

## **Promoting Physical Activity Framework**

Guidelines for producing a framework for each locality that will enable and encourage people to lead active lives.

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## 1. Introduction

- 1.1 Undertaking some form of physical activity is widely acknowledged as an important element of increasing a person's health and wellbeing. This framework builds on work undertaken by independent consultants, Ploszajski Lynch Consulting, who developed a Playing Pitch Assessment and Indoor Sports Facilities Assessment for West Suffolk, and Knight, Kavanagh and Page, who developed an Open Spaces Assessment. The purpose of these assessments is to help us shape West Suffolk into a place that will enable local people to take part in physical activity that will improve their health and wellbeing. The aim is to provide opportunities for all levels of ability, including formal and informal activity. Types of activity are very wide ranging. Formal activity could include being part of a sports club or going to the gym for example. Informal activity might include children playing in the park or walking to work as part of a daily routine.
- 1.2 Nationally, the focus is on reducing levels of inactivity across the population, the benefits of which are wide-ranging. Crucially, populations who lead active lives have been shown to have improved health and mental wellbeing and to be less reliant on health care services. We also want to see people enjoying a healthier old age; in turn saving public money. These benefits will take time to realise but it is a place we need to work towards.

## 2. Aim of the framework

- 2.1 The aim of this framework is to set out what West Suffolk Council will do, with other partners, to enable and encourage people to lead active lives.

## 3. National context

- 3.1 Through this framework we are responding to the national agenda which focuses on increasing levels of activity across the population. Through our response in this framework, we mirror the commitment to, and understanding that physical activity at any level improves the physical and mental health and wellbeing of individuals and helps to build community cohesion. It is also essential to enable equality of access to all forms of physical activity. The information below sets out that context.

### 3.2 Sporting Future: A New Strategy for an Active Nation

- 3.2.1 In December 2015, central Government published a strategy to tackle the flat lining levels of sport participation and high levels of inactivity. The strategy presents a new focus on **five key outcomes**: physical wellbeing, mental wellbeing, individual development, social and community development and economic development.

3.2.2 The important role of local councils was discussed in the strategy. It is recognised that our understanding of communities enables us to target opportunities to encourage mass participation. Councils also play an important role in bringing together schools, voluntary sports clubs, national governing bodies of sport, health and the private sector in local areas. We need to ensure that there is a place-based approach to provision, irrespective of the provider. We also need the industry as a whole to maximise provision and work together rather than providers competing against each other. It is acknowledged that getting national organisations working together to support what happens locally can be a challenge, but this work is vital to local success and can add value especially through partnership working.

### **3.3 Sport England: Uniting the movement**

3.3.1 In January 2021, Sport England launched its 10-year vision [Sport England - Uniting the movement](#) to transform lives and communities through sport and physical activity. In this vision, Sport England sets out the important role that sport and physical activity has in improving the physical and mental health of the nation, supporting the economy, reconnecting communities and rebuilding a stronger society for all. It also acknowledges the disruption caused by the pandemic and how it has reinforced and exacerbated inequalities, particularly around socio-economic status and ethnicity.

3.3.2 Five big issues have been identified within the vision that Sport England believes there is the greatest potential for preventing and tackling inequalities in sport and physical activity:

- recover and reinvent
- connecting communities
- positive experiences for children and young people
- connecting with health and wellbeing
- active environments.

### **3.4 Public Health Outcomes Framework 2019-2022**

3.4.1 The indicators in this framework [GOV.UK - Public Health Outcomes Framework](#) are refreshed every three years and help the UK Health Security Agency (formerly Public Health England) to understand trends in public health. The framework sets out a vision for public health, desired outcomes and the indicators that will help develop an understanding of how well public health is being improved and protected. The outcomes reflect a focus on how long people live and importantly, how well they live at all stages of life. The vision is 'to improve and protect the nation's health and wellbeing and improve the health of the poorest fastest'. The overarching outcomes are:

- improving the wider determinants of health
- health improvement
- health protection
- healthcare public health and preventing premature mortality.

See section 5.3 for more information about public health priorities for Suffolk.

### 3.5 National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) 2021

3.5.1 The framework sets out Government policies for achieving sustainable development, including how planning policy can contribute to promoting healthy communities. It requires planning policies to plan positively for, amongst other things, the provision and use of shared space and community facilities such as sports venues, and it notes that 'access to high quality open spaces and opportunities for sport and recreation can make an important contribution to the health and wellbeing of communities, in addition to addressing benefits for nature and climate change.' It requires planning policies to be based on 'robust and up to date assessments of the needs for open space, sports and recreation facilities and opportunities for new provision'. The NPPF is reflected by local plan documents.

## 4. The benefits of physical activity

4.1 The benefits of physical activity are well documented. Sport England sets out the benefits of physical activity (visit [Sport England - The benefits of being active](#)) as being:

- physical wellbeing
- mental wellbeing
- social and community development
- economic development
- individual development.

4.2 In 2014, the Department for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport published evidence (Source: DCMS (1) Quantifying and Valuing the Wellbeing Impacts of Culture and Sport; and (2) Quantifying the Social Impacts of Sport and Culture) which showed that:

- sport participation is associated with higher wellbeing. This increase is valued at £1,127 per person per year, or £94 per person per month
- sports participants are 14.1 per cent more likely to report good health than non-participants.

4.3 Physical activity delivers wider benefits too:

4.3.1 Sport England commissioned the Sport Industry Research Centre at Sheffied Hallam University to quantify the **financial, economic**

**and social impact** of sport and physical activity in England (Source: [Sport England - Measuring impact](#)). All figures relate to 2017 to 2018. It found that, for every £1 spent on community sport and physical activity, a £4 return on investment was created for individuals and society. Furthermore, the combined economic and social value of taking part in community sport and physical activity in England was £85.5 billion. The research showed that £42 billion worth of value was created from improved life satisfaction for 24 million participants and 3.9 million volunteers through their involvement in sport and physical activity.

4.3.2 The findings also demonstrate how physical activity plays an important role in preventing a number of serious physical and mental health conditions, with the research showing this had a value of £9.5 billion. For example, £3.6 billion worth of savings were generated from the prevention of 900,000 cases of diabetes and £450 million was saved by preventing 30 million additional visits to the GP.

4.3.3 A further £20 billion of value came from stronger and safer communities, including:

- 10,000 fewer crime incidents
- the replacement value of work carried out by sports volunteers (£5.7 billion)
- improved levels of social trust, belonging and community engagement (£14.2 billion).

#### **4.4 Health and participation data for West Suffolk**

4.4.1 Appendix A presents health data for West Suffolk which is split down to ward level. It shows any areas for concern across a number of indicators including the percentage of children who are obese at reception age and general health.

4.4.2 Appendix B presents participation rates in sport across Suffolk, data for which is taken from the Active People Survey. The number of people playing sport is monitored continuously through the Active People Survey. It is carried out on behalf of Sport England which provides a picture of sport participation levels across England, at a national and local level. It also looks at who plays sport and how they participate.

### **5. Local context**

5.1 Across Suffolk, there is a strong and established focus on local government and health, community and voluntary group partners working together to provide the best possible health outcomes and services for local people whilst tackling inequalities. West Suffolk Council is a key partner in that work and this approach is reflected through our framework.

5.2 Our [West Suffolk Council - Strategic Framework](#) sets out **resilient families and communities that are healthy and active** as one of its top three priorities alongside economic growth and homes for our communities. We will use our leadership, local connections, commissioning role, investment and assets to:

- support communities to fulfil their ambition so as to improve the lives of residents and the local environment
- work with partners to build resilience in families and communities, so that problems can be prevented at the earliest opportunity
- use our community, leisure, public open space, countryside and heritage assets so that they give the maximum benefit to West Suffolk communities.

5.2.1 The Families and Communities team and local councillors have a critical role in understanding localities. Alongside local knowledge, we utilise the [Healthy Suffolk - The State of Suffolk](#) report and [Healthy Suffolk - Place-based needs assessments](#) (more of which in section 5.4.2) that are carried out by Suffolk County Council Public Health. They are produced from qualitative and quantitative data in the Joint Strategic Needs Assessment (JSNA) for Suffolk that answers key questions such as key demographics, how healthy are Suffolk residents and the factors that influence the levels of health. This approach to understanding need is being adopted across health partners in the area and links with the work of the West Suffolk Alliance (see section 5.5 for further information). This information complements our [West Suffolk Council - Families and Communities Approach](#) and is an important part of understanding need and working with communities to raise awareness of opportunities for increasing physical activity.

### 5.3 Public health priorities for Suffolk

5.3.1 The focus of the Suffolk public health team (visit [Suffolk County Council - About public health in Suffolk](#)) is to help people stay healthy and protect them from threats to their health. This is about improving opportunities for good health and providing health and care services. The priority for public health in Suffolk is to 'address inequality in Suffolk so that it should not matter who people are or where they live when it comes to their health and opportunities in life'. The goals are to:

- **promote** health and healthy lifestyles
- **protect** the health and wellbeing of our county
- **prevent** ill health
- **prolong** lives
- **improve** health and the factors that affect health, wellbeing and health inequalities
- **support** our health and care services.

5.3.2 The Director of Public Health and Protection publishes the [Healthy Suffolk - Annual Public Health report](#) which is a core part of the JSNA (referenced in 5.2.1) and feeds into the Joint Health and Wellbeing Strategy.

#### **5.4 Suffolk and North East Essex Integrated Care System (SNEEICS)**

5.4.1 The JSNA in both Essex and Suffolk has informed the joint health and wellbeing strategies that set out priorities for improving the health and wellbeing of local populations. These are the priorities of its integrated care system (ICS) and align to the higher ambitions that it has identified (visit [SNEEICS - Higher ambitions: an overview](#)). The ICS is a forum for planning and delivering joined up care and services with everyone working together across the NHS, local government and the voluntary sector. The role of clinical commissioning groups will become integrated in the ICS.

#### **5.5 West Suffolk Alliance**

5.5.1 The [SNEEICS - West Suffolk Alliance](#) is formed of health and care partners who are committed to work together to improve the health and care system in West Suffolk for all individuals. This broad range of organisations is involved in impacting on health, care and the wider determinants of health and wellbeing. It covers the West Suffolk district and part of the Babergh and Mid Suffolk districts. The alliance has identified four key priorities:

- strengthening the support for people to stay well
- managing people's wellbeing and health in their communities
- focusing with individuals on their needs and goals
- changing both the way we work and how services are configured
- making effective use of resources.

5.5.2 The alliance uses place-based needs assessments, also utilised by our Families and Communities Team as part of our approach, to identify areas where there are opportunities to improve outcomes for people in each locality. For example, the alliance is working to integrate the approach to mental and physical health and develop the links that exist between them.

5.5.3 Partnership working across the alliance is constantly developing and joint work around finance and quality will continue the move towards system thinking.

#### **5.6 Suffolk Health and Wellbeing Board**

5.6.1 The board works to encourage integrated working between public services such as health, care and the police to improve wellbeing outcomes in Suffolk. It has responsibility for delivering the JSNA and health and wellbeing strategy.



5.6.2 The board's vision is 'People in Suffolk live healthier, happier lives. We also want to narrow the difference in life expectancy between those living in our most deprived communities and those who are more affluent through greater improvements in more disadvantaged communities.'

5.6.3 The board refreshed its [Suffolk County Council - Joint Health and Wellbeing Board Strategy](#) for the period 2019 to 2022. The principles are:

- prioritising prevention
- reducing health inequalities
- enabling resilient communities
- working well together.

## **5.7 The Suffolk-wide approach to recovery following the coronavirus pandemic**

5.7.1 During 2020 to 2021, Suffolk's public sector, including West Suffolk Council, worked together to agree a strategic approach for how Suffolk will recover from the coronavirus pandemic. Suffolk public sector leaders' priorities are health inequalities and supporting individuals to improve their physical and mental health and wellbeing, town centres, housing and homelessness, young people and climate and environment. Through this commitment, the aim is to improve outcomes for all Suffolk people and to reduce inequalities.

5.7.2 The proposals are focused around collaborative work to maximise benefits and will sit alongside individual organisations' plans to support recovery among Suffolk residents and businesses and capitalise on available resources.

## **5.8 West Suffolk Local Plan**

5.8.1 The council is in the process of reviewing the local plan which will set out the long-term planning and land use policies for the area. The new local plan is due to be adopted in 2024 and will plan for the period up to 2041.

5.8.2 The role of the local plan is to:

- set out the strategic and local policies for the area
- set the overall housing provision and distribution
- identify land use sites to meet housing, employment, leisure and community needs
- set out specific criteria against which planning applications will be considered.

5.8.3 It is an important part of understanding and planning for local need in terms of leisure facilities and providing the opportunities for outdoor recreation, physical activity and enjoying green spaces interlinked with beautiful places to live and work. Supplementary planning documents (SPDs) complement policies in the local plan by adding further detail.

## **5.9 Playing pitch, indoor sport facilities and open space assessments**

5.9.1 The assessments, that update the West Suffolk Indoor Sports Facility Assessment dated 2016 and West Suffolk Playing Pitch Assessment 2015, are key documents used to set out the approach to protection, enhancement and investment in sport, recreation and physical activity pursuits across the district. They guide the council's current and future strategic direction for sport, recreation and physical activity provision and will be used to help inform the emerging West Suffolk Local Plan policies and updated Sports and Open Space Facilities SPDs.

5.9.2 We want to ensure that the current and future demand for sports and recreation facilities are planned for holistically and that the needs of the current and growing population of West Suffolk can be fully met. Furthermore, the assessments will provide evidence to support funding bids to national sports bodies like Sport England and support requests for contributions from Section 106 planning obligations or any future infrastructure levy introduced by central Government.

5.9.3 Evidence for the assessments was collated through consultation with representatives of sporting national governing bodies and Sport England and wider community engagement was undertaken with park councils and local sports clubs. The future demand for facilities was calculated by using population projections and planned housing delivery. This information was used to make recommendations contained in the assessments that will inform the sport, recreation and physical activity needs of the district going forward and shape the market with regard to provision of facilities.

## **5.10 Most Active County**

5.10.1 Since its launch in 2012, the Most Activity County partnership (led by Suffolk County Council) has been working hard to help local residents become active or remain active. Partners across Suffolk (including West Suffolk Council) together created the following objectives for the Most Active County initiative:

- developing community-led participation in sport and physical activity
- improving the use of physical assets and the environment for sport and physical activity

- addressing sport and health inequality
- delivering national governing body plans for an active lifestyle
- increasing activity among children and young people
- developing Suffolk as a host for mass participation sports events.

## 6. Outcomes

6.1 Our approach will ensure that we work with partners, including the West Suffolk Alliance, the Voluntary, community and social enterprise sector, businesses and our communities to achieve the following **outcomes**.

6.1.1 Social and community:

- create an environment that provides the opportunity for physical activity for all
- encourage personal responsibility for wellbeing through education and the development of life skills and healthy habits
- improve the quality of life and the health and wellbeing of all our communities
- ensure that physical activity is inclusive by understanding and addressing barriers to participation
- prevent and tackle inequalities to enable access to physical activity for all
- maximise use of local assets including sharing assets where appropriate
- make connections between different communities through shared activities.

6.1.2 Economic:

- ensure we are financially efficient and responsible in a changing financial environment, in line with the council's Medium Term Financial Strategy
- understand how our impact on health and wellbeing will financially benefit the whole public sector
- target our financial support and subsidies to improve outcomes that support our strategic priorities
- create wider value for money.

6.1.3 Personal experience:

- provide opportunities for physical activity that are accessible, inclusive, welcoming, nurturing and convenient
- acknowledge that there are a range of motivations to participating in physical activity and that some people want to be competitive, while others don't
- support the provision of facilities (including shared facilities) and opportunities in locations that encourage participation and keep active people active.

#### 6.1.4 Health and wellbeing:

- promote initiatives that will support the Suffolk Health and Wellbeing Strategy
- focus on activity to address preventable health issues by creating local opportunities that address local health needs, using the health data at Appendix A to this framework
- ensure that active people remain active and that more people become active
- encourage natural exercise as a part of daily lives and acknowledge that this may not include traditional sport.

## **7. How we will achieve the outcomes**

### 7.1 We aim to achieve these outcomes by:

- considering the information from the Knight, Kavanagh and Page and Ploszajski Lynch Consulting assessments to develop a holistic approach to local areas in order to identify current provision and gaps and use that knowledge to secure developer contributions and encourage the market to meet shortfalls in delivery
- setting out our commitment to whole place planning, so that we can make the most of all available assets and use space as flexibly as possible
- prioritising future requests for support, in line with this framework
- working with partners to deliver physical activity in West Suffolk
- acknowledging the benefits of informal activity – for example, children’s play – in developing active lifestyle habits.

## **8. The principles of our approach**

8.1 We have worked with a number of our partners to develop this approach, including Abbeycroft Leisure, Sport England and Suffolk County Council. Councillors from across West Suffolk Council have also contributed towards this document.

8.2 Together we have agreed to approach this using the following principles:

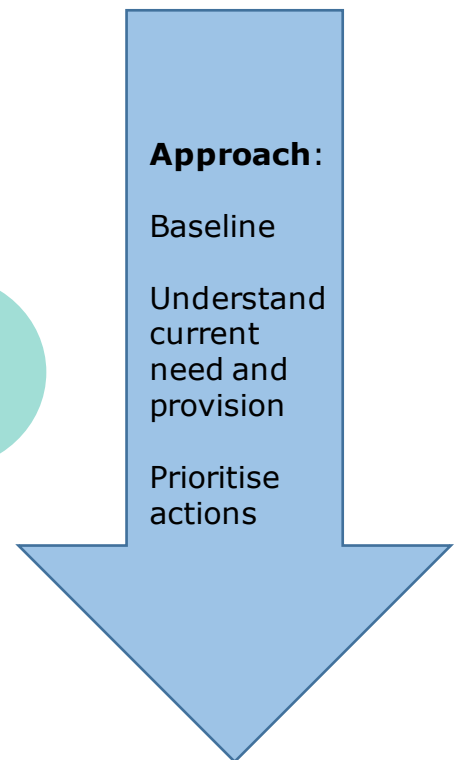
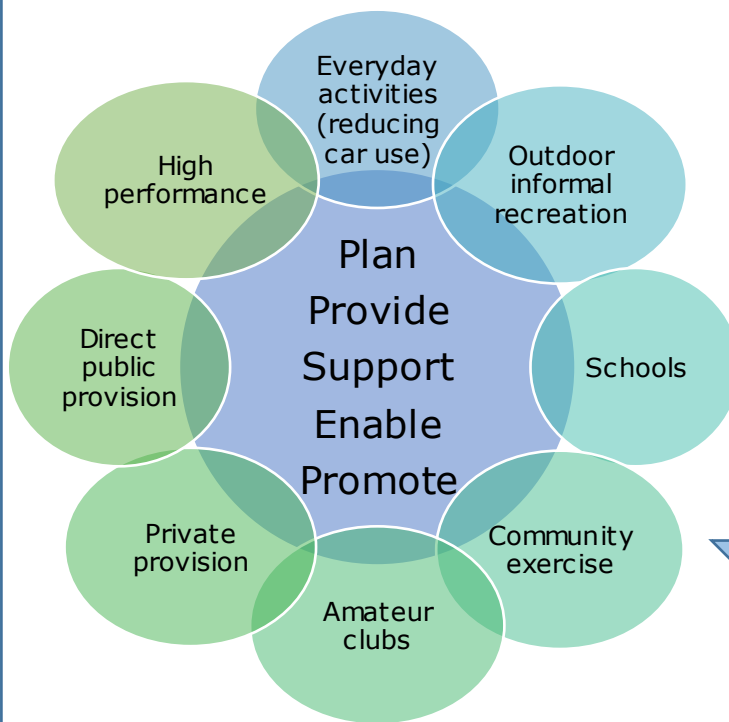
- identify opportunities for increasing physical activity by taking an asset based community development approach which is about sustainable community-driven development
- use health data at a local level to inform options and priorities
- recognise and promote both formal and informal activities
- build on wider research and our and others’ experience of what works
- take a whole life cycle approach and focus on the importance of physical activity in the early years of a person’s life

- take a whole system approach, working in partnership with voluntary, community and social enterprise groups and businesses
- understand sports and other physical activity provision holistically (including providers) and maximise what is already there
- understand and address individual barriers to access (finance, physical accessibility)
- understand and address rural challenges (transport, timing of activities)
- develop a hierarchy of offer – a stepped-up approach
- develop the breadth of offer in order to engage the maximum number of people in regular physical activity
- make the most of digital technologies to encourage physical activity
- develop meaningful measures to show progress against the framework
- explore different financial and delivery models.

## **9. How we will increase participation in physical activity across West Suffolk**

- 9.1 The following diagram outlines how we will work with a whole range of partners to deliver physical activity in West Suffolk. We need local people to be able to access physical activity in a number of different ways.

- Partners:**
- West Suffolk Council
  - Parish councils
  - Health commissioners and providers
  - Integrated care system
  - West Suffolk Alliance
  - Abbeycroft Leisure
  - Commercial developers
  - Clubs
  - Communities and organisations
  - Commercial providers and sponsors
  - Sport England
  - National governing bodies
  - Education providers
  - OneLife Suffolk



### Accessible version – diagram text

How we will work with a whole range of partners to deliver physical activity in West Suffolk. We need local people to be able to access physical activity in a number of different ways.

Plan, provide, support, enable and promote through:

- everyday activities (reducing car use)
- outdoor informal recreation
- schools
- community exercise
- amateur clubs
- private provision
- direct public provision
- high performance.

Partners:

- West Suffolk Council
- Parish councils
- Health commissioners and providers
- Integrated care system
- West Suffolk Alliance
- Abbeycroft Leisure
- Commercial developers
- Clubs
- Communities and organisations
- Commercial providers and sponsors
- Sport England
- National governing bodies
- Education providers
- OneLife Suffolk

Approach:

- baseline
- understand current need and provision
- prioritise actions.

9.2 The council's role in facilitating participation in physical activity is to:

- **plan:** plan for the future to ensure that we provide opportunities for people to participate in sport and physical activity at any level and maximise the impact of developer contributions
- **provide:** provide community, leisure, public open space, countryside and heritage assets so they give maximum benefit to West Suffolk communities (as set out in priority 2 of the strategic plan), creating opportunities for natural exercise
- **support:** for schemes and facilities that align with our priorities, explore funding opportunities for groups and organisations
- **enable:** working with partners, enable local communities and individuals to participate in sport and physical activity in a way that works for them
- **promote:** promote opportunities at a local level through our communities and with providers.

## 10. Supporting initiatives that promote physical activity

10.1 Based on what the council's role is in facilitating participation in physical activity, we have developed a set of documents that will

help us to determine how and in what ways we can support initiatives that promote physical activity.

- 10.2 **Appendix C** is West Suffolk's physical activity 'offer' which sets out the ways in which we can provide support for initiatives that promote physical activity. **Appendix D** is a checklist that we will use to help assess whether an initiative would meet our desired outcomes in terms of positive, negative or neutral benefit (see section 6 of this framework).
- 10.3 These documents are intended to be used as tools to help start discussions with our partners.

## 11. Next steps

- 11.1 In each place, we will use the information from the assessments plus other data to look holistically at the locality, to identify gaps and opportunities and prioritise actions in line with our priorities. This work will initially be focused around the following major centres of population, with the surrounding rural areas included:
- Brandon
  - Bury St Edmunds
  - Clare
  - Haverhill
  - Mildenhall
  - Newmarket.
- 11.2 Furthermore, using the assessments we will develop a Sports and Open Space Facilities Supplementary Planning Document for West Suffolk as a whole. This will help inform how we shape the local area to support our aim to enable and encourage people to lead more active lives.

## Appendices

- [Promoting Physical Activity Framework - Appendix A: Health data for West Suffolk](#)
- [Promoting Physical Activity Framework - Appendix B: Sport across Suffolk – participation data](#)
- [Promoting Physical Activity Framework - Appendix C: West Suffolk Council's physical activity offer](#)
- [Promoting Physical Activity Framework - Appendix D: Checklist of how proposals might meet West Suffolk Council's desired outcomes](#)