



Wolverhampton Joint Strategic Needs Assessment

Physical Inactivity 2023

Executive Summary



Physical inactivity is a global issue, with the World Health Organisation stating one in six deaths worldwide are attributed to physical inactivity. The situation in England is no different where it is reported 22.3% of the population are inactive. Concerningly, the city of Wolverhampton sees a higher level of inactivity than England with 30.5% of the adult population being classed as inactive (Public Health Outcomes Framework, 2023) and 42.5% of children being classed as less active (Active Lives Survey, 2023).

Being physically inactive poses a significant risk to individual and population health. It increases your risk of many non-communicable diseases: stroke, coronary heart disease, type 2 diabetes, depression, some types of cancer, dementia, and social isolation. At a population level, it can lower healthy life expectancy, increase days lost to sickness, reduce community cohesion, contribute to climate issues, and negatively impact the economy.

The Chief Medical Officer has a set of recommendations of how much physical activity should be completed, for adults this is 150 minutes of at least moderate intensity physical activity a week and for children it is 60 minutes of at least moderate intensity physical activity a day. A physically inactive adult is someone who does less than 30 minutes a week and a less active child is someone who does less than 30 minutes a day.

The physical inactivity needs assessment looks at key local needs surrounding the physical inactivity and activity landscape in Wolverhampton and analyses data on the people who live and work in Wolverhampton, the system and leaders that influence physical activity levels, activities available and spaces and places that are in the city.

Wolverhampton's Health and Wellbeing Board, Health and Wellbeing Together has included physical inactivity within their Joint Health and Wellbeing Strategy 2023 – 2028 as a strategic priority. This Needs Assessment provides the evidence base to inform a partnership strategy, addressing the high levels of physical inactivity in the city in response to this.

The physical inactivity system of influence is diverse and complex, with many factors and sectors effecting levels of activity. Owing to this, the Needs Assessment has been split into four sections to provide structure, these are:

1. Active Wulfrunians

A city where everyone is active every day and has a positive attitude towards physical activity. Where everyone understands the benefits of being physically active and how to be active in a way that suits their ability.

2. Active City

Through the creation and promotion of suitable activities, programmes, and infrastructure, Wulfrunians will be able to engage in regular physical activity that meets their needs and create an active city.

3. Active Spaces and Places

A city where we enhance, invest in, and protect our community spaces and places that encourage and promote physical activity and make them more accessible to our residents.

4. Active Systems

Through working collaboratively as a whole system, we will create leadership, governance and partnerships that enable practice and protocols that promote physical activity across all sectors.

Data and information have been drawn from a number of sources to provide the findings and recommendations of this needs assessment. These include, Public Health Outcomes Framework, Active Lives, City Lifestyle Survey, Wolverhampton Health Related Behaviour Survey, Canal and River Trust, WVActive. The below infographics summarises the findings and recommendations for each section.

Active Wulfrunians



30.5% of Adults in Wolverhampton are physically inactive



The city lifestyle survey found that more Wulfrunians are fairly active than Active Lives



42.5% of Children in Wolverhampton are less active



There is a 46% drop in enjoyment in physical activity by girls from year 2 to year 10



Wolverhampton physical inactivity levels are higher than the England average



48% of children at year 6 can not swim 25m



In Wolverhampton some groups are more likely to be inactive: women and girls, people living with a disability, people from Asian and Black ethnic groups, people from deprived backgrounds, and older adults



Low levels of Active Travel in the city



There is no early years measure of physical activity



79% of Wulfrunians want to be more active



People with low life satisfaction are more likely to be inactive

Recommendations

- Work in a way that supports Wulfrunians' to change their behaviour to move more based on evidence and lived experience and include Wulfrunians in all levels of creating change.
- Whilst the focus will remain on inactive people, there is an opportunity to support those who are 'fairly active' to build their activity level to transition to 'active'
- Early Years: work in partnership with early years practitioners to establish a local measure of physical activity.
- Improve Wulfrunians understanding and participation of required physical activity levels, with a focus on the muscle strengthening training guidelines.
- Seek opportunities to improve life satisfaction and mental wellbeing through physical activity opportunities
- Build competence and confidence of Wulfrunians to choose active travel, with a focus on CYP for school and short journeys.
- Investigate and address low levels of enjoyment in physical activity for girls.
- Maximise the use of people of influence to facilitate behaviour change, e.g.: community leaders
- Swimming:
 1. Support the work Active Black Country are undertaking to address swimming inequalities in the Black Country
 2. Review CWC current swimming offer

Active City



Communication of physical activity messages needs specialist guidance to make it relevant and effective



20% of Wulfrunians need physical activity provision to be free and have no budget allocated to being active



Black Country Moving and YO! Wolves are key information resources



Walking is a popular activity for people who want to increase their activity levels



At KS2 there are low levels of completion of 30 minutes of physical activity in the school day



Activities need to be fun, social and safe



There is a very limited Active Workplaces offer available



WVActive has an increasing membership. Over half of members are female, however there is low proportion of members with a disability and older adults



There are low levels of children completing 30 minutes of activity outside of school each day



There is a lack of community physical activity provision and awareness of existing provision for children and young people



WVActive has low attendance figures for children and young people

Recommendations

- Create a partnership physical activity marketing and communication plan and maximise suitable local platforms for activity promotion and ensure there is a good coverage of the local offer and identify gaps in provision
- Facilitate and create opportunities that fill gaps in provision and activities that meet the needs of groups who are more likely to be inactive
- Maximise and facilitate sign up to local, regional, and national physical activity initiatives
- Continue to support and advise physical activity, education, and sport in educational settings to deliver at least 30 minutes of physical activity in the school day
- Create opportunities and facilitate access for children and young people to complete 30 minutes of physical activity outside the school day
- Maximise opportunities and empower community providers and venues to deliver hyper local opportunities
- WV Active: create a user segmentation insight pack to inform service delivery and improvements and create opportunities to grow the WV Active offer for underrepresented groups
- Utilisation of non-traditional methods to deliver physical activity
- Expand the current workplace physical activity offer

Active Spaces & Places



Completion of Active Places Strategy documents:

- Built Facilities Strategy
- Playing Pitch Strategy
- Open Spaces Strategy



Wolverhampton has a comprehensive network for Canals. They are less likely to be used as commuter routes and have reduced usage in autumn and winter months



Utilisation of schools as community venues is key to providing wider facilities for physical activities. Currently only 28 out of the 108 schools offer community use



Perceived safety is very important to Wulfrunians and will influence whether they engage with spaces



Wulfrunians want to use hyper local facilities to be active



Parks and Nature Spaces was the top answer of where Wulfrunians are active



Through the LCWIP, new Active Travel routes are being developed



Wulfrunians who have additional needs do not always feel their needs are met by facilities in the city

Recommendations

- Finalise the creation of the suite of documents (e.g.: Built Facilities Strategy, Open Spaces Strategy and Playing Pitch Strategy) to inform future capital investment into sport and physical activity
- Create safe and welcoming spaces for people to be active
- Ensure physical activity is a priority consideration when developing infrastructure policy, allocation of funding, and future project planning
- Advocate and champion community use of facilities that do not have open access
- Maximise the use and raise awareness of hyper local facilities both indoor and outdoor
- Trial approaches such as 20-minute activity zones to create change at a neighbourhood level

Active System



The system of influence around physical inactivity is wide and diverse. We need to build on existing and new partnerships engaged during the Needs Assessment and new governance arrangements



Competence and Confidence Survey findings:

- Workforce see their role as to create an active city, but are not confident to champion in organisational structures
- There is a good understanding of individual benefits of being active but not at a population level
- Low knowledge of groups who are more likely to be inactive and how to support them
- Lack of knowledge and confidence surrounding behaviour change



NICE guidance on physical activity is available but not embedded into physical activity strategy or delivery



There are a large number of SNOMED codes relating to physical activity, further understanding is needed on how they are used and any efficiencies that can be made



Wulfrunians trust people who they have a rapport with to give them advice on physical activity - community leaders play an important role in disseminating information



Wulfrunians trust health care professionals to give them lifestyle advice, but do not feel there is always the opportunity

Recommendations

- Continue to grow and develop system partnerships, champion the role of Wulfrunians have in the system and ensure physical activity is a priority consideration when developing policy, allocation of funding, and future project planning
- Facilitate workforce development
- NICE Guidance: understand the use of, embed and champion, and utilise the CMO Guidelines Communication tool
- Conduct a review of the use of SNOWMED Physical Activity codes
- Utilise the non-traditional physical activity workforce as champions and advocates of physical activity
- Create and implement a 'Tackling physical inactivity' stakeholder management plan
- Maximise the role of health professionals as a tool to facilitate behaviour change for physical activity and build on NHS pathways
- Conduct evaluation of the approach to addressing of physical inactivity, ensure successes are replicated and lessons learnt are taken onboard and there is regular review of local data and community consultation
- Create a cohort local insight pack/ market segmentation

The needs assessment shows Wolverhampton has high rates of physical inactivity and there are considerable inequalities within the population. However, there is a great deal of opportunity to change behaviour in Wolverhampton to tackle physical inactivity and support Wulfrunians to move more. The system that surrounds physical inactivity needs to come together, base future plans and programmes on evidence, deliver a systematic method to tackle physical inactivity and, communicate in a more effective way. The recommendations are set out for each section in the report. These will be translated into priority actions, allocated owners and resource implications identified by the Physical Inactivity Steering group. The recommendations will inform the city-wide partnership strategy which will outline the approach to get Wolverhampton to move more.