

Everyone more active for life

Northumberland
Physical Activity
Strategy 2020 - 2028

Enter



The Northumberland Physical Activity Strategy is an interactive PDF with navigation and external links. To best view the strategy, you will need to download it to your computer and open with the free Adobe® Acrobat® reader, available to download at <https://get.adobe.com/uk/reader/>



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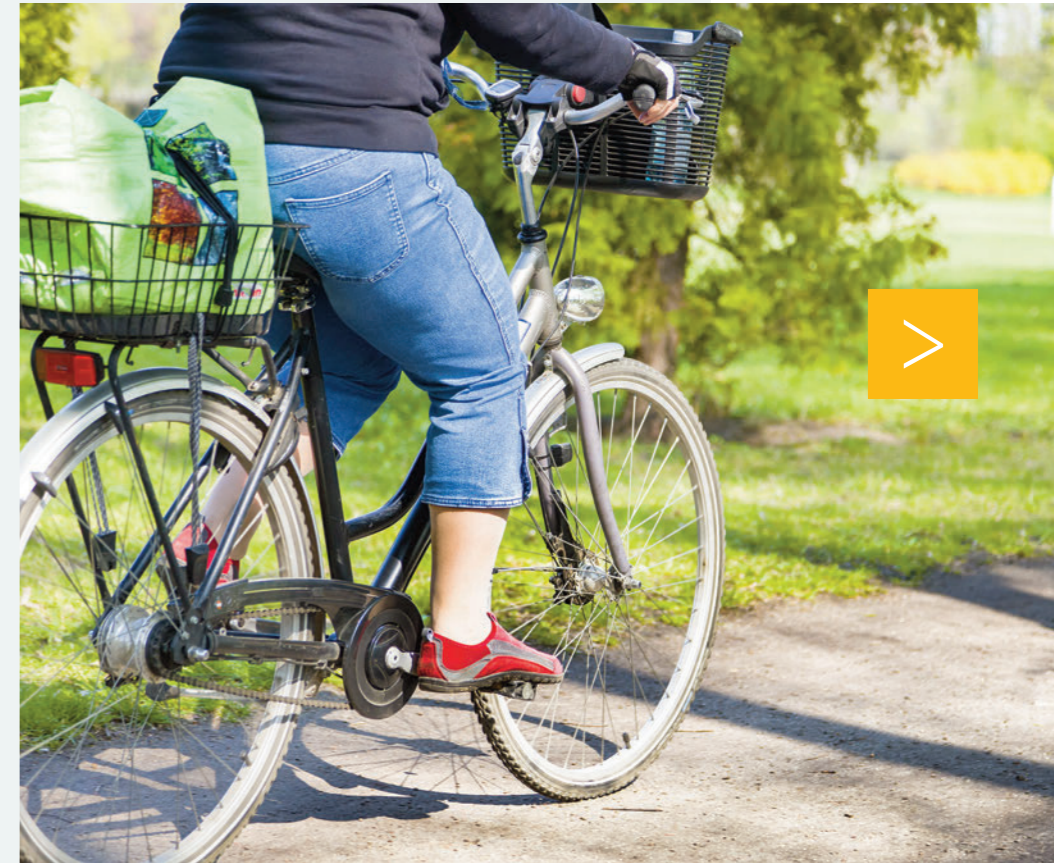
The Northumberland Physical Activity Strategy provides a framework to tackle the challenge inactivity presents in Northumberland.

This strategy has been developed through extensive consultation with a wide range of stakeholders all with a vested interest in reducing physical inactivity and improving local communities throughout Northumberland.

The aim is to have an impact on the collective long term health, social, educational and economic outcomes associated with tackling high levels of inactivity through robust insight, co-designed interventions and utilising behaviour change approaches.

Using a whole system approach, aligned to both local and national plans, this strategy will create an ecosystem between organisations and individuals using physical activity as a driver for change. This will propel physical activity as a social norm, helping more people in Northumberland develop a habit for life.

Encouraging everyone to be more active for life across Northumberland, through both a universal and targeted approach is the fundamental aim of this strategy.



Insight into Northumberland

Northumberland is the most northerly county in England and is a unique place, of coastline, castles, areas of outstanding natural beauty and a population with a proud social, cultural and economic heritage.

Whilst the county's landscape presents a plethora of opportunities for local people, communities across Northumberland face diverse health, social and cultural challenges. These challenges are associated with the rurality of the county, access to services and higher levels of social and economic deprivation particularly in the urban areas of the south east.

Northumberland residents however, have a long history of strength, solidarity, resilience, passion and pride for where they live, encompassed within a strong active sporting heritage. These qualities present opportunities to meet the future challenge of reducing inactivity and improving the health of our population.

Click to view other maps:

Deprivation

Healthy life expectancy

Population aged over 65



Insight into Northumberland

Index of Multiple Deprivation (IMD) Decile

An **IMD decile** is a dimension which places the deprivation scores of individual areas across England into one of ten groups of equal frequency, ranging from the 10% most deprived areas to the 10% least deprived areas.

This map demonstrates the levels of multiple deprivation across Northumberland, with the red areas being ranked as amongst the most deprived areas nationally.



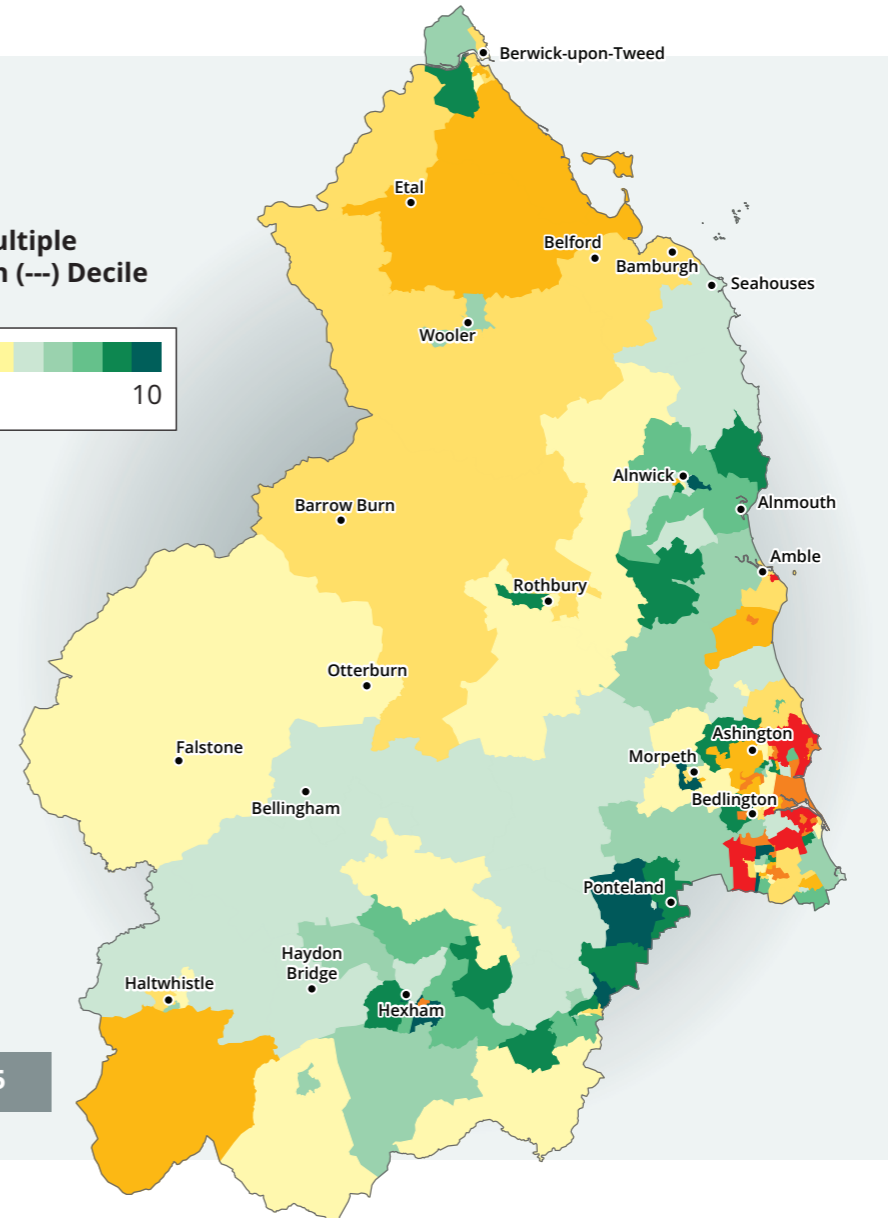
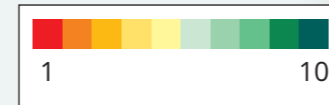
Click to view other maps:

Deprivation

Healthy life expectancy

Population aged over 65

Index of Multiple Deprivation (---) Decile



Insight into Northumberland

Healthy Life Expectancy

Healthy life expectancy is an estimate of how many years a person might live in a 'healthy' state, free from illness or impairment and able to do most things without the need for assistance.

This map demonstrates some real inequalities in healthy life expectancy across the county, with approximately 20 years variation, between those living in the most deprived areas compared to those living in the least deprived areas.



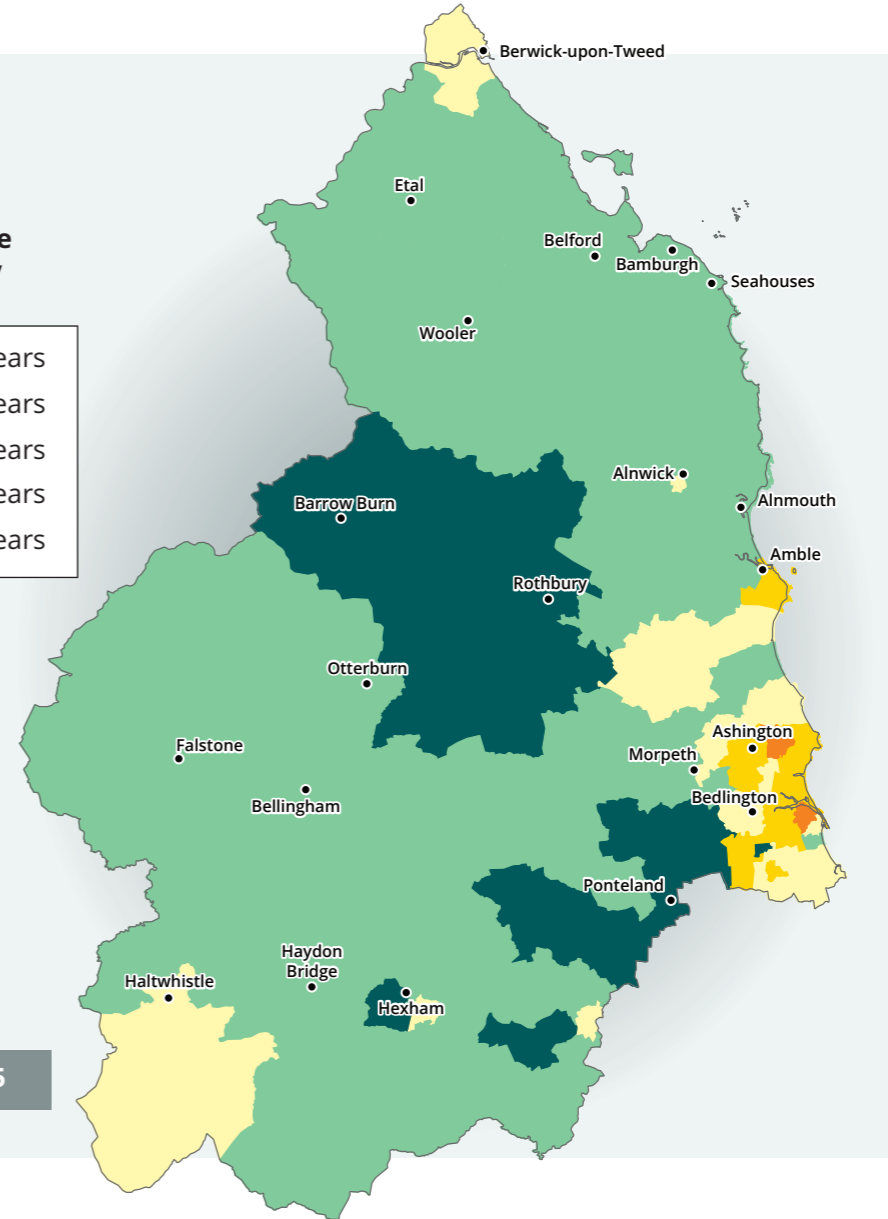
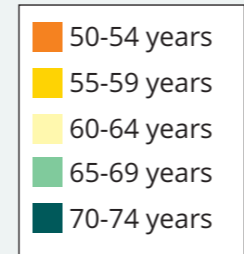
Click to view other maps:

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Healthy life expectancy

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Healthy Life Expectancy



Insight into Northumberland

Population aged over 65 years

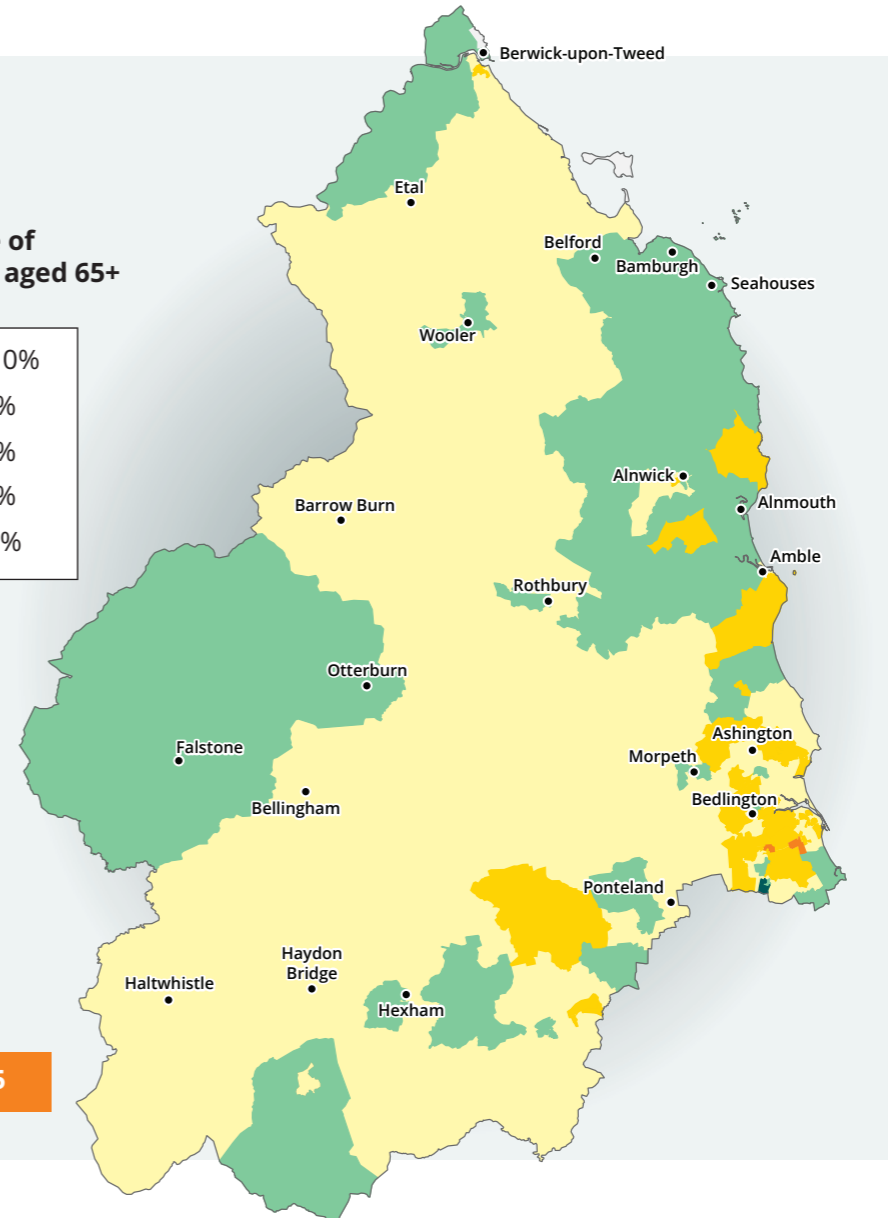
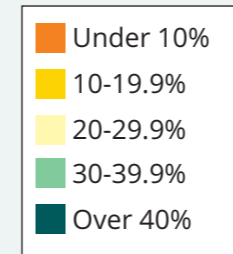
This map evidences the percentage of the ageing population, aged 65+ across Northumberland. Amongst the North East region, Northumberland has the highest percentage of population living in the 65+ age range. This represents over a quarter of residents, with a greater concentration living in rural areas, contributing to the number of older people experiencing loneliness and isolation.



Northumberland's aged population will continue to grow ahead of the North East and England averages.

The number of Northumberland residents aged 65 and over is anticipated to increase to 30% by 2035.

Percentage of Population aged 65+



Click to view other maps:

Deprivation

Healthy life expectancy

Population aged over 65

Benefits of physical activity



Reduces risk of cardiovascular disease



Strengthens bones and muscles



50% lower risk of type 2 diabetes



Helps to control weight



Improves sleep



Improves energy levels



30% lower risk of dementia



Improves mental wellbeing



National guidelines provide advice on frequency, intensity, duration and types of exercise at different life stages. Whilst benefits of an active lifestyle will accrue over time, it's never too late to start being more active.

Physical activity is important for our personal health, wellbeing and vitality. It also makes an important contribution to our communities by bringing people together socially, building cohesiveness and adding to a sense of place and local identity. Being active adds to our individual and collective potential to live longer, happier, more fulfilling and successful lives.

What counts as physical activity?

Physical activity is defined as any body movement that expends energy and raises the heart rate. This can include all forms of sport, however, insight shows that less traditional activity may be more appealing to inactive people. A few examples are below:



Walking



Gardening



Hiking



Dancing



Cycling



Active recreation



Swimming

The complex nature of inactivity

Following a consistent trend of rising inactivity levels in Northumberland since 2015, (which have been higher than the national average), [Sport England's Active Lives](#) participation data (2019) indicates that Northumberland is now heading in the right direction, with a lower proportion of our population currently classified as inactive.

However, inactivity is a complex issue, so we cannot be complacent. There are no quick and easy solutions to changing behaviours and supporting inactive people to become active for life. There are some stubborn inequalities which exist within our local communities which means being more active is not a priority for everyone.



“Things are moving in the right direction, however, stubborn inequalities remain which show that sport and physical activity still isn't appealing to everyone”.

Sport England CEO, Tim Hollingsworth

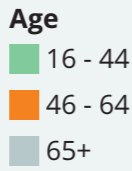
The complex nature of inactivity

Understanding the complex nature of physical inactivity

29% of the adult population nationally are inactive. These are people that don't achieve at least 30 minutes of moderate intensity physical activity in a week.

This means that they are not undertaking walking, cycling, or any kind of exercise where their heart rate increases and they are mildly out of breath for at least 30 minutes a week.

There are 3 distinct behaviours that are derived from these national figures:



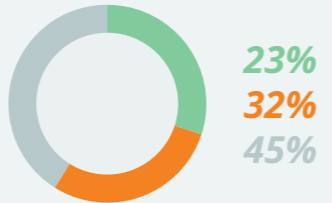
7%
Doing Nothing
3.1 million people
(no activity at all in the last 28 days)

Demographics
Closest fit to inactive stereotype:

- older people
- over half with a limiting illness/disability
- 58% female / 42% male

Behaviours

- size of this group varies depending on the time of year (8% of the population in winter, 5% in summer)
- a high proportion cite health/disability/injury/age as the main reasons for doing less activity



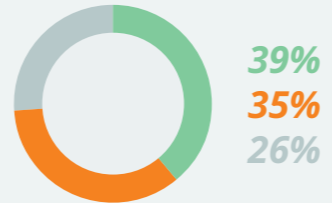
3%
Not Doing Enough
1.4 million people
(some moderate activity but less than 30 minutes)

Demographics
Younger profile than the other inactive groups - most representative of society.

- 52% female / 43% male
- 27% have a limiting illness/disability

Behaviours
Low levels of overall activity (even including light intensity):

- relatively few 'active' sessions in a week and short average duration
- gardening and walking are often the main activities



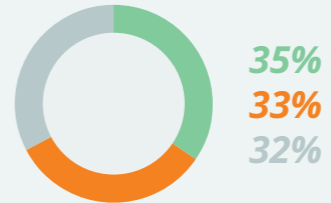
19%
Missing the Intensity
8.1 million people
(only light intensity activity in the last 28 days)

Demographics

- 58% female / 42% male
- 22% limiting illness/disability
- more even spread of ages

Behaviours
The largest group is already quite 'active'

- on average 4.5 hours per week of usually just one lifestyle activity eg. walking
- for the small number engaged in some sport, it's almost 8 hours per week of light activity



Data source: Active People Survey (April 2015 - March 2016)



Changing Behaviours

Behaviour refers to the way we act or 'behave' in any given situation or in response to any given stimulus.

Anyone who has ever tried to give up a particular habit or start a new one, will know that it is about being motivated and supported to make consistently different sustained choices.

The key ingredients to creating behaviour change

- The person's capability to change
- The person being given the opportunity to change
- The person having the motivation to change

Behaviour change is at the heart of this strategy and the various stages that therefore need to be considered are outlined in the diagram opposite.

Behaviour change model



People can move back and forth through these stages

A whole system approach

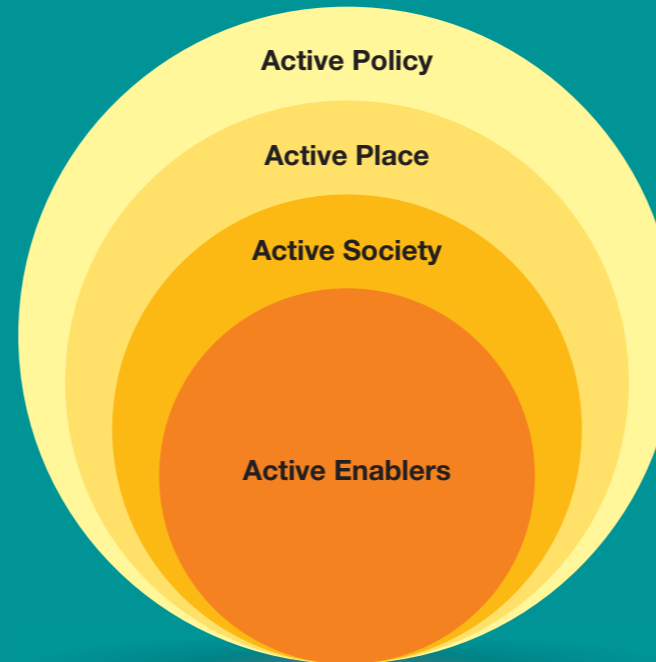
To address the stubborn inequalities associated with inactivity across Northumberland, this strategy seeks to develop a whole system approach through four 'strategic themes':

Active Policy

- To influence and embed greater consideration of using physical activity as a driver for change across all relevant policies, strategies and commissioned programmes in Northumberland.
- To establish simple, effective messages that champion behaviour/policy change through greater awareness about the benefits of physical activity at a senior level across public, private and voluntary sectors.

Active Place

- To utilise the stunning natural environment (green and blue space) that Northumberland has to offer and utilise existing community assets e.g. schools, leisure centres, village halls.
- To embed the principles of 'active design' into the development of new homes, towns and infrastructure.



Active Society

- To utilise insight to develop local interventions which are delivered by inspirational people that are representative of their communities.
- To ensure safeguarding, inclusion and diversity remain core to the delivery of the strategy, which results in high quality, safe and accessible opportunities for all.

Active Enablers

- To develop a more diverse workforce which is representative of Northumberland's communities.
- To utilise insight and develop a robust joint marketing and communications campaign, which all stakeholders in Northumberland sign up to.

A life course approach

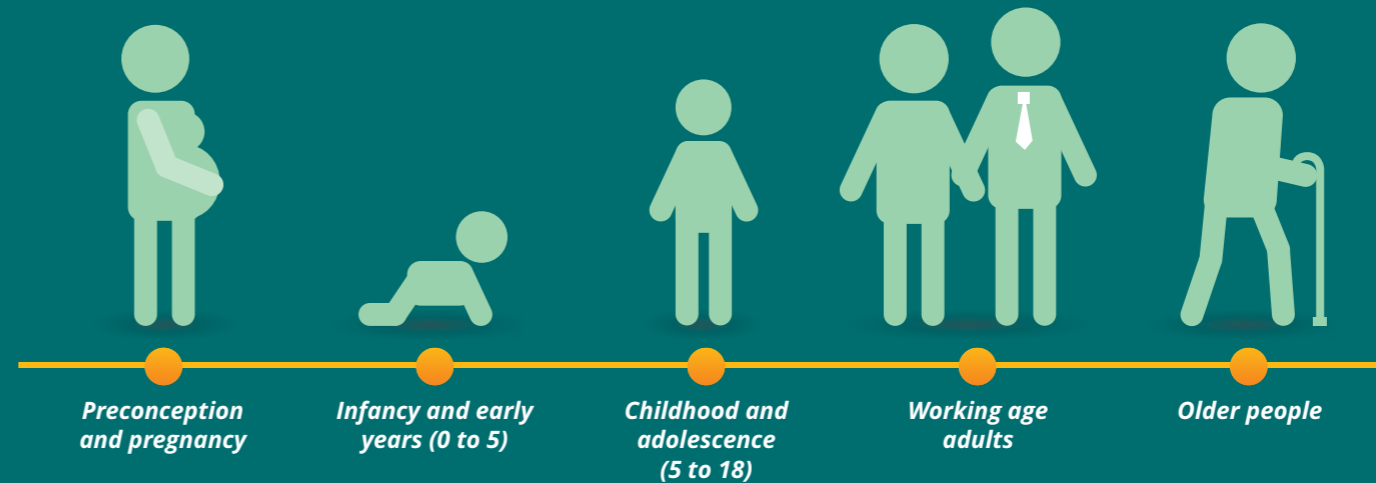
It is important to remember that being inactive is a behaviour. An individual's activity level does not stay at the same level throughout their life.

This strategy is designed around and underpinned by a life course approach, acknowledging that being active makes an important contribution at every stage of our lives.

Everyone has been active or inactive at some point in their life, whether that is for a week, a month or year. Our habits vary at different stages of our lives and can be influenced significantly by different life occurrences.

By looking across the life course (from childhood to later life) we are able to identify patterns of activity and inactivity and use this insight to develop interventions that change attitudes and behaviour.

Life stages



“Social and economic trends over decades have ‘designed’ physical activity out of daily life.”

Public Health England Getting Everybody Active, Every Day

Starting well

Developing positive attitudes to activity from a young age is fundamental to developing active habits for life. Embedding active play and physical literacy into children's lives are central to this.

Sport England Active Lives Survey data for children and young people's participation in physical activity and sport reveals a worrying trend for Northumberland, with activity levels below the national average.

To increase physical activity levels amongst children and young people, this strategy will:

- Support health professionals to embed physical activity into pre and post natal services.
- Develop and implement a 'Physical Literacy Framework' for children and young people.
- Support schools to embed physical activity, active learning and school sport in fun, inclusive ways.
- Co-design new initiatives as part of a place based approach to support children and young people's regular participation.

[Click to view a case study](#)

Benefits of physical activity for children and young people (5-18 years)



Builds confidence and social skills



Maintains healthy weight



Develops co-ordination



Improves health & fitness



Makes you feel good



Strengthens muscles and bones

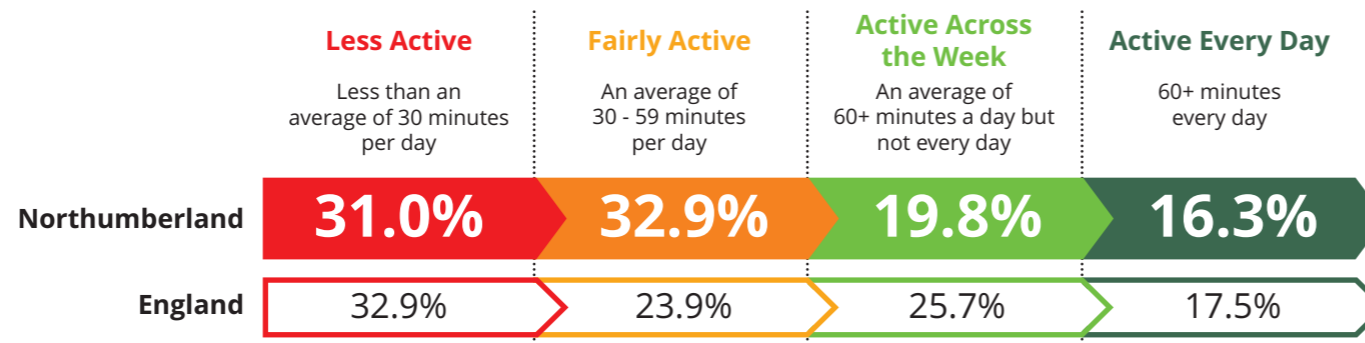


Improves sleep



Improves concentration and learning

Sport England Active Lives Children & Young People (2018-19)



Living well

Northumberland's demographic profile, geography and distribution of local services, hold inherent and unique challenges when applied to how readily, and widely, our working age population engages with physical activity.

To increase physical activity levels amongst adults aged between 20-54, this strategy will focus on:

- Placing physical activity at the heart of the preventative health agenda to educate and support adults to be physically active and lead healthier lives.
- Recruiting, developing and deploying a network of 'Community Champions' that inspire and support their communities to become and stay active.
- Supporting employers to embed physical activity into workplace health approaches.
- Preparing working aged adults for their transition into retirement.

Physical activity benefits for adults and older adults



Improves health and fitness



Improves sleep



Maintains healthy weight



Manages stress



Improves quality of life



Strengthens bones and muscles

Reduces your chance of...

Type II diabetes -40%

Cardiovascular Disease -35%

Falls, depression and dementia -30%

Joint and back pain -25%

Cancers (colon and breast) -20%



Ageing well

Northumberland's population is ageing at a quicker rate than the rest of the UK. It is predicted that by 2035 the dependency ratio of pensionable aged population against working aged population will be 54.8%, compared to 34.4% nationally, which will place significant pressure on the local health and social care system.

Whilst we have an ageing population, local data demonstrates stark inequalities across the county as healthy life expectancy varies by over 20 years from our least to most affluent communities and whilst women live longer, they do so with greater levels of ill-health.

The county's ageing population provides a powerful source of local community assets, which this strategy will harness by utilising their experience and insight, empowering them to facilitate greater community connections and social activity for local residents.



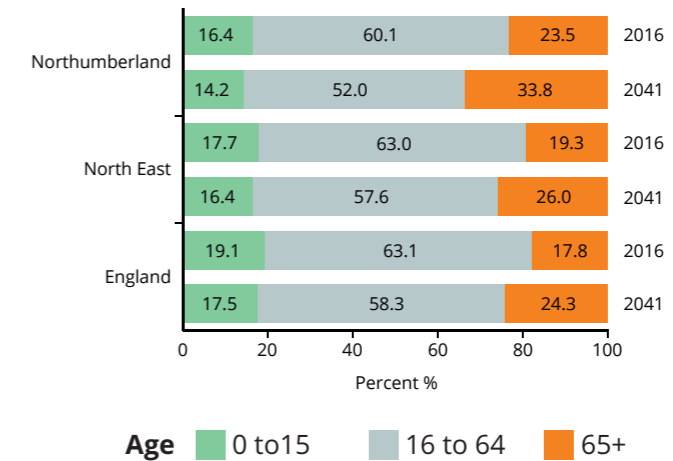
Two thirds (67%) say "being able to make a positive contribution to society", such as by volunteering, will be important to their happiness at 65+.

Source: YouGov. Sample size 2153 GB adults aged 40-60.

To increase physical activity levels amongst older adults aged 55+ years, this strategy will focus on:

- Empowering people and local communities to utilise physical activity to build resilience, reduce social isolation and loneliness.
- Educating, supporting and reinforcing the messaging that physical activity is fun, appropriate and relevant for our ageing communities.
- Adopting an asset based approach for using physical activity within the preventative health agenda for addressing the needs of Northumberland's ageing population.

Ageing of population 2016-2041



A targeted approach

Whilst recognising the need to use a universal approach to tackle inactivity across Northumberland, there is a need to focus capacity and resource to tackle a number of stubborn inequalities that exist in the county.

Extensive engagement has identified the following under-represented groups as priorities for this strategy.

People from lower socio-economic groups



People with long term health conditions



Women and girls



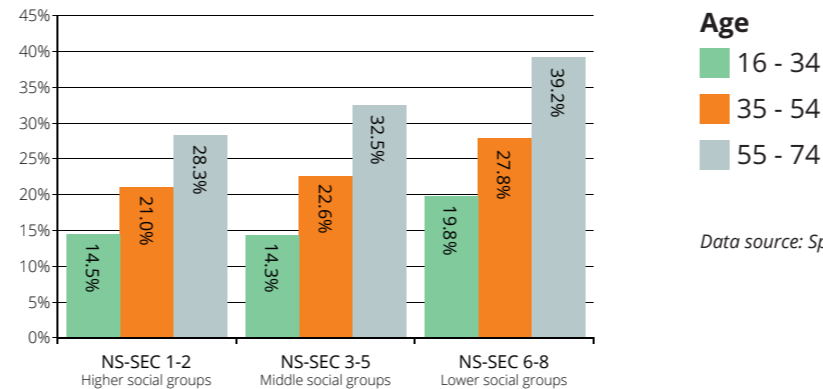
People from lower socio-economic groups

In Northumberland, 34% of the adult population (aged 16+) are classified in the lower socio-economic groups (NS SEC Groups 6-8), meaning they are on relatively low income, employed in routine and semi-skilled jobs or are in long term unemployment. This also includes those who sometimes struggle to make ends meet or are just about managing.

To overcome the barriers faced by people from lower socio-economic groups, this strategy will look to focus on:

- Enhancing our local insight and intelligence to understand the needs of people in this population.
- Embedding physical activity within the local delivery system as part of a preventative approach to improving health and wellbeing.
- Co-designing interventions that empower people from lower socio-economic communities to develop sustainable opportunities that deliver wider individual and social outcomes.

England inactivity levels by age and National Statistics Socio-economic Classification (NS SEC)



Data source: Sport England Active Lives Survey, 2018

“If you are well-off you are far more likely to be active than if you’re on a low income or less affluent. While there are complex barriers that stop less well-off people from getting active, this is an unacceptable inequality.”

Sport England CEO, Tim Hollingsworth

People with long-term health conditions

Those with long-term health conditions are twice as likely to be inactive than people without a long-term condition.

Reducing physical inactivity can have significant impact both in terms of the reduction of risk of people getting diseases such as cancer, dementia, hypertension and obesity but also in the treatment and management of conditions such as type 2 diabetes and depression.

In Northumberland 14.7% of adults aged 16-64 years are living with a limiting long-term health condition which has an impact on their day to day life.

To make a significant difference to the lives of people living with long-term health conditions in Northumberland, this strategy will focus on:

- Enhancing our insight and understanding linked to the main barriers associated with long-term health conditions, particularly those living with cancer, cardiovascular disease; respiratory diseases, type 2 diabetes and mental health conditions.
- Utilising learning from national campaigns such as [#Weareundefeatable](#) to overcome the misconception around being active whilst living with a long term health condition.
- Providing clinicians and allied health professionals with accessible, evidence based, condition specific information to help give advice on physical activity at all stages of a patient's treatment pathway, utilising the [Moving Medicine](#) resources.



**WE ARE
UNDEFEATABLE**

 [Click to view a case study](#)

Women and girls

National research indicates there are fewer women and girls than men and boys meeting national guidance for physical activity levels on a regular basis.

Sport England's This Girl Can research shows that many women are put off taking part in physical activity due to a fear of judgement - this might be about the way they look when they exercise, that they are not good enough to join in or they should be spending more time on their families, studies or other priorities.

The impact of this inactivity also correlates with our local health profiles, which show that whilst women commonly have a longer life expectancy than men in Northumberland, they typically live longer with greater levels of ill-health, particularly long-term lifestyle related illnesses.

In order to incentivise women and girls to be more active, this strategy will focus on:

- Enhancing our insight and understanding of the barriers to physical activity faced by women and girls across all life courses at a community level.



- Using local insight to co-design initiatives that reflect the needs of women and girls across the county, that are both meaningful and sustainable.
- Utilising learning and good practice from the [#ThisGirlCan](#) campaign to create opportunities for women and girls in local communities across Northumberland.

 [Click to view a case study](#)

Measuring success

The strategy is underpinned by an Outcomes and Evaluation Framework developed through a logic model approach. This sets out the shared understanding about the relationships between the resources available or needed to deliver the strategy, the sequence of actions and the resulting progression expected.

The logic model identifies shared outcomes or changes over short-term (1-3 years) and medium term (4-7 years) timeframes. These short and medium-term changes are milestones on the way to the more long-term fundamental and ultimate system and individual changes being sought, for example:

Stronger and resilient communities

- Northumberland is universally regarded as a distinctive, vibrant and great place to live.
- Enhanced green infrastructure, open spaces and facility access in the communities most at need.
- Diverse, vibrant and multicultural communities which are valued and which people express pride in.
- Residents empowered to support, shape and contribute to their communities.
- Communities that inspire and places where people want to live.

Achieving and realising potential

- A community where everyone has an opportunity to thrive and reach their full potential regardless of circumstance.
- Young people are successful learners, confident individuals, effective contributors and responsible citizens.
- Residents are better educated, more skilled and successful.
- Narrower gap in achievement and performance between people from different economic backgrounds.
- Residents contribute to a thriving local economy.

Enhanced health and wellbeing

- Healthy communities, where people look after themselves and make healthy choices.
- Every child has the best start in life.
- Adults living well and supported to stay well for as long as possible.
- Fewer people will die early from preventable diseases.
- Whole systems approach ensuring greater equality in life expectancy and healthy life expectancy.
- Reduction in costs relating to health and social care.
- Improvements in air quality.

 [Click to view the full logic model](#)

Find out more

For further information about any aspect of this strategy, please contact Northumberland Sport by email at info@northumberlandsport.co.uk

www.moreactiveforlife.co.uk



Thank you to all stakeholders and partners involved in the consultation and development of this strategy.

