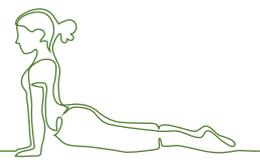

Get Elmbridge Moving



Physical Activity Strategy 2021 - 2031



Elmbridge
Borough Council

July 2021

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Foreword



Janet Turner
Leisure and Cultural Services Portfolio Holder

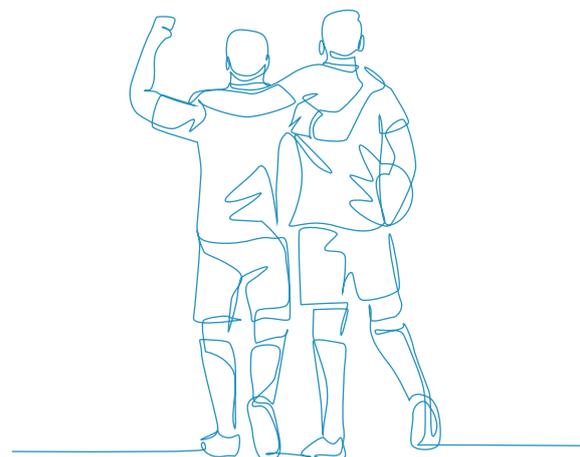
Given the impact of the pandemic, the value of being physically active has never been more important. However, despite the obvious challenges ahead, the pandemic has provided space and time to reset and take a fresh look as to how local councils and other partner organisations can work collaboratively to reduce stubborn health inequalities.

I view living an active life as a wonderful and powerful medicine that makes you feel great, keeps you physically and mentally well, brings you closer to people and even connects you with the natural environment.

The Strategy lays out the Council's vision and approach to help create an environment that supports residents to have excellent access and opportunities to be more active, irrespective of age, geography or personal circumstances. Indeed, there is a strong commitment that runs throughout this strategy to remove the many barriers that hinder access into regular physical activity.

Also, at the heart of this strategy is strong partnership working. It has been developed and will be delivered by working collaboratively with a variety of partners including Active Surrey, local communities, health partners, the council's leisure centre operator, Surrey Constabulary, Surrey County Council and many more local organisations.

It therefore gives me great pleasure to recommend to you Elmbridge Borough Council's new Physical Activity Strategy which is appropriately named Get Elmbridge Moving. The new strategy builds on the good work from the previous physical activity strategy and I have no doubt will lead to a happy and healthier Elmbridge.



Vision

Our vision is for Elmbridge to be a borough where everyone will have the opportunity to enjoy the benefits of living an active life.

By 2031 we want to be the most active borough in Surrey. We want all Elmbridge residents to have great opportunities to access a diverse range of physical activities to improve both their physical and mental wellbeing no matter what their personal circumstances.

Aims and objectives

Our overarching aim is to increase activity in the least active people. We will do this through the following objectives:

1. **Recover and reinvent** – We will emerge from the Covid-19 pandemic a stronger and fairer borough

2. **An active life is a healthy life** – We will enable people to live an active life and will strengthen the connection between physical activity and health and wellbeing

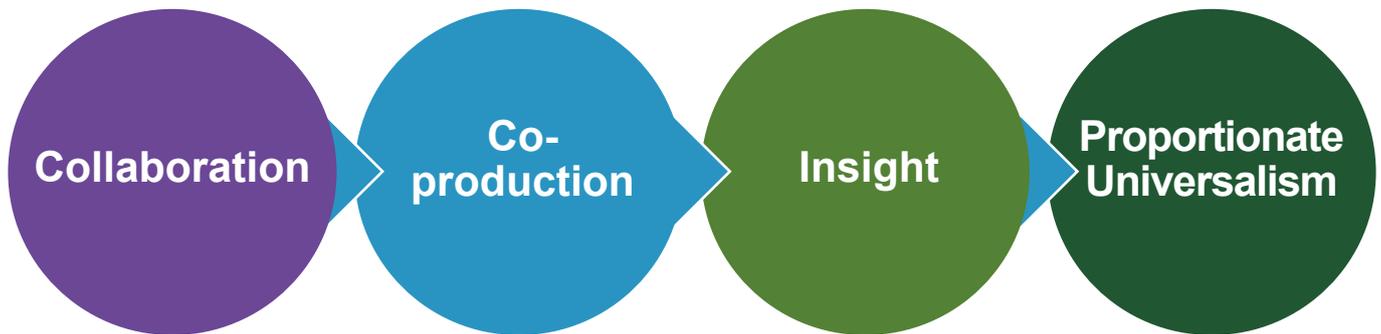
3. **Fairer access to physical activity** – We will create a fairer, active Elmbridge for all, where no-one is less active because of who they are or where they live

4. **Strengthening communities** – We will work in partnership to create active communities. We will bring people together, create identity and develop people's confidence and skills through engaging in physical activity.

5. **Active environments** – We will make it easy for people in Elmbridge to be active in the space around them

Guiding principles

This strategy is underpinned by a set of guiding principles, which will be incorporated into everything we do, to make Elmbridge a more active borough.



Collaboration – By working in partnership with our communities, organisations and customers we will work towards our shared objectives to achieve greater impact and reach more people.

Co-production – People in Elmbridge will be at the heart of every activity and service we deliver. Their needs will inform the design and delivery of services.

Insight – Our services will be evidence-based. We will use best practice and data to inform what we do, to track progress and to show the difference we make.

Proportionate Universalism*– Allocate resources and services at a scale and intensity that is proportionate to the degree of need. We will prioritise our efforts to engage the least active and those who face the greatest barriers to being active.



Introduction

What is physical activity?

Physical activity is defined by the World Health Organisation (WHO, 2018) as any bodily movement produced by skeletal muscle that requires energy expenditure. It can be undertaken in many different ways: walking, cycling, sports and active forms of recreation (dance, yoga, tai chi). It can also be undertaken as part of work (lifting, carrying, or other active tasks) and as part of paid or unpaid domestic tasks (cleaning, carrying, gardening and care duties). All physical activity provides health benefits, however, it's worth noting that activities as part of work or domesticity, may not have the same mental or social health benefits as activities chosen for recreation.

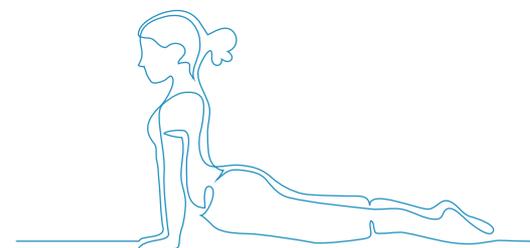
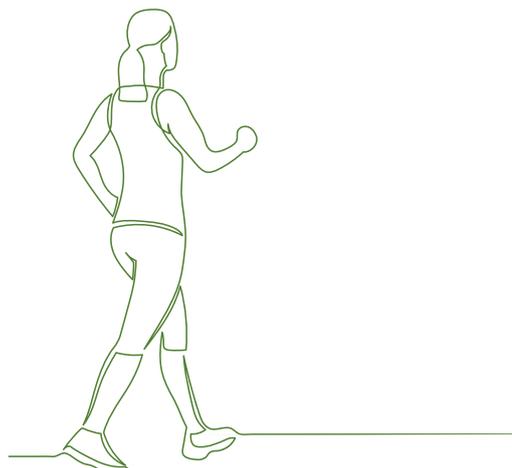
Regular physical activity is proven to help prevent and treat non-communicable diseases such as heart disease, stroke, diabetes and breast and colon cancer. It also helps to prevent hypertension, overweight and obesity and improves mental health, quality of life and wellbeing.

Active communities also benefit the environment, by using less fossil fuels, having cleaner air and less congested and safer roads. An active Elmbridge will mean our residents can lead healthier and more fulfilling lives, whilst supporting the Council to be carbon neutral by 2030.

Context

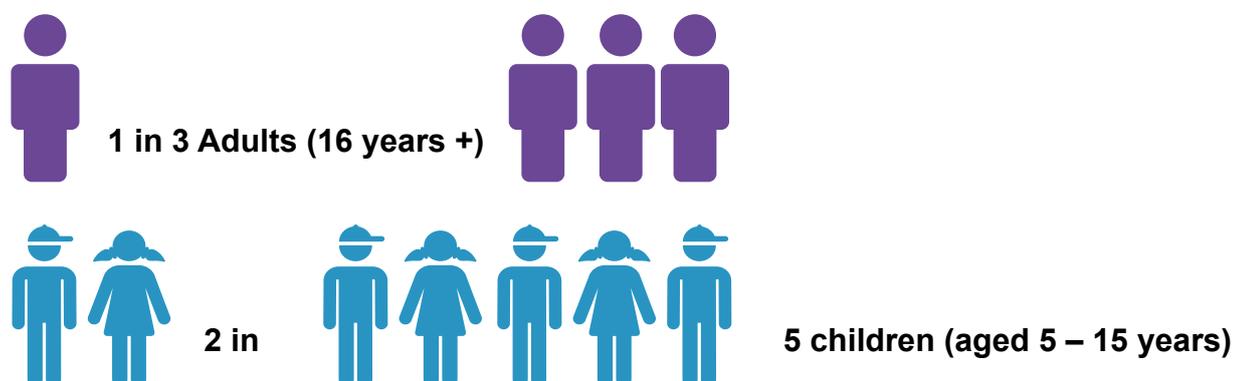
This strategy sets out what Elmbridge Borough Council will do to become a more active Borough by 2031. It was developed following consultation with residents, community organisations and statutory bodies to ensure the needs of local residents are incorporated into everything we do.

This strategy is aligned locally to the [Elmbridge Council Plan \(2018\)](#), [Elmbridge Play Strategy](#), [Elmbridge Connect Strategy \(2020\)](#) and [Elmbridge Carbon Management and Reduction Plan 2020 – 2030](#), and regionally, to Active Surrey's Physical Activity Strategy and the Surrey Health and Wellbeing Strategy which are being released later this year. Nationally it is also aligned to [Sport England's Strategy](#), [Health of the Nation](#), and [Achieving Fairness](#) and internationally the [World Health Organisation's Physical Activity Action Plan 2018 – 2030](#).



The current situation

In Elmbridge 1 in 3 adults and more than 2 in 5 children and young people (aged 5 – 15 years) do not currently meet the recommended amount of physical activity, as set by the UK Chief Medical Officers (Department of Health and Social Care, 2019).



Historically, physical activity levels differ between people based on their gender, economic prosperity, ethnicity and age. For example, there are higher levels of inactivity in females, older adults, people from ethnically diverse communities, underprivileged groups and people with disabilities and chronic diseases. These differences can be as high as 1 in 2 adults not meeting the recommended levels of physical activity, including residents aged over 75 years or those with a long-term health condition or disability.

Elmbridge is a relatively healthy borough, however, there are some conditions where there is a higher prevalence, such as breast cancer, colon cancer, dementia and emergency admissions for hip fracture. There is strong evidence that physical activity can help to prevent and treat these conditions. Inequities in health outcomes also exist for some population groups. For example, someone living in Walton North is almost twice as likely to be admitted to hospital for a heart attack than someone living in Esher or Oxshott and Stoke D'Abernon.

The views of 479 residents (Appendices 1 and 2) regarding physical activity barriers, motivations, preferences and communication methods were gathered and collated. The feedback was instrumental in helping shape this strategy with the key messages emerging being:

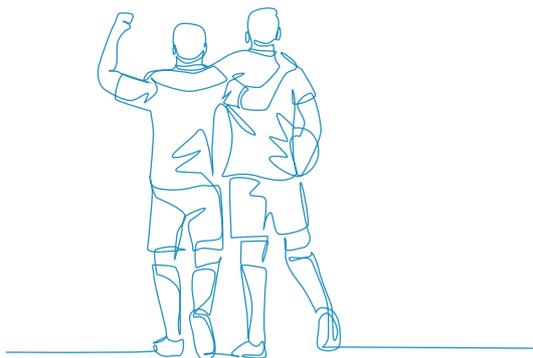
- Barriers to being more active were time, work, money, motivation and family balance and residents would be more motivated to exercise if they exercised with friends, joined a group, had access to reasonably priced and convenient activities and activities fitted in around other commitments.
- The most popular ways of being active were walking, cycling, gardening, indoor classes, exercise at home and swimming and people wanted to do more outdoor fitness sessions, self-guided walks, trim trails, outdoor family activities and safer cycling and walking routes.
- Most respondents wanted to use more active forms as travel such as walking or cycling.

2020 has been unprecedented with the negative impact of COVID-19 on both physical and mental wellbeing. Alarming, there is compelling evidence that COVID-19 has widened health inequalities, particularly for residents who are disabled and financially disadvantaged (Sport England, 2020). This has manifested locally; for example residents living in Thames Ditton, Walton North and Molesey Heath have been disproportionately economically impacted by Covid- economically with a high number of estimated workers furloughed compared to the rest of Surrey.

Some of our achievements over the past 5 years

Start Moving - Supporting all children and young people to have an active start in life

- An average of 3,600 residents took part in Play Day every year, and around 4,500 people have attended other Play initiatives such as Shout out! Teddy Bear's Picnic, Xplorer, and Woodland Adventures over the past 5 years
- Elmbridge Sports Council awarded a total of £50,000 Grant Aid funding which directly supported local sports clubs and athletes access new equipment, coach education and high-quality training facilities
- We supported Surrey Police on the Sporting Chance project which helped direct 50 young people into positive activity instead of being on the streets
- We supported the launch of a new boxing club at Cobham Community Centre called Cobham Hive boxing with over 20 young people from Cobham Downside attending
- We supported Thames Ditton Junior School train up some of its students to become Young Leaders & Care Homes Champions and deliver physical activity sessions in Care Homes
- We launched 4 Satellite Clubs at Xcel, Lower Green and Walton North for young people aged 11 -19 which attracted over 1,100 participants into a range of sports activities. (Dance, basketball, football and Saturday Night Project)
- We recruited an average of 1000 young people aged 7 to 16 per year to take part in the Surrey Youth Games. This annual sports festival attracts over 2000 young people across the whole country. It transitioned from being a competitive event to a mass participation programme in 2019 to attract less active children and young people. In 2019, all Elmbridge participants were non-club players as a result of the Council's work in partnership with housing associations, family services and surrey police to recruit 'Team Elmbridge' members. Prior to registration, 53% of participating young people were exercising less than 3 hours a week and 19% did not undertake any physical activity.

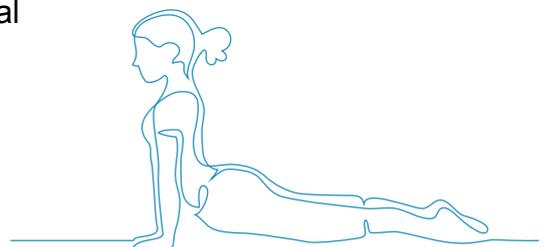


Move Every Day - Encouraging all adults to build activity into their everyday lives.

- We celebrated National Fitness Days by organising walking challenges for staff, family activities at Coronation recreation ground, Hersham and offered free access to gym & swim and personal training at Xcel Leisure Complex
- We supported various Back 2 Sports programmes, including Back 2 Hockey, Track, Netball and Football, encouraging men and women aged over 50 to get back into sport
- We ran successful track initiatives at the Sports Hub such as couch to 5K, buggy fit, This Girl Can Run in partnership with local sports clubs and running clubs
- We introduced Wheelchair Karate, Surbiton Flyerz Hockey and trained up a level 2 Boccia coach to run sessions from Cobham Community Centre
- We ran a Borough wide This Girl can campaign with 108 women taking part in free activities over a month. A high percentage of participants were women who live in our targeted areas of inactivity
- We oversaw the installation of 4 outdoor gyms – Molesey Hurst, Cobham, Coronation and Long Ditton recreation grounds

Stay Moving - Supporting older adults to live longer and more active lives

- An average of 5,124 people participated in the healthy walks programme each year and an average of 643 people attending the healthy cycle rides per year
- We worked in partnership with Elmbridge Community Link on providing activities for adults with learning disabilities such as the smoothie bike and boccia sessions in their community user forums, with at least 15 people attending each session
- We delivered a successful Exercise Referral scheme running out of Xcel Leisure Complex and Elmbridge Community Centres and introducing various new sessions including stroke rehab, Otago and Zumba, with an average of 500 people attending each year
- We hold the title of the largest and most successful Walking Football team in Surrey at Xcel Leisure Complex with over 200 men taking part each week
- We successfully launched Parkrun in Brooklands with hundreds of participants attending each week (pre COVID)
- We introduced Sporting Memories as a support group for people with dementia in partnership with Chelsea FC and Fulham FC
- We delivered a successful Get Active 50+ campaign with over 200 people attending across 8 different physical activity providers



Opportunities

Physical activity can be integrated into a wide range of settings: where people live, work and play and how they travel to these locations. As a Council, we are in a unique position to impact all these settings.

Activity is important for all ages, for healthy growth and development in children and adolescents, health and wellbeing for adults and maintaining physical, mental and social health for older adults.

Our work in partnership with health professionals, the voluntary sector, Active Surrey, schools and other partner organisations will benefit residents and encourage them to become and remain active, in supporting environments. We will be able to have a greater influence on wider factors that impact activity levels such as education and health. Primary and secondary health care providers can help patients of all ages become more active and prevent disease, as well as supporting rehabilitation and recovery. As a council, we have a key role to play to ensure their patients/ our residents are supported to be active through initiatives such as social prescribing.

Technology also provides exciting new opportunities to do things differently, reaching and supporting people of all ages to be more active.

COVID-19 has provided us with an exceptional opportunity to reset what we do and reinvent how we can provide fairer access to regular physical activity. It has shone a light on sections of our communities that face additional barriers to enjoying regular physical activity and provides a clear focus to address these historically stubborn inequalities.



Objective 1 – Review, recover and reinvent

We will take action to emerge from the COVID-19 pandemic an active, stronger and fairer borough.

COVID-19 has created a watershed moment to step back and reflect on the stubborn inequalities that exist in society. By working closely and proactively with local communities and health/sports providers, there is a real opportunity to reduce health inequalities for key target groups that have been disproportionately affected by the pandemic, namely disabled people, ethnically diverse communities, people who are economically disadvantaged and older residents. We want to put physical activity and movement at the heart of everything we do in the recovery period from COVID-19 to ensure we maintain and improve everybody's quality of life. We want to adapt our offer so that it meets the needs of people in our borough who need our support the most.

By 2031 we will have:

- Reviewed our services and implemented changes so that everyone in Elmbridge can be active
- Invested our time, effort and money supporting the people in Elmbridge who are least active to become more active
- Used technology to deliver effective and efficient physical activity services
- A good understanding of the people we have supported and the difference we have made to their lives
- An active borough, created through a network of partners working together to achieve the same goal

We will do this by:

- Reviewing our walks and cycle rides programme, tennis programme, activities for children and young people, physical activity offer in the centres for the community,
- Working with our leisure provider to proactively identify and work with residents and community groups that are inactive and do not currently use leisure facilities.
- Working with sports, arts and other appropriate voluntary clubs to help them access funding, reach inactive groups and recover from the pandemic stronger.

Objective 2 – An active life is a healthy life

We will enable people to live an active life and will strengthen the connection between physical activity and health and wellbeing.

It is widely known that physical activity is good for a person's health, however, more can be done to connect physical activity to health. We want to work with the health and social care sectors to embed physical activity as a core way of preventing, managing and treating health conditions. To quote the UK Chief Medical Officers, "If physical activity were a drug, we would refer to it as a miracle cure, due to the many great illnesses it can prevent and help treat" (Department of Health and Social Care, 2019). We want to make physical activity Elmbridge's drug of choice.

By 2031 we will have:

- More people who do enough activity to benefit their health (150+ minutes per week)
- More people who do more than 30 minutes of physical activity per week

We will do this by:

- Embedding physical activity into social prescribing services in the Borough
- Working with our leisure provider to deliver an exercise referral scheme that supports people with long term conditions to be active and also ensure a proactive approach to engage and attract less active/inactive residents
- Delivering and expanding a healthy walks programme that supports people with medical conditions to be active
- Promoting the Sport England 'We Are Undefeatable' campaign through health partners
- Support Active Surrey to train health and social care professionals in the benefits of physical activity for health
- Developing and promoting an interactive directory of services that incorporates physical activity, dance, and play activities
- Embedding social interaction in all activities to improve mental health
- Investing in Elmbridge's parks and green spaces
- Proactively supporting local GP referral schemes by working collaboratively with health providers and other key partners to increase throughput and reach onto the council's leisure operator exercise referral scheme.

Objective 3 – Fairer access to physical activity

We will create a fairer, active Elmbridge for all, where no-one is less active because of who they are or where they live.

In Elmbridge, there are people and communities who experience poorer health and are less active than others. For example, one in 4 people who live in Molesey West are inactive compared to one in 7 people in Molesey East and if you are disabled or over 75 years of age, you are likely to be 20% less active than a non-disabled or under 75 year old person. We want Elmbridge to be a place where, no matter who you are or where you live, you have fair access to being active.

Activity Alliance's Annual Disability and Activity Survey shows COVID-19 is having a significant impact on disabled people, their lives, and their ability to be active. Twice as many disabled people felt that coronavirus greatly reduced their ability to do sport or physical activity compared to non-disabled people (27% vs 13%).

- The pandemic has made disabled people feel that they do not have the opportunity to be as active as they want to, compared to non-disabled people (29% vs 44%).
- Respondents said the lack of activity has led to both their physical and mental health being harder to manage. Feelings of loneliness and social isolation were frequently voiced.
- A fear of contracting the virus (35% vs 13%), the impact on their health (31% vs 13%), a lack of space (23% vs 18%) and support to be able to exercise safely at home (16% vs 5%), have become significant barriers for disabled people, compared to non-disabled people.
- Almost a quarter of disabled people stated that they had not received enough information about how to be active during the pandemic (23% vs 13%).

By 2031 we will increase physical activity levels and reduce inactivity levels for:

- Children and young people
- Ageing and older adults (55 years and over)
- Women and girls
- Ethnically diverse communities
- People with a disability or long-term condition
- People who live in Molesey West, Walton North and Hersham Village.

We will do this by:

- Engaging further with these groups to fully understand their barriers, motivations and preferences for being physically active, in particular children and young people
- Working with these groups to design and deliver targeted activities that enable them to be active. Examples could include: Surrey Youth Games, Saturday Night Project, expansion of the KT12 Project and dance activities, female only swimming sessions, free/ affordable tennis coaching, walking sports, family friendly sessions
- Delivering targeted campaigns that appeal to different population groups such as 'We Are Undefeatable' and 'This Girl Can'
- Ensuring our universal leisure activity offer is accessible to disadvantaged and under-represented groups
- Providing a 'leisure' offer to schools, incorporating tennis coaching, fitness sessions, yoga, dance, active travel also incorporating museum, play and green spaces activities to enrich the participant experience
- Linking community sport and physical activity providers to schools and other population groups as well as supporting them to access grants to reach wider audiences
- Delivering an exciting play programme that offers new opportunities for children and young people in a range of settings
- Investing in Elmbridge's play areas
- Working collaboratively with the Elmbridge Arts Forum and the Surrey Arts Partnership to increase opportunities to participate in dance activities

Objective 4 – Strengthening Communities

We will work in partnership to create active lives, bring people together, create identity and develop people’s confidence and skills

By 2031 we will have:

- More people taking part in activities in their local community
- More people feeling confident and connected to a physically active community
- More community organisations better equipped to meet the needs of inactive people, through funding, training and support with community connections
- Better access to information on physical activity services

We will do this by:

- Delivering a shared action plan to embed physical activity within our Community Support Services team. This will include providing activities at the community centres (falls prevention classes, and social prescribing services, through staff training, providing activity sessions, improving access to information and transport to physical activity sessions
- Working with community sport, arts and physical activity providers to access funding, training and develop their clubs to reach inactive groups
- Celebrating and recognising the great work of the local voluntary sector
- Consulting with local community groups and residents to help support the development of appropriate sports and physical activities in the right location and at the right time

Objective 5 – Active environments

We will work with partners so people in Elmbridge find it easy to be active in the space around them

The spaces around people have a huge impact on their ability to be active. People are more likely to walk if a neighbourhood is well lit, has wide safe footpaths that are lined with trees than they are to walk down a dark, bumpy, narrow path with obstacles in the way. We know people want to walk and cycle more for travel and they want the space to be safe and accessible for them to do this. We want to make this possible for them.

By 2031 we will have:

- More people in Elmbridge walking and cycling for travel
- More people in Elmbridge using our outdoors and green spaces
- Safer and accessible walking and cycling routes throughout the borough
- Better air quality in Elmbridge, with fewer carbon emissions

We will do this by:

- Working with colleagues in Planning Services to ensure the Elmbridge Local Plan and all planning applications consider healthy and active spaces by implementing Sport England's Active Design Principles
- Working with colleagues to ensure our green spaces, countryside, play areas, outdoor gyms, footpaths and cycle routes are accessible to all
- Working with Planning Services to support the implementation of the Local Walking and Cycling Infrastructure Plan
- Delivering an active travel campaign with initiatives to support this
- Developing targeted activities that support our least active groups to access active spaces around them. Examples include working with schools, green prescription/ cycles on prescription, cycle training, walks programme, orienteering, nature initiatives such as survival skills and den building.

How we will know if we are successful

- The gap between the most active and least active people in Elmbridge will be narrowed
- More people from ethnically diverse communities will be doing at least 30 minutes of activity each week
- More people with a long-term health condition or disability will be doing at least 30 minutes of physical activity each week
- More women and girls will be doing at least 30 minutes of physical activity each week
- More older adults will be doing at least 30 minutes of physical activity each week
- To evidence the impact of the strategy, we will be using participation levels collected from our year 1 action plan as the baseline data to measure future year-on-year improvements. This will allow us to show which schemes have delivered the best outcomes particularly from Elmbridge's less active groups.

Conclusion

With the impact of COVID-19, there is a huge challenge ahead to increase levels of physical activity and reduce health inequalities across Elmbridge.

Working collaboratively with health professionals, community groups and a host of other partners is woven throughout the strategy and is critical in helping Elmbridge residents become more active.

Despite the challenges caused by COVID-19, there is now a fresh impetus and strong willingness to change the status quo and make sport and physical activity more accessible by reducing barriers and providing local and more bespoke activities.

To demonstrate the value of this strategy, an annual action plan will be developed to capture its impact in helping reduce health inequalities. This action plan will provide strong evidence as to how its various projects support the strategy's five objectives and so make Elmbridge a more active and healthier place to live and work for all its residents.

Definitions

The following definitions are taken from the World Health Organisation (2018)

Term	World Health Organisation definition
Health inequalities	Health inequalities can be defined as differences in health status or in the distribution of health determinants between different population groups. For example, differences in mobility between elderly people and younger populations, or differences in mortality rates between people from different social classes. Health inequalities are the differences between people or groups due to social, geographical, biological or other factors.
Health inequity	<p>Health inequities are unnecessary, avoidable, unfair and unjust differences between groups of people within countries and between countries. Inequities result from circumstances stemming from socio-economic status, living conditions and other social, geographical, and environmental determinants that can be improved upon by human actions. They are neither naturally predetermined nor inevitable. Inequities typically arise when social issues such as household wealth, education, and housing location overshadow biological differences, such as age and gender.</p> <p>Although biological and predetermined differences can cause inequalities, they are not considered inequities, as they are not caused by social or systematic factors and are not inherently “unfair”.</p>
Inclusive	The process of including or covering everyone that reflects the willingness, intent, actions, and resources needed to increase accessibility for people with disabilities and other marginalized groups.
Partnership	Arrangement of people or organizations to work together towards common interests.
Physical activity	Any form of bodily movement performed by skeletal muscles that result in an increase in energy expenditure. Examples of common types of activity are: walking, running, dancing, swimming, yoga, and gardening.
Physical inactivity	An absence of sufficient level of physical activity required to meet the current physical activity recommendations.
Proportionate universalism	Proportional universality describes an approach to the resourcing and delivery of services at a scale and intensity proportionate to the degree of need. At a global, national and subnational level, there is a need to focus efforts on reducing inequity in the opportunities for physical activity. Therefore, proportional allocation of the resources to the actions needed to engage the least active and those who face the greatest barriers to increasing participation should be a priority.

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Appendices

Appendix 1 - Consultation Survey – Survey results summary sheet

Appendix 2 - Consultation Survey – Survey results by group