

**HEALTH AND HOUSING SCRUTINY COMMITTEE
26 FEBRUARY 2025**

DARLINGTON PHYSICAL ACTIVITY STRATEGY 2025-2035

SUMMARY REPORT

Purpose of the Report

1. To update members on the outcome of the review of Darlington's Physical Activity Strategy, due for renewal in 2025.
2. The Darlington Physical Activity Strategy 2025-2035 was approved by the Health and Wellbeing Board on 5 December 2024 and is attached at **Appendix 1**.

Summary

3. The purpose of Darlington's Physical Activity Strategy is to improve participation and engagement in sport and physical activity.
4. It is one of the key delivery strategies to support the Council Plan and the timing of this review has been intentional to ensure the objectives align with the Council's priorities.
5. A further review will also be carried out in tandem with the Council Plan review in 2027 to adjust and realign the content of the strategy, if required.

Recommendation

6. It is recommended that:
 - (a) Members review and consider the renewed strategy for 2025-2035.

**Ian Thompson
Assistant Director - Community Services**

Background Papers

- i. Darlington Physical Activity Strategy 2025-2035
- ii. Eight Investments That Work for Physical Activity (International Society for Physical Activity and Health)
- iii. Uniting the Movement Strategy (Sport England)

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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	In the development and delivery of the strategy and action plan, the efficient and effective use of resources is key to ensure maximum benefits are achieved.
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	There is no impact on the Council's Budget and Policy Framework.
Key Decision	No
Urgent Decision	No
Impact on Looked After Children and Care Leavers	Looked After Children and Care Leavers routinely receive support related to health and wellbeing, including the Local Offer to Care Leavers, which includes free access to the Council's leisure services. A key aim of Darlington's Physical Activity Strategy 2025-2035 is to ensure our education system gives young people an active learning experience to establish lifelong healthy habits.

MAIN REPORT

Information and Analysis

7. 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.
8. 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 Officer's guidelines, adults should be aiming for 150 minutes of moderate activity per week.
9. Public Health and Leisure Services agreed a collaborative review of the Physical Activity Strategy to respond to changes in environments and behaviours which has been amplified following the pandemic.
10. Self-assessment was conducted using the 'Eight Investments That Work for Physical Activity' produced by the International Society for Physical Activity & Health. Eight themes were used to complete the self-assessment, including:
 - (a) Whole of School Programmes
 - (b) Community Wide Programmes
 - (c) Workplaces
 - (d) Active Travel
 - (e) Sport and Recreation for All
 - (f) Active Urban Design
 - (g) Healthcare
 - (h) Public Education and Mass Media
11. A roadshow of consultation workshops covering these themes took place in 2023/2024 with over 100 stakeholders invited alongside public consultation that generated feedback from 332 residents. In collaboration with an assigned Public Health Consultant, the outcomes of the workshops have been translated into an action plan for Darlington, which details actions ranging from short, medium and long-term.
12. Sport England's 'Uniting the Movement Strategy' has also influenced the action plan, which aligns to the priorities set in the Council Plan and the objectives of the Health and Wellbeing Strategy.

Climate Considerations

13. Darlington Physical Activity Strategy 2025-2035 includes an action plan focussed on active travel, which features as a running theme through other action plans contained within the strategy, including workplace health, public education and mass media.

The draft action plans are comprised of high-level actions. Steering groups will develop these into detailed plans and will be encouraged to consider climate considerations as an ongoing agenda item.