

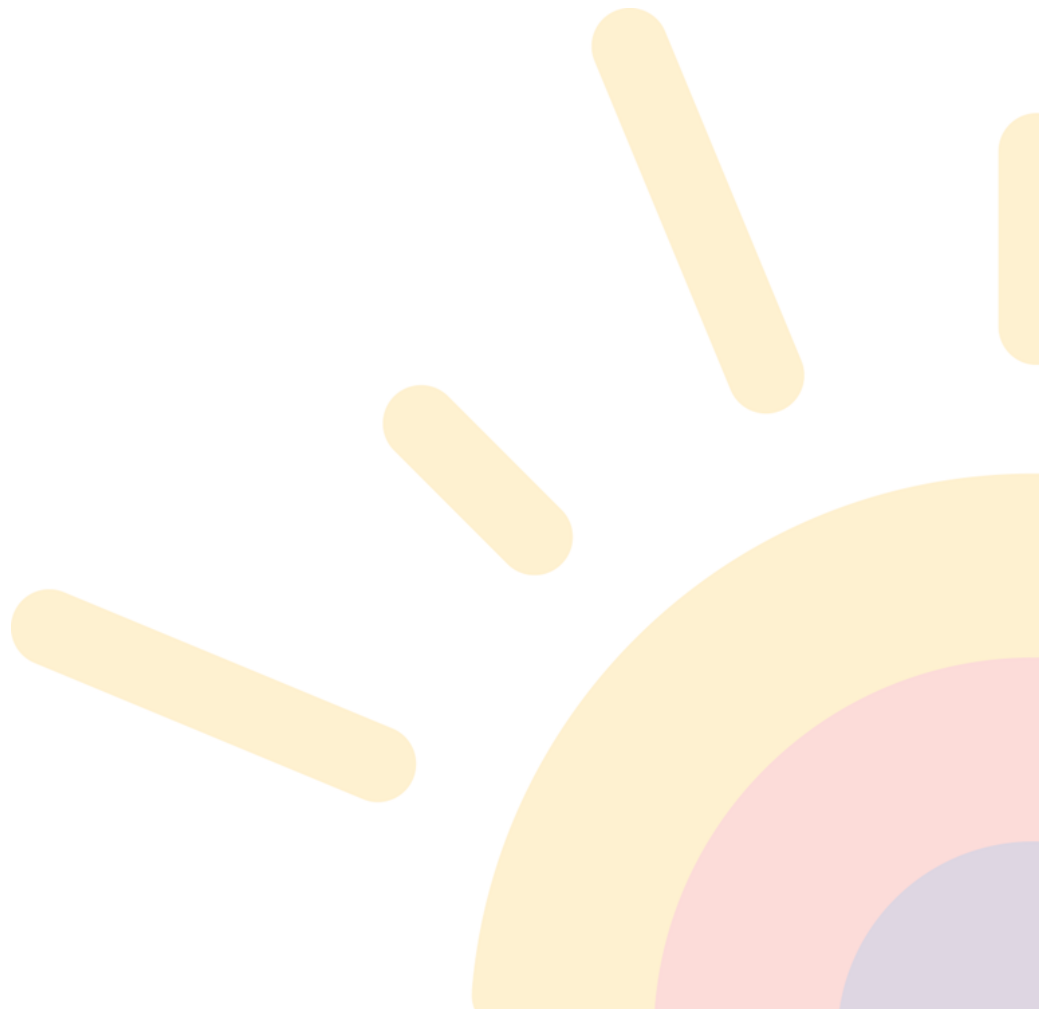


Eat Well, Feel Well Plan

2024 - 2027

Summary version

v5.0



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Introduction

We, along with the local NHS (GP surgeries, pharmacies and hospitals), voluntary organisations and schools have worked together to support people to eat healthier food and drink and be more active. We have also worked with local people to develop this '**Eat Well Feel Well**' plan to show how we will achieve this over the next three years.

Everyone should be able to take part in activities and access healthier food and drink, so we can all benefit from being a healthy weight. Being overweight or underweight can affect your health and wellbeing. This can increase your risk of developing diseases and reduce how long you are expected to live.

In Warrington, the number of adults and children who are overweight have increased over the last ten years. Children have been weighed in primary school for nearly 20 years now¹. Warrington partners use this information to plan projects and services that can help you and your family stay healthy.

Being underweight or overweight starts young and can be for many reasons. You might struggle to pay for healthy food or have more than one job, so you do not have time to cook or be active. You may struggle to pay for your electric / gas to cook healthy meals or have low wellbeing so don't feel like doing activities or going out. We recognise this and want to help. We want everyone to be able to access healthy food, be active and be happy. We know it's not easy, so we want to make it easier.

We have written this three-year plan to create places and policies to help make the healthy choice the easier choice. This includes providing green space such as parks for people to be active, cycle lanes for active travel and good public transport to access healthy food outlets. This also includes food growing schemes, access to fresh drinking water and healthier food options in schools, workplaces, hospitals, and community venues. We want to protect children and young people from unhealthy food and drinks adverts and make sure you have the facts and support you need to stay a healthy weight.

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

¹ The National Child Measurement Programme

Unhealthy Weight – what we mean and what it does to us

If you are underweight, it may mean you are not getting the nutrients you need to build healthy bones, skin or hair. This means you could have less energy and be more likely develop conditions such as brittle bones and anaemia.

Being overweight means you will have too many fat deposits around your body which can also damage your health. Being overweight increases your risk of developing heart disease, type 2 diabetes, cancers and joint problems. It can also lower your mental health and reduce the time that you are expected to live.

What is a healthy weight in adults?

Doctors, nurses, and other NHS staff use a measure called Body Mass Index (BMI) to assess if an adult is a healthy weight or not. BMI links your weight to your height. Your score will be any of the below:

- Below 18.5 – underweight
- Between 18.5 and 24.9 – healthy weight
- Between 25.0 and 29.9 – overweight
- Between 30.0 and 39.9 – obese
- BMI of 40.0 or more – severely obese

People with a South Asian, Chinese, other Asian, Middle Eastern, Black African or African-Caribbean family background are asked to use lower BMI scores to measure if they are overweight or obese:

- Between 23.0 and 27.4 – overweight
- 27.5 or above – obese.

What is a healthy weight in children?

Children of different ages and sexes grow at different rates. The National Child Measurement Programme (NCMP) measures children at primary school in reception (age 4-5 years) and year 6 (age 10-11 years) every year. A school nurse does this and it gives data on the number of children above a healthy weight and living with obesity.

Causes of unhealthy weight

Being underweight, overweight or obese happens when people eat less or more energy than their body uses when being active.

Someone may be underweight for many reasons. This could include family medical history (genetics), a high metabolic rate and lack of food (poverty). This could also include low appetite, medication, illness (physical or mental) or eating disorders such as Anorexia Nervosa.

The causes of overweight and obesity are not as simple as eating too much and moving too little. Obesity is linked to a wide range of factors. For example, health conditions, use of medicine that can make you overweight, inactive jobs and increased car use. Also, seeing unhealthy food and drink adverts and promotions, which are often cheaper than healthy options. But one of the biggest influences on our weight is the world around us² (Figure 1).

Figure 1: The world around us affects how healthy we are:



² [What causes obesity? | Cancer Research UK](https://www.cancerresearchuk.org/health-professional/obesity/what-causes-obesity)

Impact

As figures 2-5 show, unhealthy weight impacts on both the person and our wider society:

Figure 2: Impact on health:

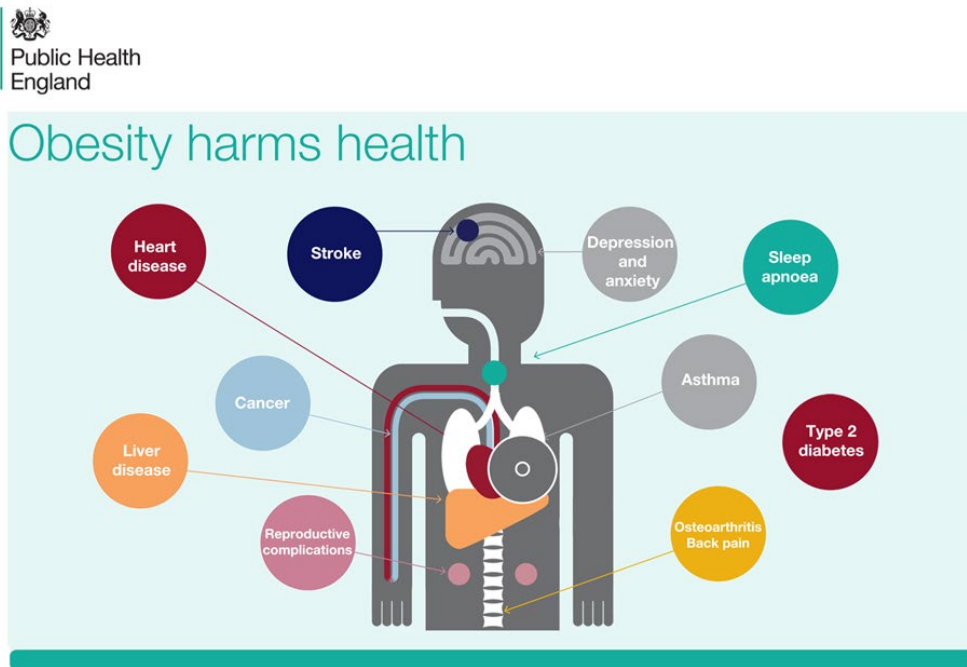


Figure 3: Impact on adults:

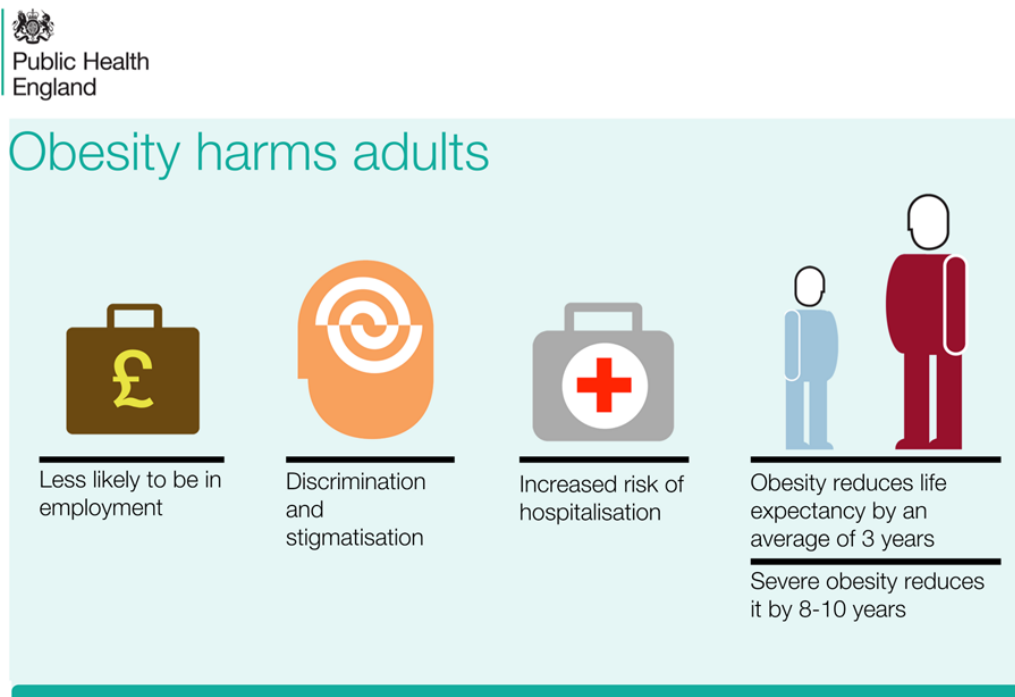


Figure 4: Impact on children and young people:

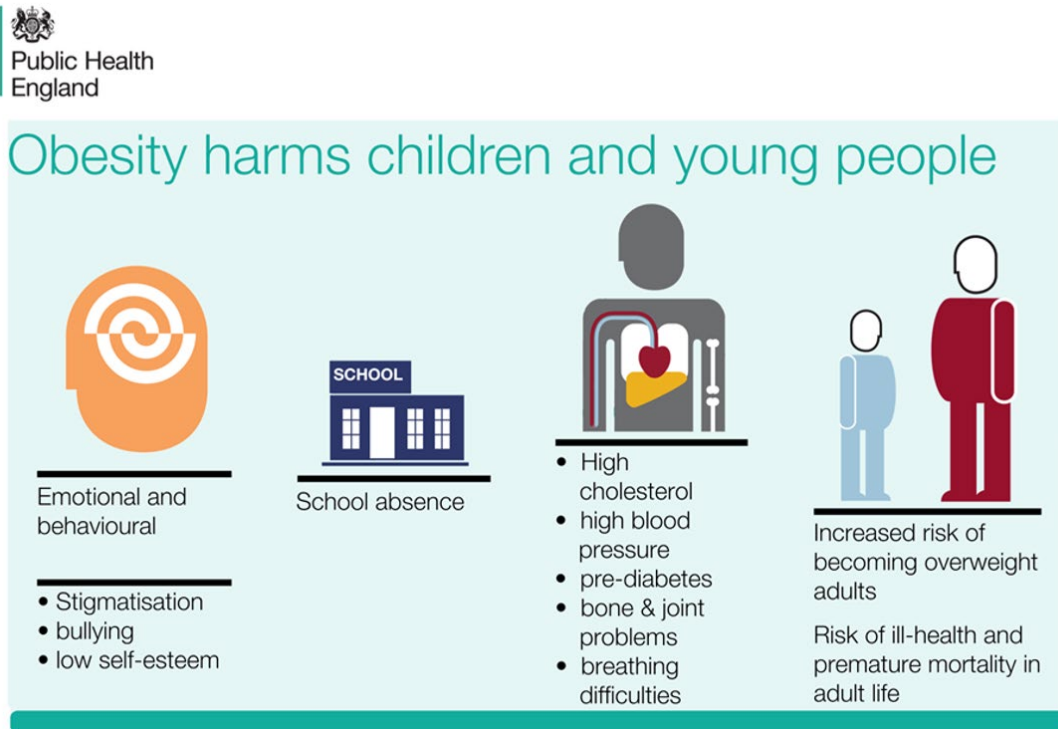


Figure 5: Financial impact:



Unhealthy weight statistics

The number of adults and children with an unhealthy weight has increased both nationally and locally in Warrington.

Children and young people

The latest data (2022/23) shows that 1 in 4 Warrington children in Reception are above a healthy weight. This rises to 1 in 3 Warrington Year 6 students being above a healthy weight before they have started secondary school.

Children living in the poorest parts of England are more likely to be living with obesity. In Warrington, levels of obesity are twice as high among both Reception and Year 6 children living in the most deprived areas, compared to those living in the least deprived areas.

Adults

In England, 1 in 4 (26%) adults are living with obesity, and a further 38% are overweight. Since 1993, the number of people living with obesity has nearly doubled. Men are more likely to be overweight or living with obesity than women. As figure 6 shows, obesity does not affect all groups equally.

Figure 6: Obesity does not affect all groups equally:



In Warrington, three fifths (61.3%) of adults are overweight or living with obesity, which is around 103,000 people³. A survey with Warrington residents in 2023⁴ also found that 1 in 4 adults (25.8%) are living with obesity, compared with 1 in 5 in 2013 (19.3%). Obesity is also 60% higher among people living in the most deprived areas, compared to the least deprived.

³ Calculated using the 2022/23 Warrington figure of 61.3% and the 2022 mid-year ONS population estimates.

⁴ Warrington Borough Council (2023) Warrington Adult Health and Wellbeing Survey 2023 General Health and Health Related Behaviour. November 2023. Available at: [Joint Strategic Needs Assessment \(JSNA\) | warrington.gov.uk](https://www.warrington.gov.uk/joint-strategic-needs-assessment-jsna)

The plan

What we want to achieve

We want to be a place where the healthier choice is the easier choice so people can stay at or get to a healthy weight. Where the people of Warrington have access to healthy food, support to have a healthy diet and the chance to move more.

What we want to do

The aim of the **Eat Well Feel Well** plan is to stop the increase in children, young people and adults becoming an unhealthy weight in Warrington. The strategy outlines a 'whole system approach' to promote healthy weight across all age groups to improve the overall health and wellbeing of our residents. This includes:

- Tackling the differences in health between different groups of people that can affect our weight. This includes when a person is without reliable access to affordable, healthy food.
- Producing a plan with all partners (Council, NHS, Voluntary, Private) where we all have a part to play in offering support.
- Ensuring support to be a healthy weight is included in all Council NHS and Voluntary sector plans and services.
- Using ways that do not blame individuals to reduce unfair thoughts and ideas that may be had based on somebodies' size (weight stigma).

How we will do it

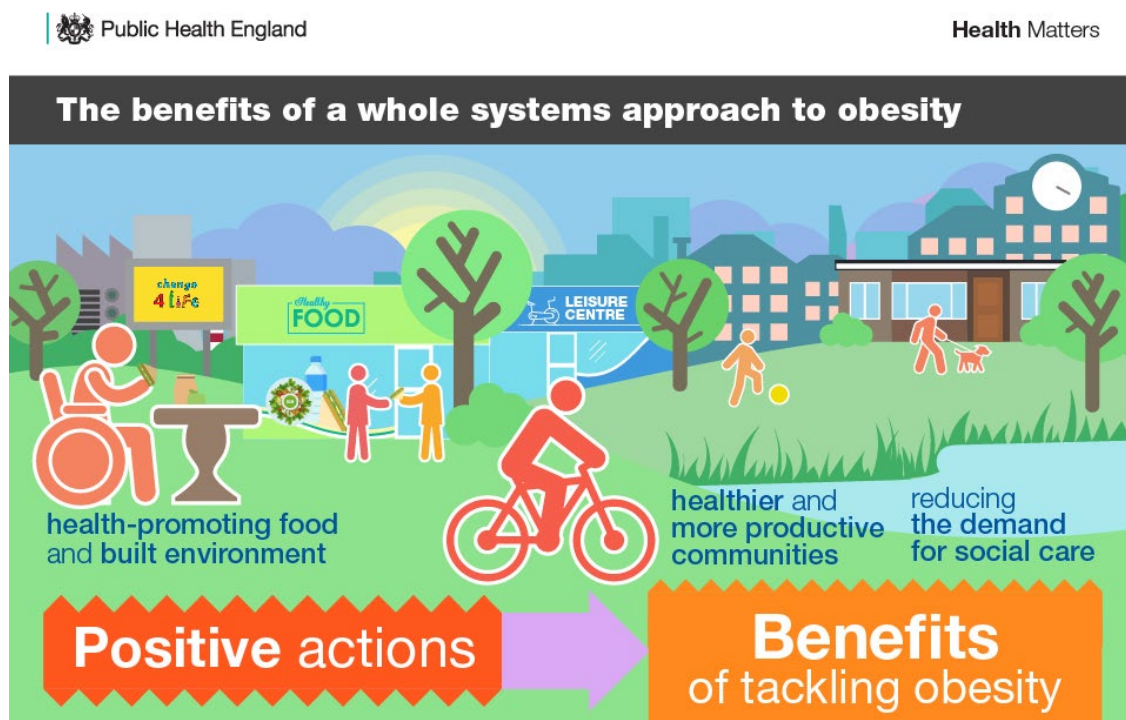
We will do this by:

- **Leadership** – Work together and supporting action at national level.
- **Food & Drink Businesses** – Including takeaways and supermarkets, to offer healthier choices and limit unhealthy marketing to children.
- **Healthy Environment** – Design and renew buildings and outdoor spaces to help people move more and access healthy food. This will also improve air quality.
- **Healthy Workplaces** – Have healthier food and drink available at public events, increase access to fresh water, and promote active travel (cycling, wheeling and walking) among staff.
- **Tracking Progress** – Tracking the strategy's progress and reporting on it.

Whole systems approach

Tackling unhealthy weight is everyone's business, there is no single individual, group or partner that can do it alone. This is what we call a whole systems approach to obesity, and it must involve action by individuals and the entire community⁵ (Figure 7).

Figure 7: Benefits of a whole systems approach to obesity:



Taking a whole systems approach at a local level can provide more benefits to people's health. They can have positive impacts on other local issues including employment and the happiness of local populations. It could also reduce the demand for social care.

Adoption of the Local Authority Healthy Weight Declaration

The Healthy Weight Declaration (HWD) was made by the Health Equalities Group (Food Active)⁶, a charity based in the North West. The declaration highlights the key role local councils play in promoting good practices and influencing partner policies. The Strategy commits partners to deliver actions under five themes.

⁵ [Health matters: whole systems approach to obesity - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/government/news/health-matters-approach-to-obesity)

⁶ [Food Active | Local Authority Declaration on Healthy Weight](https://www.foodactive.org.uk/)

Theme 1: Leadership:

- Warrington Borough Council and partners sign-up to Food Active's Healthy Weight Declaration (HWD) using a partnership approach at both an individual and environmental level.
- Carry out public consultation on the Eat Well Feel Well (EWW) plan.
- Sign off the EWW plan by the Staying Well Board.
- All partners consider adding healthy weight activity in their business, plans and services.
- Protect, promote and support safe and effective infant feeding e.g. Breastfeeding and bottle feeding.
- Protect, promote, and support healthy diets for children.
- Improve uptake of school meals and review against relevant Government healthy eating guidelines.
- Develop a local healthy weight communications plan to share with the public, partners, and key businesses.
- Provide training for relevant professionals and volunteers to have positive conversations about health e.g. healthy eating, weight etc.
- Develop community sessions such as cook and taste shows and growing schemes.
- Encourage individual Community and Voluntary Sector member organisations to consider signing the HWD 'Partner Pledge' to promote a healthy weight environment.
- Integrated Care Systems (ICS) to support including healthy messages into renewed contracts.
- Create messages to promote healthy weight information and support to patients through Primary Care (e.g. GP's, Opticians, Dentists, Pharmacies etc).

Theme 2: Food & Drink Businesses:

- All partners to strengthen public food procurement (the process of getting supplies) and provision standards.
- Work with the out of home sector (any food or drink purchased outside of home e.g. takeaways, cafes) to offer and promote healthier catering, focussing on areas of deprivation.
- Develop and apply guidance for healthier choices to be included in vending machines.
- Options to be considered to restrict local unhealthy high fat, sugar, salt (HFSS) food advertising.
- Work with procurements teams to ensure actions and activities to promote and enable healthy weight are embedded in contracts and sponsorship arrangements.
- Work with all partners to encourage the Government to introduce policy measures to help make the healthy choice the easy choice. For example, including nutrition labels in food outlets, restrictions on unhealthy food at end of aisles and at tills, portion size regulations, and taxation of HFSS food.

Theme 3: Healthy Environment:

- Review and update WBC Hot Food Takeaways Supplementary Planning Document (2014).
- Deliver a range of healthy weight projects within the education/school setting and other settings for young people.
- Local planning regulations and licensing to support healthy weight environments.
- Supporting families out of food poverty.
- Review and develop the WBC Neighbourhood team's weight management support for whole families.
- Reviewing the commissioning of weight management services/support.
- Upskilling carers and workforces (paid and unpaid) around healthy weight resources and services.
- Ensure the Holiday Activity and Food (HAF) programme promotes healthy weight (healthy eating and physical activity), including the promotion of active travel.

Theme 4: Healthy Workplaces:

- Develop healthy food and drink guidelines (catering requirements) for Council meetings and events.
- Increase public access to fresh drinking water, encouraging re-usable bottle refills.
- Promote appropriate signage/images/resources in large businesses buildings to encourage patients, staff, and visitors to move more.
- Develop and promote business engagement initiatives for healthy weight.
- Inclusion of healthy weight messages/initiatives within organisation's 'Workforce Health and Wellbeing' strategies.

Theme 5: Tracking Progress:

- Coordinate HWD Steering Group to track progress of the EFWW Strategy delivery action plan.
- Participate in Staying Well Board monitoring process.
- Include any relevant updated National guidance within the EFWW Strategy.

How will we know we are there?

To see how well the Strategy works, we will monitor these outcomes:

- Outcome: Percentage of adults who are overweight / living with obesity
- Outcome: Percentage of children who are overweight / living with obesity in reception year (age 4-5)
- Outcome: Percentage of children who are overweight / living with obesity in year 6 (age 10-11)
- Outcome: Obesity prevalence in Warrington by deprivation quintile for reception (age 4-5) and year 6 (age 10-11).