

# Physical Activity and Wellbeing Strategy

2023 - 2027



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# Foreword

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We are delighted to introduce the new Physical Activity and Wellbeing Strategy for Hertsmere 2023 - 2027. This new strategy brings together the following three areas of work; health and wellbeing, sports development and improving physical activity in the borough. We believe that bringing these areas together, will mean that together we can achieve better outcomes for Hertsmere residents.

It would be unwise to think that Hertsmere Borough Council can tackle the challenges faced in the borough alone. Involvement and delivery can be through national and regional health agencies, the Herts and Essex Integrated Care Partnership (ICP), the Integrated Care System (ICS) and the Integrated care Board (ICB), as well as, and alongside our County, District and Parish Councils and the voluntary sector. In Hertsmere, this is made up of organisations from the voluntary, community, faith and social enterprise community sectors (VCFSE). Hertfordshire County Council (HCC) Public Health also has a key role to play in supporting good health and wellbeing and is tasked with the overall responsibility for achieving this across Hertfordshire.

This strategy will focus our collective energies to improve physical activity and wellbeing in Hertsmere, and will support with the implementation of Hertsmere Together's Community Strategy.

This strategy provides an opportunity to enhance opportunities for our communities to promote and improve physical activity and wellbeing in the borough.

**Cllr Paul Richards, Portfolio Holder for Environmental Sustainability and Net Zero and Public Health**

**Cllr Parveen Rani, Portfolio Holder for Street Scene, Parks, Leisure and Culture**

# Introduction

The purpose of this strategy is to set out the vision for physical activity and wellbeing in Hertsmere. The strategy reflects Hertsmere Borough Council's Vision, the aims of the Local Strategic Partnership and other local and national priorities. The priorities in this strategy have been agreed by Hertsmere Borough Council and the organisations that make up the Health and Wellbeing Board. The focus of the partnership is on improving health and wellbeing so that individuals and communities are able to live healthier lives.

Good health and wellbeing is about more than just the absence of disease. It is about ensuring everyone is able to fulfil their potential, contribute to society and to be resilient to life's challenges. We all have a responsibility to ensure that good health and wellbeing is being promoted in our families, work places and communities.

Health systems are complex with a wide range of organisations responsible for the different parts of care. This strategy recognises that the primary responsibility for supporting residents lies with Hertfordshire and West Essex Integrated Care System, West Hertfordshire Hospitals NHS Trust, Hertfordshire Partnership Foundation Trust and Hertfordshire Community Trust. The lead role in public health, family services, adult and social care lies with Hertfordshire County Council. District councils have no statutory duty to provide primary or secondary care. Nonetheless, district and borough councils and their partners are well placed to collaboratively create an environment that empowers people and communities to take responsibility for their own health and wellbeing.

This document brings together the previous Health and Wellbeing Strategy and the previous Sports Development and Physical Activity Strategy. Bringing the strategies together in one document will enable the Health and Wellbeing Partnership to work collaboratively to make the biggest difference to the key issues in our community.

The strategy will be monitored by the Health and Wellbeing Board and an annual action plan will be reported to the Local Strategic Partnership.

The purpose of this strategy is to set out the vision for physical activity and wellbeing in Hertsmere.



## Strategic Context

We understand the importance of partnership working and have designed our approach with the strategic aims of our partners in mind for the period 2023 - 2027.

## 2022 Health and Care Act

Integrated Care Systems (ICSs) have existed in one form or another since 2016, but for most of this time have operated as informal partnerships using soft power and influence to achieve their objectives. In 2022, the Health and Care Act formalised ICSs as legal entities with statutory powers and responsibilities. Statutory ICSs comprise of two key components:

- Integrated Care Boards (ICB) - statutory bodies that are responsible for planning and funding most NHS services in the area;
- Integrated Care Partnerships (ICP) - statutory committees that bring together a broad set of system partners (including local government, the voluntary, community and social enterprise sector (VCSE), NHS organisations and others) to develop a health and care strategy for the area.



Working through their ICB and ICP, ICSs have four key aims:

- Improving outcomes in population health and health care;
- Tackling inequalities in outcomes, experience and access;
- Enhancing productivity and value for money;
- Helping the NHS to support broader social and economic development.

### **Hertfordshire Health and Wellbeing Strategy 2022 - 2026**

The Hertfordshire Health and Wellbeing Board, which is made up of representatives of the NHS, local government, the voluntary, community, faith and social enterprise sector as well as the office of the Police and Crime Commissioner, have developed this strategy. Each sector contributes towards the delivery of this strategy through its own strategic aims.

This strategy is underpinned by the vision for all partners to improve the health and wellbeing of Hertfordshire residents and reducing health inequalities across the county.

The strategy recognises that factors which affect our health and wellbeing change during the course of our lifetime. The strategy sets out the following high-level priorities:

- Every child has the best start in life;
- Good nutrition, healthy weight and physical activity;
- Good emotional and mental wellbeing throughout life;
- Reduction in smoking and substance misuse;
- Healthy standard of living for all;
- Healthy and sustainable places and communities.

### **Hertfordshire Public Health Strategy 2022 - 2027**

This strategy outlines the aim of the Public Health Service as part of the vision for Hertfordshire. It sets

out how the work of Public Health ensures that all residents will have an opportunity to be as healthy as possible and to live long, fulfilling lives in their communities. It is intended to support and complement the public health aims of partner organisations, such as district councils.

### **Sport England 2022 - 2032**

The theme of Sport England's new physical activity strategy, "Uniting the Movement", is tackling inequalities. For certain people with disabilities and/or long-term health conditions, women, people from lower socio-economic groups and people from Black and Asian backgrounds, there's a clear pattern of low levels of activity – so Sport England will place a sharp focus on providing opportunities for those who are being left behind.

Sport England have set out the five big issues:

- Recover and reinvent;
- Connecting communities;
- Positive experience for children and young people;
- Connecting with health and wellbeing;
- Active environments.

Through this they aim to create the right environment for change across people, organisations and partnerships.

### **Herts Sports Partnership Strategy 2022 - 2027**

The long term mission is to work in partnership to benefit Hertfordshire residents through using sport and physical activity to tackle health inequalities. The key objectives of this strategy underpin providing opportunities of sport and physical activity for all, Covid-19 recovery, sport for social change and bringing together stronger communities using the active environment. The vision of the strategy is more people, more active, more often.

# Our partnership vision and principles

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## Our partnership vision

Support our residents to live longer, happily, healthily, and independently

## Our principles

Whole systems approach

Partnership working

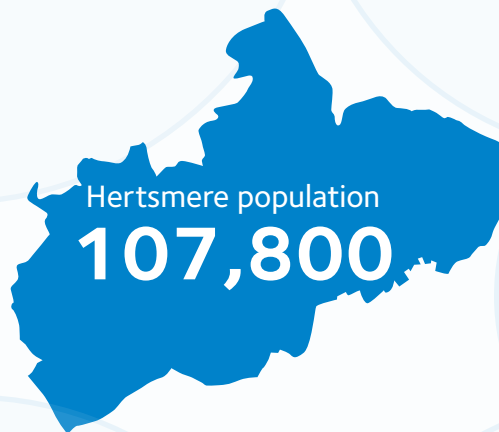
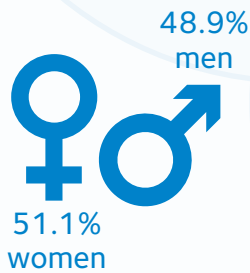
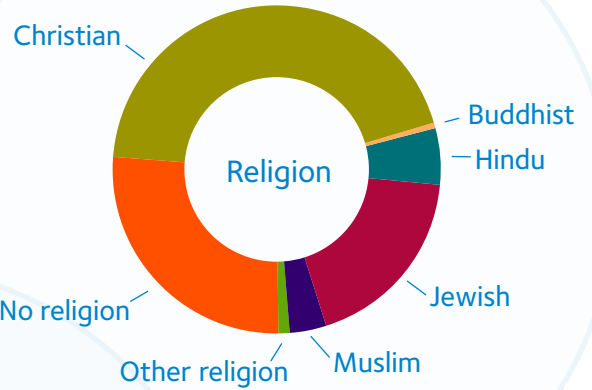
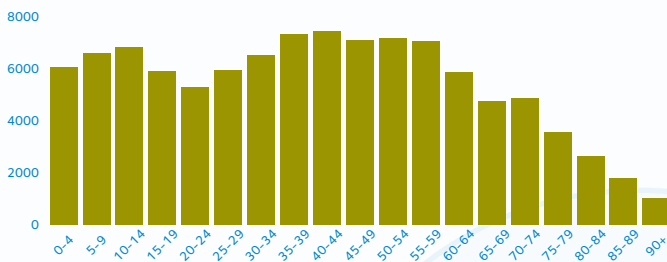
Prevention

Person centred

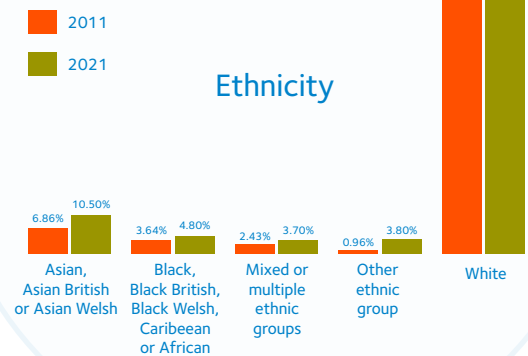
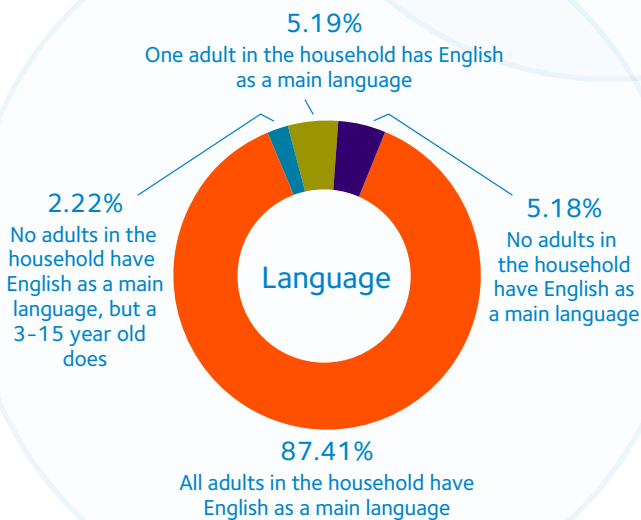
# Local context

## Hertsmere's Census data 2021

Age groups of Hertsmere population



**42,700**  
households in the borough



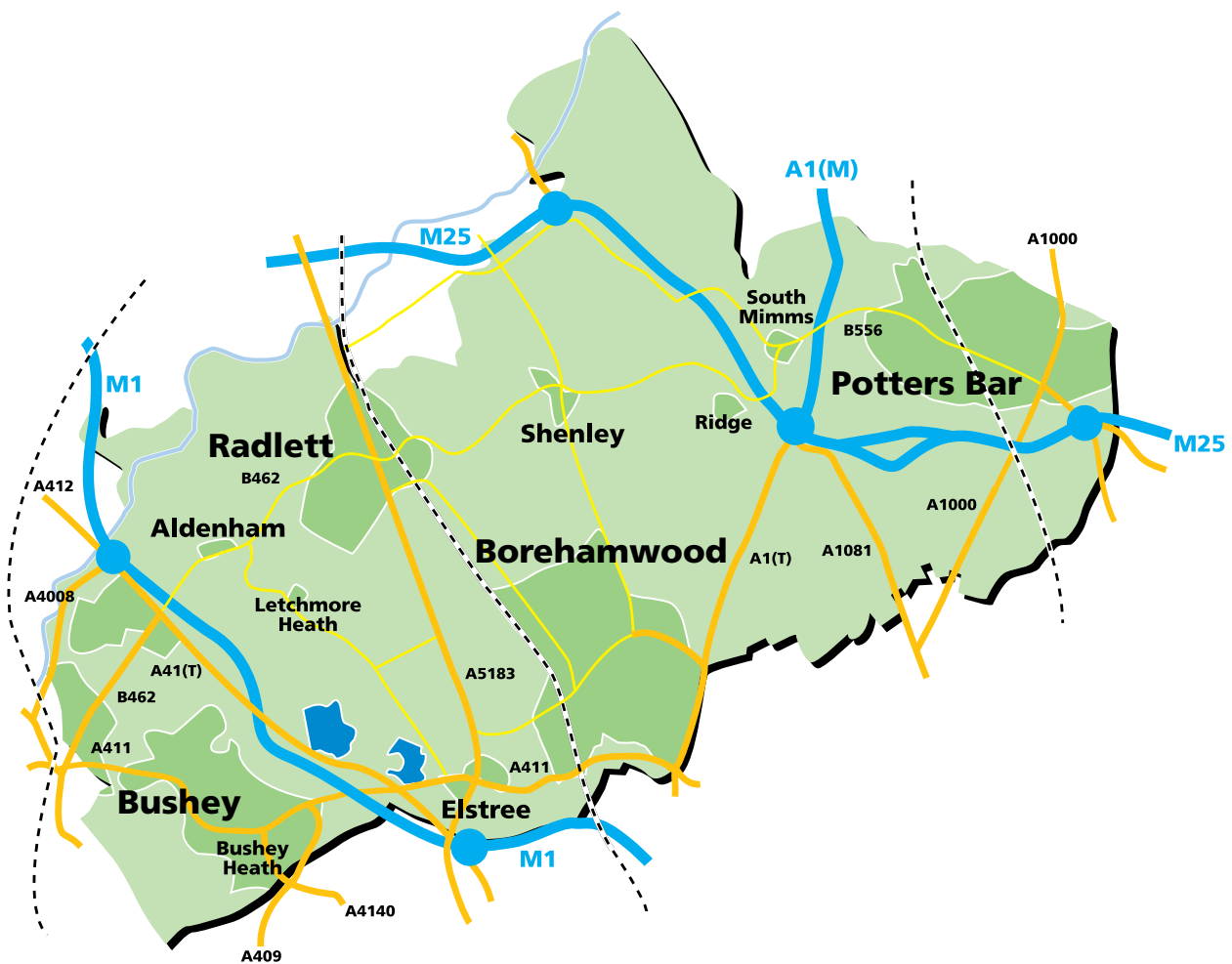


## Overview

Hertsmere is a largely rural borough with 80 per cent of its 38 square miles being green belt land. Four main settlements – Borehamwood, Bushey, Potters Bar and Radlett – are the only urbanised areas and home to the majority of the borough's 107,000 residents (Census 2021). There are 19,139 people aged 65 or over. Open green space (including parks, cemeteries and allotments) makes up 10.2 per cent of Hertsmere, public parks and gardens is 2.76 per cent, the England average is 0.8 per cent.

## Ethnicity

77.1 per cent of the population are white (2021), compared to 85 per cent in 2011. 63.1 per cent of the population are white British (2021), 14 per cent are white non British, 3.7 per cent of population are mixed (2021), 4.8 per cent of population are black (2021), 10.5 per cent of population are Asian (2021), 3.8 per cent of population are other ethnic group (2021). Herts Insight ONS shows that 77.1 per cent of the population of Hertsmere was born in the UK and 87.4 per cent of households have English as the main language. Christianity is the main religion in Hertsmere 41.8 per cent, 17 per cent of the population is Jewish and 24.2 per cent of the population have no religion.



Physical activity has significant benefits for health, both physical and mental.



### Crime

In the 12 months from September 2021 to August 2022 there were 7,618 crimes reported in Hertsmere. The total neighbourhood-level incidents of criminal offences were 93.9 per 1,000 residents. During the same period the number of incidents of Anti-Social Behaviour (ASB) was 2,277; of which 548 were environmental, 1,179 were nuisance and 550 were personal.

### Deprivation

In Hertsmere 11.8 per cent of children in families in receipt of out of work benefits or in receipt of tax credits and 10.7 per cent of household are in estimated fuel poverty in 2020. There are 1,840 people (2.9 per cent) claiming unemployment benefit. 1,550 people in Hertsmere live in the 20% most deprived areas of England according to the indices of deprivation 2019 domain. The number of children in Hertsmere in absolute low income families is 2,144. The indices of deprivation show Cowley Hill in Borehamwood is within the 10% most deprived and Oakmere in Potter Bar within the 25% most deprived.





## Our priorities

# 1. Reducing health inequalities

While the overall health of Hertsmere residents is generally good, the Partnership acknowledges that there are notable health inequalities across the borough. For example, in Borehamwood Cowley Hill and Borehamwood Hillside Wards, the life expectancy for men and women is significantly lower than in other parts of the borough. Data also shows that child poverty levels are higher in Borehamwood Cowley Hill ward and that the rate of older people in poverty is high in Borehamwood when compared to the rest of the borough.

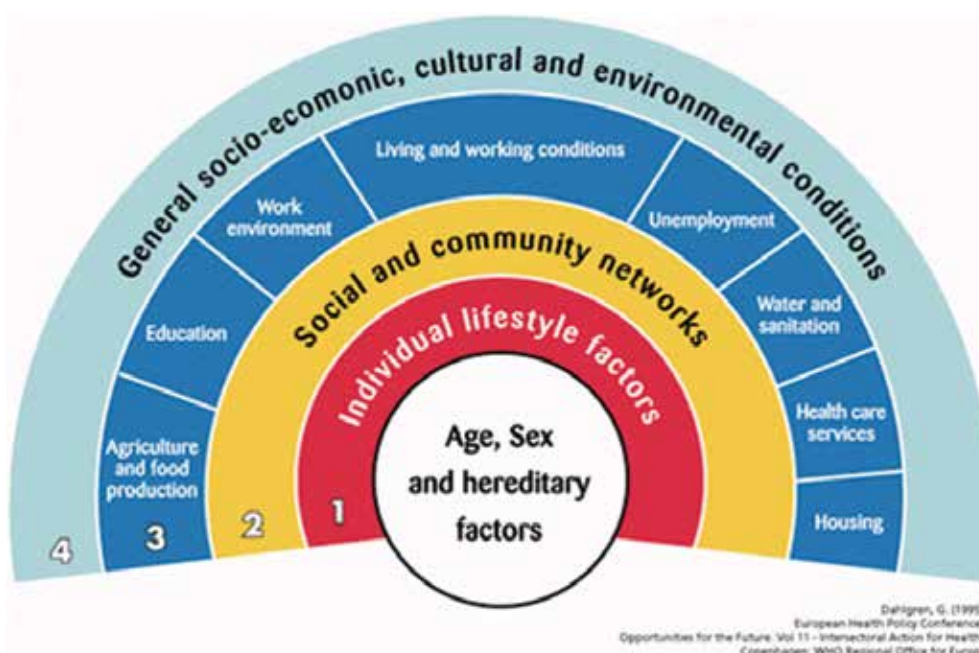
The 2023 - 2027 Community Strategy sets out the desire to reduce health inequalities in Hertsmere. In order to tackle health inequalities, the partnership will need to take a place-based approach, making sure that services and interventions reach those experiencing greater levels of inequality.

Local areas and communities have a greater understanding of what they need from health and care services and of what works when improving health and wellbeing. Through community engagement, we will interact with those more likely to experience differences in health care. This will mean that we are



better able to understand the needs of our community, involve and engage them to design solutions and interventions that will lead to improved health and wellbeing and reduce inequalities.

Each part of the borough has different inequalities and will have different assets in place to find solutions. The Health and Wellbeing Partnership can collaboratively address some of the wider determinants of health. By working in partnership, we can promote prevention and improve the health and wellbeing of residents in the borough.



## Our priorities

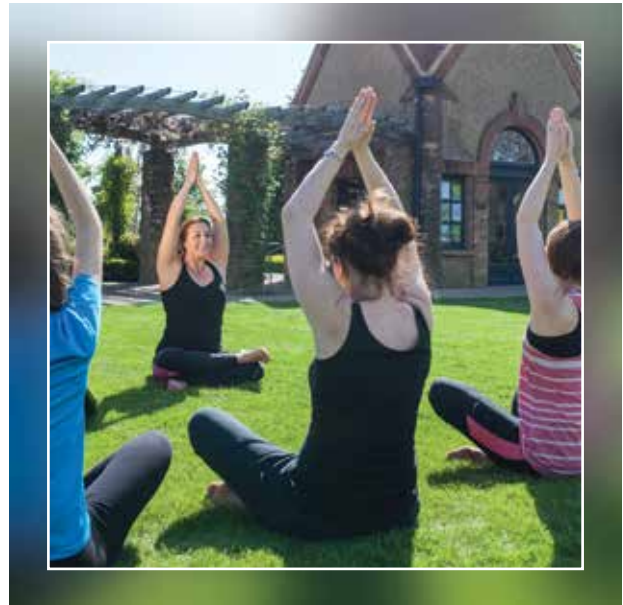
# 2. Improving levels of physical activity

There are lots of barriers (both physical and mental) that stop adults, children and young people from participating in physical activity. It is important to understand and listen to the needs of the community and barriers faced with the view to introducing programmes that meet those needs. If we want to share the benefits of physical activity with all residents, we need to make it fully “accessible” in its broadest sense, so it is inclusive for all. Accessibility is about more than just access for someone with a wheelchair – it’s about making everyone feel comfortable and that being active is for them.

As a partnership, we will develop mechanisms to communicate with and attract more adults to participate in sport and active recreation.

Hertsmere has a large amount of green space which can be used for physical activity, and for free or low cost. Consultation with partners has highlighted the importance of low-cost activities as well as raising awareness of existing opportunities. It would be beneficial to identify ‘champions’ who can act as role models and ambassadors for physical activity in their communities.

Many organisations are working to improve health and wellbeing, including colleagues in the NHS, the



community sector, employers and the commercial health and wellbeing sector. The Partnership wants to continue building on the great work that has taken place previously and strengthen the connection and collaboration between organisations and agencies within the wider systems to ensure that residents can be signposted towards activities which meet their needs.



# 3. Supporting and helping to reduce mental health issues

Over the last few years, we have seen a rise in residents reporting poor mental health. As a partnership we want to help support and reduce the impact this is having on our communities. Mental health is defined as a state of wellbeing in which an individual realises their own abilities, can cope with the normal stresses of life, can work productively and is able to make a contribution to their community (World Health Organisation). The partnership recognises that there are many complications and factors that can contribute to a person's deteriorating mental state. Taking a collaborative approach, this strategy will aim to minimise this.

There are already many organisations working to improve mental health in Hertsmere, including colleagues in the NHS, Hertfordshire Mind Network, the community sector and employers. Despite this, the partnership recognises the extreme pressures on local mental health services and the long waiting times associated with this. We will engage local services and create opportunities for collaborative working, to raise awareness of the rising mental health concerns in the borough and will ensure that all partners are able to refer and signpost to the most appropriate service. The Partnership recognises that there can be stigma



carried with the term 'mental health' in some cultures and we will work in partnership to reduce this so that all residents are able to access support. The partnership want to ensure safe spaces across the borough as they can provide open, green spaces for support groups for those struggling with their mental health. The partnership will also support local organisations and volunteers to access mental health awareness training, to ensure that frontline staff are able to support individuals and families who might be struggling.



## 4. Ensuring equitable access for all to green spaces and activities

Health is influenced by how surroundings make people feel and the opportunities they provide. The partnership believes that residents and communities should have equitable access to green spaces and activities in the borough. The partnership will take a proactive approach to promoting free and low cost activities in the borough's green spaces.

To foster health-promoting environments, it is essential that planners, urban designers, developers and health professionals collaborate to ensure that health is considered at all development stages. Hertsmere Borough Council, working with delivery partners, will lead by example when developing its own land and buildings. Well-designed places, spaces and buildings enable people to be more physically active, feel safe and secure, use facilities and services, and socialise and play. Hertsmere Borough Council recognises the importance of designing new homes for life, enabling residents to remain and live in their homes regardless of age and/or disability.

Hertsmere Borough Council will be writing a new Local Plan that identifies potential areas of development across the borough. Work already undertaken on this, has identified that local infrastructure needs to be provided alongside new homes and jobs; this includes open spaces, sport and recreation facilities and play



areas, as well as provision for new or expanded GP/ health facilities. The plan strives to make it easier for people to get out into the countryside and green spaces. The National Planning Policy Framework encourages planning authorities to shift behaviour from private car use to more sustainable forms of transport. Well-designed streets, limitations to on and off street parking including for new developments and accessible public services can encourage active travel and reduce harmful emissions. The new plan will need to manage off-street parking levels within new strategic development sites.



# Implementing the Strategy

Delivery of this strategy is the responsibility of the organisations and agencies, which make up the Health and Wellbeing Board. This includes:

- Hertsmere Borough Council;
- InspireAll;
- Citizens Advice Hertsmere;
- HealthWatch Herts;
- Communities 1<sup>st</sup>
- Herts Mind Network;
- Hertfordshire County Council;
- Town and Parish Councils;
- Hertfordshire and West Essex Integrated Care Board;
- Hertfordshire Family Centres;
- Beezee Bodies;
- Herts Sports Partnership.

Only by working in collaboration will the partnership be able to improve the health and wellbeing of Hertsmere residents.

Each year an action plan will be produced and reviewed by the Health and Wellbeing Board to demonstrate how we deliver our priorities. It is important to note that the strategy and action plan will continue to evolve to reflect local needs based on evidence and changing aspirations. Hertsmere Health and Wellbeing Board will be responsible for the implementation of the key priorities outlined in this strategy by:

- Working together towards a shared vision;
- Combining resources, skills and expertise to deliver impactful initiatives;
- Delivering or commissioning projects that respond to need;
- Championing health and wellbeing in the borough and promoting positive health related behaviours;
- Responding to consultations both at local and national level to improve health in Hertsmere.

Working with partners and across departments is vital in order to achieve the outcomes identified in this strategy which will shape the action plan. The final section outlines the practical ways that Hertsmere Borough Council's services can impact upon physical

activity and wellbeing. These services and those of our partners are for the benefit of residents in the borough.

## Street Scene

A clean environment is essential for human health and wellbeing. Street Scene improves and promotes a healthy living environment by:

- Keeping the streets of Hertsmere clean by undertaking waste and recycling collections, street sweeping, removing fly-tipped items and abandoned vehicles;
- Administering the management of car parks and controlled parking;
- Maintaining the borough's parks and open spaces. Our parks are maintained to an excellent standard this is reflected by the borough having seven Green Flag awarded parks;
- Developing the green spaces in the borough to offer residents an opportunity to be healthy and active such as the outdoor gyms play equipment and cycle routes;
- Providing walking and cycling trails through the borough's well managed and attractive parks to encourage active travel.

## Community Safety

The Hertsmere Community Safety Partnership (CSP) brings together key partners within the borough with the aim of reducing crime and disorder and making Hertsmere a safer place to live work and visit. Community Safety plays a major role in the health and wellbeing of the community through dealing with causes of domestic abuse, tackling modern slavery, reducing anti-social behaviour, responding to mental health crises, and drug and alcohol safety. The impact of Community Safety on health is perceived as important for Hertsmere Borough Council.

## Environmental Health & Licensing

Environmental Health and Licensing plays an essential part in health protection and in improving public health through its advice and where necessary regulation and enforcement.





Environmental Health influences health by:

- Ensuring food hygiene standards are maintained in commercial kitchens;
- Dealing with a particular nuisance or problem in a specific area that is detrimental to the local community's quality of life;
- Providing an out of hours response;
- Proactively assessing, monitoring and working to improve air quality across the borough. Information is fed into the national database;
- Offering facilities grants to adapt homes to be more appropriate for individuals with a disability to live independently;
- Protecting the health and safety of those who live, work and visit the borough at events in work environments and leisure premises;
- Issuing licences relating to alcohol, animals, entertainments, gambling and taxis.

Environmental Health participates with other partner agencies in the Resilience Forum to provide an effective response to a wide range of emergencies including natural hazards (e.g. flooding/drought etc) major incidents, outbreaks of widespread infectious disease (e.g. Flu Pandemic) and terrorist incidents.

## Housing

Housing is an essential element to health and wellbeing of individuals and families. Living in poor housing can lead to an increased risk of cardiovascular and respiratory disease as well as anxiety and depression. Problems such as damp, mould, excess cold, overcrowding and structural defects which increase the risk of an accident can impact on a person's health.

We can improve health in many different ways for example by:

- Taking action to deal with poor housing by encouraging landlords to improve living conditions;
- Licensing larger private rented properties to ensure they meet suitable standards;
- Educating landlords on changes to regulations and laws that may affect them;
- Providing energy advice;
- Intervening to prevent individuals and families becoming homeless at the earliest opportunity;
- Support vulnerable people to avoid or prevent homelessness;
- Considering health and wellbeing needs of all people we interact with.

## Planning

Health is influenced by how surroundings make people feel and the opportunities they provide.

To foster physical activity and wellbeing environments it is essential that planners, developers and health professionals collaborate to ensure that health and wellbeing is considered at all development stages. Well-designed places, spaces and buildings enable people to be more physically active, feel safe and secure, use facilities and services and socialise and play. Climate change is one of the biggest challenges the world faces. In 2019 Hertsmere Borough Council declared a climate emergency and committed to achieving net zero carbon emissions no later than 2050. By helping to build resilience against the impacts of climate change, Hertsmere Borough Council wants to improve the wellbeing and quality of life of residents.



In addition, we will look to promote active travel options to encourage our residents to realise the wellbeing benefits of walking and cycling. Overall, we will aim to promote positive behaviour change with events such as:

- national lift sharing day;
- energy saving week;
- cycle to work day/bike week;
- national walking month.

Through our work, we hope to achieve the following outcomes across all modes of transport:

- More people walking, cycling, and using shared mobility options more regularly for everyday journeys;
- Less demand for private car travel for shorter trips, therefore reducing the number of vehicles on the network, whilst creating a higher perception of safety and quality active travel and more social interaction amongst people;
- Creation of people-focused spaces and increased dwell time at local centres;
- Longer-distance trips moved away from the local road network sooner – increased journey time reliability and reduction in delays for public transport on the local road network;
- More people using local bus services to complete everyday journeys to new and existing key destinations;
- Decarbonisation of motorised modes of travel, with a shift towards electric vehicles for private and commercial purposes.

## Sports, Leisure and Culture

The Partnerships and Community Engagement unit has the responsibility to ensure there are cultural leisure, health and sporting offers across the borough. Hertsmere Borough Council provides direct functions in

sports development and health and wellbeing working together with partners to deliver physical activity and health initiatives across the borough. In addition a range of other services are delivered by InspireAll on behalf of the council that seek to improve opportunities for residents to take part in their community; for example park events, theatre shows, activities and trips for older adults. Hertsmere Heritage Forum was set up to bring together, celebrate, develop and promote the wide variety of local community groups who play a significant role in developing arts and culture across the borough. It is supported by the local museums from Borehamwood and Elstree, Bushey, Potters Bar and Radlett. Hertsmere Borough Council supports a range of organisations in the voluntary sector with grant funding to provide specific services across the borough. For example Citizens Advice Hertsmere is funded to provide free impartial and confidential advice to residents on a range of issues from debt and money to legal advice.

Hertsmere Borough Council is one of the ten district and borough councils in Hertfordshire, and are responsible for benefits, car parking, community safety, elections, environmental health, housing needs, leisure and parks, licensing, planning, street cleaning and kerbside waste and recycling collections. Hertfordshire County Council is responsible for providing the following services: adoption and fostering, early years childcare, fire and rescue, health and social care, household waste recycling centres and the general disposal of waste and recycling, libraries, public transport, registry, roads, schools, street lights, trading standards and youth provision across the ten districts of Hertfordshire. There are also some town and parish councils that operate in some areas of Hertsmere, which are generally responsible for local events and some activities for young/older people, Christmas lights, some allotments, cemeteries and parks, public clocks and war memorials.

# Definitions

The strategy will be using the following definitions of key words.

**Accessibility** – Accessibility is giving equitable access to everyone along the continuum of human ability and experience. Accessibility encompasses the broader meanings of compliance and refers to how organisations make space for the characteristics that each person brings (American Alliance of Museums).

**Equity** – Equity is the absence of unfair, avoidable or remediable differences among groups of people, whether those groups are defined socially, economically, demographically, or geographically or by other dimensions of inequality (e.g. sex, gender, ethnicity, disability, or sexual orientation) (WHO).

**Health** – A state of complete physical, mental and social wellbeing and not merely the absence of disease or infirmity (WHO).

**Health inequalities** – Health inequalities are the preventable, unfair, and unjust difference in health status across, between and within population groups, arising from the socio-economic and environmental



conditions in which people are born, live, work and age. The unequal distribution of the social determinants of health, such as education, housing, and employment etc, drives inequalities in physical and mental health, reduces an individual's ability to prevent sickness, or to access treatment when ill health occurs (HCC).

**Inclusion** – The practice or policy of providing equal access to opportunities and resources for people who might otherwise be excluded or marginalized, such as those who have physical or mental disabilities and members of other minority groups (Oxford Dictionary).

**Physical activity** – 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. Both moderate- and vigorous-intensity physical activity improve health (WHO).

**Wellbeing** – Wellbeing is a positive state experienced by individuals and societies. It is a resource for daily life and is determined by social, economic and environmental conditions. Wellbeing encompasses quality of life and the ability of people and societies to contribute to the world with a sense of meaning and purpose (Glossary of Terms 2021) (WHO).



