



# Move more, more often

## Active Warrington Strategy

2024 - 2027

### Summary version

v5.0

“If physical activity were a drug, we would refer to it as a miracle cure, due to the great many illnesses it can prevent and help treat.”

**UK Chief Medical Officer**



# Introduction

Being active is vital for a healthy and happy life. It can improve our health, help us to connect with others and live longer. Despite these benefits, many people are not active enough. The Active Warrington strategy aims to make it easier for all our residents to move more, more often. It also includes ways to make sure we all can access and afford ways to be more active and to make active travel easier.

This strategy supports other local plans, including:

- Eat Well, Feel Well Strategy (2024-2027)
- Warrington Climate Emergency Action Plan (2023)
- Warrington Education Strategy (2023-2027)
- Warrington Design Guide (2023)
- Warrington Together Place Plan (2023)
- Living Well in Warrington Health & Wellbeing Strategy (2024-2028)
- Warrington Central 6 Masterplan
- Warrington Outdoor Spaces, Sports and Recreation Assessment (OSSRA)

It will also work with the upcoming Warrington Mental Health & Wellbeing strategy.

The development and ongoing delivery of this strategy is through a partnership with many organisations and departments within Warrington Borough Council. Thank you to all partners and departments for their input, expertise, time and contributions to the development of this strategy.

## Why is it important to be more active?

In England, 1 in 4 women and 1 in 5 men do less than 30 minutes of physical activity per week, this classifies them as physically inactive. Not being active enough is linked to 1 in 6 deaths in the UK and costs the country £7.4 billion each year.

There are lots of benefits to being more active, such as:

- Reduces the risk of over 20 diseases and increasing lifespan.
- Strengthens muscles and bones.
- Helps children develop motor and social skills.
- Reduces the risk of frailty with age.
- Improves sleep.
- Maintains a healthy weight.
- Manages stress and boosts confidence and wellbeing.
- Enhances quality of life.
- Helps build social connections and relationships.
- Reduces carbon footprint through active travel.
- Lowers the risk of pregnancy complications, like high blood pressure and gestational diabetes.

Every £1 invested in community sport and physical activity puts £4 back in the economy and society. The social value of physical activity, including its effects on wellbeing, health, and community development, is thought to be over £72 billion.

Even with these benefits, at this time we aren't active enough. But that can change.

## How active should we be?

The UK's Chief Medical Officer (CMO) recommends the following levels of physical activity:

- **Babies under 1:** active several times a day with floor-based activities and for non-mobile babies, at least 30 minutes of tummy time, while awake.
- **Early Years (under 5 years):** At least 180 minutes (3 hours) of physical activity per day for 1-5-year-olds and at least 30 minutes for under 1s.
- **Children and Young People (5-18 years):** At least 60 minutes (1 hour) of moderate to vigorous activity daily.
- **Adults:** At least 150 minutes (2.5 hours) of moderate activity or 75 minutes (1 hour 15 minutes) of vigorous activity per week.
- **Older Adults (65+ years):** Follow adult guidelines and include activities to maintain muscle strength, balance, and flexibility.

## Current physical activity Levels in Warrington

- Adult physical activity increased from 59.6% to 69.2% between 2017/18 and 2021/22. In 2023, it was 69.1%.
- Physical activity among children and young people fell from 51.2% to 48.3% over the same period.

## Inequalities in physical activity:

- Women, older people, those with disabilities, and those in lower socioeconomic groups are less active.
- 51% of women and 58.9% of men in Warrington do at least two strength-based activities per week.
- 22.7% of residents in the most deprived areas are inactive compared to 14.5% in the least deprived areas.
- Physical inactivity increases with age: from 13.3% of 18-39-year-olds to 18% of 40-64-year-olds, rising to 23.7% of those 65+.

# Barriers to physical activity

The main barriers to being active reported by Warrington residents include:

- Lack of time (26%).
- Feeling too tired/not enough energy (19%).
- Health issues (18%).
- Unable to afford activities (12%).

In addition, 37% of respondents, reported 'Nothing, I do as many activities as I want to'.

# Active Warrington Strategy

## Theme

Objective

### Theme 1. Active Leadership

- 1.1 The Council and partners across all organisations commit to supporting the Active Warrington strategy and delivery plan.
- 1.2 Active Warrington Strategy to be reported to Warrington Together Staying Well Board.
- 1.3 The Council and partners set up local leadership and processes to add physical activity to strategies, business and delivery plans.

### Theme 2. Active Environment and Facilities

- 2.1 Create a local structure where active travel is accessible, inclusive and the first choice of transport for everyone, every day.
- 2.2 Increase opportunities to be active and involved in sport.
- 2.3 Provide and commission leisure services, activities and pathways to meet a range of needs for adults, children and families.
- 2.4 Increase opportunities to use the local bus service to promote active travel and reduce car use.

### Theme 3. Actively Inclusive

- 3.1 Address barriers to taking part in physical activity and sport to increase participation.
- 3.2 Leisure services, community groups and voluntary sector provide equitable, affordable access for everyone.
- 3.3 Provision and promotion of sport and physical activity opportunities with and for people living with disabilities.

### Theme 4. Active Communications

- 4.1 Develop annual physical activity communications plans for all partners deliver and support.

### Theme 5. Active Health and Social Care

- 5.1 Include physical activity in prevention and treatment pathways including long term conditions and mental health.
- 5.2 Include physical activity into strategic and business plans for health and social care providers.
- 5.3 Use a Making Every Contact Count (MECC) approach.
- 5.4 GP practices and primary care networks to sign up to the Active Practice Charter.
- 5.5 Health and social care organisations to promote moving more and active travel for patients,

staff and visitors.

## **Theme 6. Active Communities**

6.1 Promote physical activity as a part of daily life.

6.2 Support, recruit and increase visibility of community champions to promote physical activity in the community.

## **Theme 7. Active Education**

7.1 Schools and education settings to provide and promote a variety of sports and physical activities for both staff and students to take part in.

7.2 Facilitate change and remove barriers to enable all children and young people to participate in and enjoy sports and physical activity.

7.3 Enable early years (0-5's) settings to provide a range of physical activities, including promotion of physical activity levels and benefits.

## **Theme 8. Active Workplaces**

8.1 Support and enable local businesses and workplaces to develop strategies and policies to promote physical activity and create opportunities for staff and customers to be more physically active, including participation in sport and active travel.

8.3 Support and enable business participation in Warrington Business High Sherriff Health & Wellbeing Award.

## **Theme 9. Actively Promoting Sport**

9.1 Work to make sport more sustainable and more financially secure.

9.2 Work to widen and increase participation in sport at all levels.

## **Monitoring outcomes**

Reporting of the Active Warrington Strategy will be to the Warrington Together Staying Well Board, on an annual basis. As well as monitoring of objectives and actions in the delivery plan and activity data from leisure and sports clubs, the following outcome data will also be reported annually to monitor effectiveness of the strategy.

Percentage of physically active adults meeting UK CMOs' guidelines

Percentage of physically active children and young people meeting UK CMOs' guidelines

Percentage of adults meeting UK CMOs' definition of physically inactive

Numbers of school students engaging with active travel schemes  
e.g. WOW walk to school, Bikeability.