

### **East Herts Physical Activity Strategy 2017 -2022**

#### **Introduction**

East Herts Council is committed to improving the health and well-being of its community and enhancing the quality of people’s lives. We recognise that sport and physical activity is key to achieving this. We want every member of our community to have the opportunity to participate in physical activity in the way they wish. Whether that is, walking in open spaces, cycling to work, playing sport with friends or in a gym.

We introduce this Sport and Physical Activity Strategy to demonstrate our aspirations and commitment to this vision.

#### **Background: Our District**

The population of East Herts is approximately 145,000. Approximately, 20.5% people are currently physically inactive. People who are inactive have a much higher risk of long term conditions including cardiovascular disease, diabetes, osteoporosis and some cancers. In addition they are more likely to suffer from depression loneliness and dementia.

The average age of East Herts residents is marginally over 40, which is slightly above the average age of England at 39.6 but lower than that of East England. Its demographic is predominantly 'White British' with over 95% which is far higher than both the East of England and England as a whole.

The ageing population in East Herts very much mirrors patterns found across England. The rural nature of the District coupled with an aging population may cause bigger problems than that are found in other, more urban, Districts with social isolation likely to be an issue. Car usage is very high in the District.

The key health statistics for East Herts are as follows:

- Excess weight in children (reception) 18.4%
- Excess weight in children (Year 6) 23.9%
- Excess weight in adults 63.6%
- Physically active adults 64.5%
- Physically inactive adults 20.5%
- 4.9% of recorded cases of diabetes (17yrs +)
- 3433 (per 100,000) injuries due to falls for 80yrs+ (males)
- 5981 (per 100,000) injuries due to falls for 80yrs+ (females)

Physical activity is essential for overall health and well-being. It benefits both mental and physical health directly and indirectly. It is associated with a reduction in mortality, long term conditions and diseases such as diabetes, heart disease and bones disease. It also positively impacts mental health, stress, depression, excess weight, community cohesion and promotes a positive outlook on life.

Adults in England should aim to take part in at least 150 minutes of moderate intensity physical activity each week, in bouts of 10 minutes or more, according to physical activity guidelines for adults from the UK Chief Medical Officers.

Physical Activity can include some or all of the following activities.

<b>Physical Activity</b>			
<b>Active Living</b>	<b>Active Travel</b>	<b>Active Recreation</b>	<b>Active Sport</b>
Housework	Walking	Exercise	Organised Participation
Gardening	Cycling	Dance	Structured Competitive Activity
Walking	Jogging	Gym	Informal Sport
Chair based activities		Swimming	Swimming
		Active Play	

### Our Vision

Everyone in East Herts will have the opportunity to be physically active through work, travel or participation in sport and leisure.

### Our objectives:

To work with partners to ensure appropriate and accessible physical activity provision and information is available for:

- a) children and young people to support the reduction in excess weight and promote physical activity as part of a healthy lifestyle
- b) adults and older people to achieve a year-on-year increase in adult participation in physical activity 2017 – 2022\*
- c) adults and older people to achieve a year-on-year reduction in the number of adults who are inactive 2017 – 2022\*

*\*measured via Sport England Active Lives Survey*

### Our Journey:

Local research in East Herts (2016) is encouraging. 51% of people surveyed about physical activity indicated that they would like to be more physically active. However, they also identified key barriers with not enough time being the most significant factor at 47%.

In order to support our residents in becoming more active and receiving the vast benefits of becoming physically active we need to take a whole system approach to physical activity which requires working in partnership with key stakeholders. The development of leisure centres alone will not create an environment that all sectors of our community wish to participate in. A whole system approach recognises that it is everybody's responsibility to encourage physical activity not just those who work within the industry of leisure and sport.

The key strategic themes that will drive the Council's approach to increasing physical activity are outlined below:

- **Active Living**, encouraging our residents to build physical activity into their everyday lives
- **Active Travel**, influence infrastructure plans to make active travel an easy and convenient option for our residents
- **Active Recreation**, investing in leisure facilities, parks and open spaces to provide our residents with a range of affordable leisure opportunities across the district
- **Active Sport**, provide a facilitation role to local sports clubs and voluntary organisations to support their Health and Well-being offer to the community.

The Council recognises that there are a number of organisations, facilities and committed volunteers delivering a vast range of sport and physical activity schemes and interventions and intends to build upon those successes in collaboration with stakeholders to ensure the health and well-being of all members of our community is improved.

In developing its action plan the Council will complement the work of national, regional and local organisations including:

- Public Health England – Everybody Active Every Day
- Department of Culture Media and Sport – Sporting Future: A New Strategy for an Active Nation
- Sport England – Towards an Active Nation
- Hertfordshire County Council – Physical Activity and Sports Framework

A detailed action plan will be produced following consultation and contributions from partners and this will be reviewed annually. A summary of the key actions are highlighted below

Theme	Key Actions
Active Living	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Supporting national and regional campaigns promoting physical activity</li> <li>- Exploring social prescribing for physical activity</li> <li>- Member champions for physical activity/health and well being</li> </ul>
Active Travel	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- TBC Actions to be agreed through sustainable travel work</li> <li>- Actively influence partners and developers to think creatively about opportunities to encourage physical activity in terms of travel i.e. footpaths, cycle lanes</li> <li>- Development of a cycle hub</li> </ul>
Active Recreation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Delivery of new leisure contract, reflecting health and well-being needs of the community.</li> <li>- Develop circular walks in our parks and open spaces</li> <li>- Enhance our parks offer to improve our children's play areas, teen action zones and trim trails</li> <li>- Explore opportunities to sustain successes of the Forever Active programme</li> </ul>
Active Sport	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Commit investment where funds are available (e.g Section 106) to develop the infrastructure of sports facilities and open spaces to meet the needs of a growing population as identified in the indoor and outdoor sports spaces assessment.</li> <li>- Work with partners across the County to seek external funding via Sport England / Herts Sports Partnership</li> </ul>

This is not an exhaustive list, the action plan will be a working document evolving to reflect local needs.