and use
- Success of the approach very much depends on an open and honest appraisal of current activities and approaches
- There are likely to be variations in the activities that local authorities are undertaking owing to local priorities and available resources
- The approach should be viewed to take a snapshot of where we are and to help identify opportunities.

## Example SLI process



# Appendix 3 - UK Chief Medical Officer recommendations on physical activity (Autumn 2024)

Inequalities in health arise because of inequalities in society. The conditions in which people are born, grow, live, work, and age. Over the last few decades physical activity levels have gradually declined in daily life and the impact of this has been felt disproportionately by certain disadvantaged groups

The coronavirus (Covid-19) pandemic and cost of living crises have further exacerbated inequalities in physical activity levels and has been most acute with women; young people aged 16-34; over 75s; disabled people and people with long-term health conditions; those from Black, Asian and other minority ethnic backgrounds; and those living in deprived areas.

It is widely acknowledged that being physically active can help in the prevention and management of a range of health conditions, including: some cancers; obesity; type 2 diabetes; cardiovascular diseases (CVD) including coronary heart disease and stroke; hypertension; osteoarthritis; mental health conditions including depression and anxiety; and many other conditions

In addition to supporting good physical and mental health and functioning, regular physical activity also contributes to a range of wider social, environmental and economic benefits for individuals, communities and wider society.

## Summary of Guidelines by age group

### Under-5s Infants (less than 1 year)

Infants should be physically active several times every day in a variety of ways, including interactive floor-based activity, e.g. crawling. For infants not yet mobile, this includes at least

30 minutes of tummy time spread throughout the day while awake (and other movements such as reaching and grasping, pushing and pulling themselves independently, or rolling over); more is better. NB: Tummy time may be unfamiliar to babies at first, but can be increased gradually, starting from a minute or two at a time, as the baby becomes used to it. Babies should not sleep on their tummies.

### Toddlers (1-2 years)

Toddlers should spend at least 180 minutes (3 hours) per day in a variety of physical activities at any intensity, including active and outdoor play, spread throughout the day; more is better.

### Pre-schoolers (3-4 years)

Pre-schoolers should spend at least 180 minutes (3 hours) per day in a variety of physical activities spread throughout the day, including active and outdoor play. More is better; the 180 minutes should include at least 60 minutes of moderate-to-vigorous intensity physical activity.

### Children and Young People (5 to 18 years)

Children and young people should engage in moderate-to-vigorous intensity physical activity for an average of at least 60 minutes per day across the week. This can include all forms of activity such as physical education, active travel, after-school activities, play and sports. Children and young people should engage in a variety of types and intensities of physical activity across the week to develop movement skills, muscular fitness, and bone strength. Children and young people should aim to minimise the amount of time spent being sedentary, and when physically possible should break up long periods of not moving with at least light physical activity.

### **Adults (19 to 64 years)**

For good physical and mental health, adults should aim to be physically active every day. Any activity is better than none, and more is better still. Adults should do activities to develop or maintain strength in the major muscle groups. These could include heavy gardening, carrying heavy shopping, or resistance exercise. Muscle strengthening activities should be done on at least two days a week, but any strengthening activity is better than none. Each week, adults should accumulate at least 150 minutes (2 1/2 hours) of moderate intensity activity (such as brisk walking or cycling); or 75 minutes of vigorous intensity activity (such as running); or even shorter durations of very vigorous intensity activity (such as sprinting or stair climbing); or a combination of moderate, vigorous and very vigorous intensity activity. Adults should aim to minimise the amount of time spent being sedentary, and when physically possible should break up long periods of inactivity with at least light physical activity.

### **Older Adults (65 years and over)**

Older adults should participate in daily physical activity to gain health benefits, including maintenance of good physical and mental health, wellbeing, and social functioning. Some physical activity is better than none: even light activity brings some health benefits compared to being sedentary, while more daily physical activity provides greater health and social benefits. Older adults should maintain or improve their physical function by undertaking activities aimed at improving or maintaining muscle strength, balance and flexibility on at least two days a week. These could be combined with sessions involving moderate aerobic activity or could be additional sessions aimed specifically at these components of fitness. Each week older adults should aim to accumulate 150 minutes (two and a half hours)

of moderate intensity aerobic activity, building up gradually from current levels. Those who are already regularly active can achieve these benefits through 75 minutes of vigorous intensity activity, or a combination of moderate and vigorous activity, to achieve greater benefits. Weight-bearing activities which create an impact through the body help to maintain bone health. Older adults should break up prolonged periods of being sedentary with light activity when physically possible, or at least with standing, as this has distinct health benefits for older people.

Despite the widely reported benefits of physical activity, most adults and many children across the UK are insufficiently active to meet the full set of recommendations. We want this report to act as a catalyst for a change in our attitudes to physical activity. These guidelines present a UK-wide consensus on the amount and type of physical activity that is needed to benefit health across the life course. The guidelines have been updated using the best available evidence and reflect what we know now about the relationship between physical activity and health. The guidelines apply across the population, irrespective of gender, age or socio-economic status. We know there are clear health inequalities in relation to physical inactivity and therefore interventions to promote physical activity must consider this. We want as many people as possible to make use of these guidelines to work towards and achieve the recommended activity levels. With that in mind, we have developed the updated infographics included in this report to help bring the guidelines to life and make them easy for everyone to use. We hope these guidelines help all individuals to become more active. The good news is that even small changes can make a big difference over time. As we say in these guidelines: some is good, more is better.





**DARLINGTON**  
Borough Council

