

Introduction

The aim of this first physical activity strategy for Solihull is to ensure that the Borough has the best chance, through working together, to increase levels of physical activity in the population, and so realise the health, educational, crime reduction, and social community benefits which lead from this. Physical activity is defined in its broadest sense, covering all activities that require physical effort.

The Physical Activity Strategy for Solihull, which has an emphasis on reducing health inequalities, emerged through a new joint strategic partnership, formed in 2003, which brings together all of the key stakeholders in terms of facility, service and advice provision in the Borough.

The draft strategy has emerged as a result of extensive consultation, national, regional and local research, and has been produced jointly by Solihull MBC, and Solihull Primary Care Trust, (PCT), who share a vision of health and well being for the Borough.

The strategy provides a framework for achieving key joint targets, and embracing a new joint approach.

National Context ¹

Three of the National key policy & strategy drivers are:

Game Plan²

A strategy for delivering the Government's sport and physical activity objectives - contains the aim of 70% of the population becoming moderately physically active

for 30 minutes on 5 days a week by 2020.



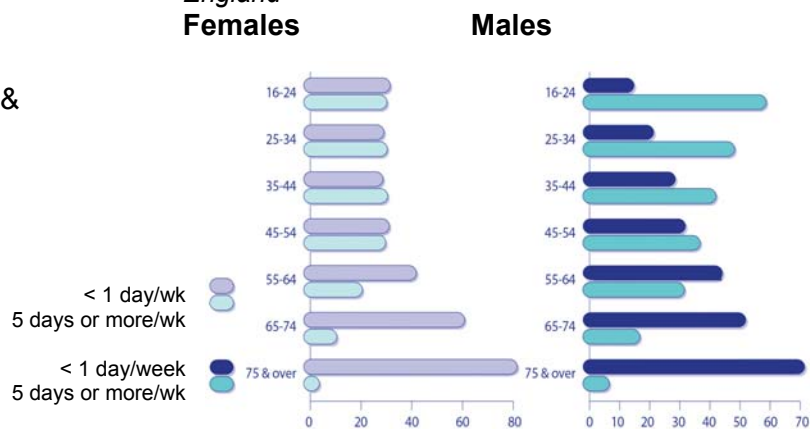
Saving Lives – Our Healthier Nation³

This is the Government white paper heralding the introduction of national targets including coronary heart disease, stroke and cancer. The document also calls for new directions, new and more effective partnerships at local level between NHS, Local Authorities, and other agencies.

Tackling Health Inequalities: A Programme for Action⁴

This sets out plans to tackle health inequalities over the next 3 years. It lays the foundations required to achieve the challenging national targets for 2010, including preventing and managing risks such as obesity, diet, physical activity and hypertension through effective primary care and public health interventions.

Figure 1 Patterns of Physical Activity in England⁵



¹ Appendix 1 of the final strategy will list all of the key policy drivers for physical activity

² Joint DCMS/Strategy Unit report 2002

³ 1999 Government White Paper

⁴ Department of Health 2003

⁵ Joint Health Surveys Unit 1999

“Only 32% of the population reported that they are currently moderately physically active for 5 x 30 minute sessions per week”⁶

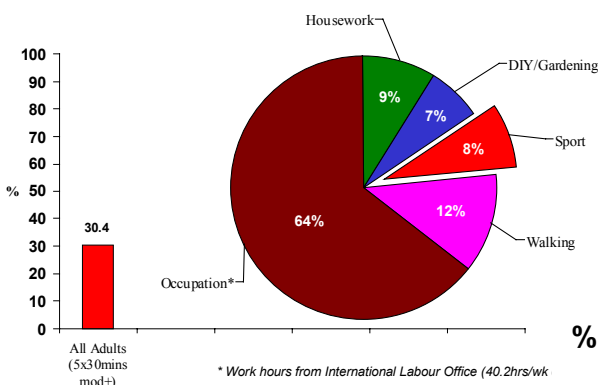
Local Context

Traditionally in Solihull the Local Authority has emphasised sport, through the provision of public leisure centres, and sports development, and engaged with Solihull PCT on a scheme by scheme basis. The health sector has focused resources on clinical treatment with a relatively small resource for prevention.

The education sector has concentrated on curriculum delivery, and team sports, with additional lunchtime and outside normal school hours provision.

The new joint approach involves the numerous providers of physical activity services and facilities in agreeing fundamental changes in delivery across public, private & voluntary sectors further education and workplace.

Physical Activity Contributions 1998



Source: Health Survey for England 1998

Inequalities

The picture in Solihull follows national trends in so far as the areas of highest deprivation display the greatest health inequalities, for example:

Cancer deaths per 1000 population:

- Chelmsley Wood 207.62
- Smith's Wood 208.52

Compared to:

- St Alphege 96.21

Educational achievement 5 GCSEs

- A northern school 24%
- A southern school 73%

These indicators along with crime highlight the need to focus local action for physical activity on the more deprived wards of:

- Smith's Wood
- Chelmsley Wood
- Kingshurst & Fordbridge

However attention also needs to be given to pockets of inequality elsewhere, such as Shirley West and within minority populations.

This new, broad approach has the potential to make an impact on both the inequalities and general health needs within the Borough.

Strategy Formulation

The strategy is designed to establish how we get from where we are now to where we want to be. It has been developed through research and consultation with stakeholders and is based on an audit of current access to, awareness of, and participation in local facilities and opportunities for physical activity, crime reduction initiatives, research on interventions that work and analysis of local health need. The strategy links to numerous other plans and strategies, including crime & disorder strategy, regional sports plan, leisure facilities assessment & plan, playing pitch strategy, and obesity strategy. It is the intention of this strategy not to add to the plethora of strategies, with a separate sports area,

⁶ Source Game plan for Sport 2002

but to use this as an inclusive approach integrating sport.

Key findings from the research⁷ indicate some **key challenges** for Solihull:

- There is no reliable baseline of data at ward level relating to physical activity availability and participation
- Physical activity provision is fragmented
- Accessibility is varied and inequitable
- There is a need to ensure advice on physical activity is accurate and consistent
- Ensure that development is based on sustainable long term provision

Where are we now?

Research suggests that only 32% of the population are physically active to levels that can improve health. Further, that some sections of the community, for example those living in areas of deprivation, those with disabilities, black and ethnic minorities, women, those on low incomes and those in the 50+ age range, are more at risk than others. However there is a growing research evidence base on how to overcome the barriers to becoming more active.

Where do we want to get to?

The Government target is to get 70% of the adult population reasonably active (30 minutes of moderate intensity physical activity 5 days of the week) by 2020.⁸

A secondary recommendation is that young people take part in at least 1 hour per day of moderate intensity physical activity.⁸

⁷ Local Research Studies 2004 Symonds Consulting

⁸ Chief Medical Officers Report 2004

How are we going to get there?

Having analysed the key findings, in the context of the local and national data available, a vision, aims and strategic objectives were developed to address the priority needs for action for Solihull.

Vision⁹

“A place where everyone has equal opportunity, and is supported and encouraged, to live an active lifestyle, within their range of ability.”



Aim

- To increase significantly the levels of physical activity through sport, recreation, leisure and every day life particularly among disadvantaged groups.

Targets may include:

- To deliver 75% of children spending at least 2 hours per week on PE and physical activity by 2006.¹⁰
- To work towards the Government target of 75% of children spending at least 1 hour per day on physical activity
- To work towards the Government's target of 70% of the adult population moderately physically active on 5 days a week by 2020.

⁹ Set through key stakeholder consultation 2004

¹⁰ DFES target for 2007

Objectives

- To develop a reliable database on physical activity patterns within Solihull populations
- To raise public awareness and understanding of the health messages of physical activity guidelines, advice and opportunities available by ensuring that information is provided in a variety of media and tailored to meet the needs of different population groups, particularly targeting those most in need
- To ensure that appropriate and consistent advice for the encouragement of physical activity is available across the Borough, tailored to meet the needs of different population groups, particularly targeting those most in need
- To ensure that a full range of acceptable and accessible opportunities for physical activity and sport is available across the Borough
- To work towards ensuring that the physical environment and local culture promotes and enables an active lifestyle at home, at work, and for recreation and transport. Also working to reduce inequalities including educational achievement and reducing crime
- To establish “pathways” for participation in specific activities providing a continuum of opportunities from the most basic level to the highest (recognising the role of all providers, including “sign posting” for those delivering outside the Borough)



Strategic Action In Solihull 2004 - 7

Increasing participation in physical requires immediate high-level action on:

1. Establishing appropriate monitoring and evaluation against jointly agreed targets and interim measures of success
2. Developing and implementing evidence based interventions to improve access to opportunities for physical activity with particular emphasis on those most in need
3. Providing front line staff and public with accurate, up to date information on opportunities and facilities for physical activity, backed up by consistent and appropriate intervention advice
4. Work towards a cultural and environmental change by ensuring that strategic planning processes contribute to creating a local environment, including facilities for outdoor recreation, sport and play, which is conducive to an active lifestyle
5. Developing and maintaining partnership working, greater co-ordination of activity between agencies, organisations and professional groups

Contacts

Alice Davey

Head of Community Services, SMBC
Tel: 0121 704 6996
Fax: 0121 704 6991
Email: adavey@solihull.gov.uk

Angela Gabb

Senior Health Promotion Specialist,
Solihull PCT
Tel: 0121 712 8304
Fax: 0121 704 0341
Email: angela.gabb@solihull-pct.nhs.uk