

SOLIHULL COUNCIL'S LEISURE, SPORT AND PHYSICAL ACTIVITY TEAM - PUBLIC HEALTH



ANNUAL REPORT 2025-26

Introduction

The Solihull Active Team in Public Health lead the Council's work on leisure, sport, and physical activity, with the aim of increasing participation and supporting residents to be more active more often. The team's work can be categorised into three main areas:

Solihull on the Move (part of the universal physical activity offer):

- A borough-wide universal offer inspiring healthier, happier, and more sustainable communities through moving more, more often. Consisting of a series of activity-specific projects, training for organisations/clubs/volunteers, and strategic facility support.

Strategic and contractual:

- Management of the leisure centre contract (part of the universal physical activity offer). In partnership with our leisure contractor Everyone Active at Tudor Grange Leisure Centre and North Solihull Sports Centre, and oversight of the Solihull Ice Rink lease.
- Development and implementation of Solihull's indoor sports facility strategy, outdoor sport and playing pitch strategy, and strategic approach to supporting inactive target groups and health inequalities working with local, regional and national partners.

Targeted and specialist services focused on the least active individuals in the borough:

- Eat Well Move More: for overweight children and their families,
- Step into Solihull: gentle activity programme for older adults,
- Solihull Gets Active: for people with disabilities,
- Active Wellbeing Hub: for people with long-term health conditions,
- Solihull Active Minds: a community wellness programme.

The Leisure, Sport and Physical Activity Service has continued to deliver a strong and diverse programme of universal, targeted and specialist interventions that support residents to become more active, improve their health and wellbeing, and reduce health inequalities across Solihull. Through the Solihull on the Move programme, strategic management of leisure facilities, and a range of specialist services for children, older adults, disabled residents and people with long-term health conditions, the service has made a significant contribution to the Public Health agenda.

Performance during 2025/26 was positive overall, with participation levels exceeding targets across most areas. Targeted programmes engaged 2,200 residents against a target of 1,900, while attendances at programmes and events reached 44,264 compared with a target of 36,000. Leisure centres welcomed over 168,000 participants from priority groups, significantly exceeding expectations, demonstrating the impact of targeted outreach and partnership working.

Health outcomes remained strong, with 68.8% of participants increasing their physical activity levels and 62.2% reporting improvements in mental wellbeing. Service satisfaction remained high at 83.3%, supported by consistently positive feedback highlighting the quality of programmes, staff support and inclusive opportunities available across the borough.

Although overall leisure centre visits fell marginally short of target due to facility disruptions and local operational challenges, the service continued to provide accessible opportunities for residents, including over 20,800 older adults, 4,600 disabled residents, 50,700 children and young people, and more than 43,000 residents from deprived communities.

Looking ahead, priorities include improving completion rates for exercise referral programmes, reviewing future leisure centre management arrangements, updating strategic sports facility planning, and supporting the transition of the service into the new Healthy Places Team. This will create further opportunities to embed physical activity within wider healthy placemaking, strengthen partnership working and deliver sustainable improvements in population health

National and Local Context

The latest Sport England Active Lives Adult Survey reveals that physical activity levels in England are at a record high, with 64.6% of adults meeting recommended guidelines of 150+ minutes of moderate activity per week— 30.9 million people, an increase of 3.3 million since 2015-16.

Positive trends include more older adults (55+) and disabled people meeting activity guidelines. However, inequalities persist, with women, lower socio-economic groups, and Black and Asian communities less likely to be active, especially when multiple factors overlap.

Recent data from Sport England ^[1] demonstrates that over 1 in 4 adults in Solihull are inactive (27.3%). This is a population of 48,600 adults doing less than 30 mins of physical activity per week. Regarding the muscular strength guidance, only 37.6% of the adult population achieve 2+ sessions per week, which equates to 66,900 adults.

1- Active Lives Adult Survey November 2024-25.

2- Fingertips Obesity, Physical activity and nutrition 2024-25

The Statistics

- **61.8%** of Solihull adults aged 19+, were classified as being physically active (at least 150 moderate intensity minutes per week). An increase of 3% compared to Nov 2023-24 ^[1].
- **61.1%** of Solihull adults aged 18 and over, were overweight or obese. ^[2]
- **22.2%** (0.1%) increase from 2024-25) of Reception children and **32.3%** (3.5% decrease from 2024-25) of Year 6 children were overweight or obese ^[2].
- Nearly **1.2 million** leisure centre visits, with **168,108** visits from targeted groups.
- Nearly **44,264** attendances across Solihull on the Move programmes. An increase of **1,264** compared to 2024-25.
- **2,200** participants accessing targeted services/programmes (excludes leisure centre figures)
- **526** joined the DocSpot Scheme, with 38% completing the 12 week intervention.
 - **68.8%** increased their physical activity levels at 12 weeks
 - **62.2%** increased their mental health and wellbeing score at 12 weeks
 - **83.3%** of participants were 'satisfied' or 'very satisfied' with the service they received
- **80** volunteers/leaders/activators trained to support our universal services i.e. Solihull on the Move programme.
- Section 106 contributions requested **£15,287,418**.

Demographics of those accessing services

- **20,815** older people (65 years plus) an increase of 2,945 compared to 2024-25.
- **4683** people with disabilities, an increase of 2,275 compared to 2024-25.
- **50,789** children and young people (0-15 yrs), a decrease of 902 compared to 2024-25.
- **73,686** females, a decrease of 1,194 compared to 2024-25.
- **21,236** from ethnically diverse backgrounds, an increase of 1,980 compared to 2024-25.

Solihull Local Outcomes Framework - Physical Activity contributes to:-



Highlights & Achievements

The narrative of 2025-26 explores our approach to place-based and systems working, collaborating with a wide range of partners, stakeholders and communities, starting our journey to transformational change. Here are some of the highlights and achievements:

April - May 2025



Learning Disability and Autism Engagement Programme: Solihull Action Through Advocacy completed consultation and practical cooking sessions with adults with learning disabilities and autism, supporting independence, confidence and healthy living skills.

Moving Social Work Pilot: 90 Adult Social Care colleagues across seven teams completed training to integrate physical activity conversations into everyday social care practice.

Inclusive Community Cycling: A range of cycling initiatives have been delivered from the community cycling hubs and leisure centres, helping children, young people and adults build cycling skills and confidence. Activities successfully engaged priority groups, including people with SEND, females, ethnically diverse communities and resettled residents.

June - July 2025

Swimming Confidence Pilot: In partnership with Everyone Active and David Lloyd, a 12-week swimming confidence and water safety pilot at North Solihull Sports Centre supported 56 children from low-income families to develop swimming skills and improve confidence in and around water.

Community Champions Recognition: Solihull Wheels for All received an Everyone Active Community Champions Award, recognising its contribution to improving access to physical activity and creating positive community impact.

Eat Well Move More: Five families completed the North community programme, with all maintaining or improving their health outcomes.

Quiet Gym Launch: New sessions at Tudor Grange Leisure Centre have created a more inclusive environment for residents who prefer lower-sensory physical activity opportunities.



August - September 2025



Know Your Numbers Campaign: Events at both leisure centres provided 30 residents with health checks and practical advice to support healthier lifestyles.

Affordable Family Activity Programme: The leisure centres' Everyone Is Family £2 activity programme returned for summer 2025 providing 90 accessible opportunities whilst Holiday Activity funded activities supported 168 children and young people.

Summer Reading Challenge Partnership: Working with Solihull Libraries and Everyone Active, 170 free family swim vouchers were claimed by residents, helping local families access leisure facilities during the school holidays.

Physical Activity Partnership Survey: Capturing insight into the social, environmental and economic factors that shape local activity levels. This intelligence strengthened Solihull's System Maturity Matrix and supported a national evaluation programme aimed at reducing physical activity inequalities.



October - November 2025

Falls Prevention: Supporting the local approach through contributions to developing a tiered service model, service directory and updated Falls Needs Assessment, helping to improve service integration, pathway navigation and the use of physical activity interventions.



Healthy Holiday Provision: Supporting procurement of the Holiday Activity Fund Christmas Hamper programme, helping ensure families received nutritious food alongside information and opportunities to be physically active.

Physical Activity and Mental Health: Research and consultation findings were published in the West Midlands Combined Authority Mental Health Commission Report: Embedding Physical Activity in the Birmingham and Solihull Child and Adolescent Mental Health Service pathway.

Monster Zone Soft Play Opens: North Solihull Sports Centre is providing new opportunities for children to be active, develop confidence and engage in social play.



December 2025 - January 2026

Solihull Physical Activity Partnership: The inaugural event brought together organisations from across the borough and demonstrated a strong appetite for deeper collaboration and a more connected approach to tackling physical activity inequalities.

Water Safety Education: North Solihull Sports Centre delivered water safety assemblies in local schools, helping children develop vital knowledge and confidence around water safety.



Community Led Walking Groups: Age UK Solihull and Colebridge Trust committed to supporting the transition of Striders and Strollers walking groups into sustainable community-led initiatives.



Community Outreach Programme Launched: Delivered by Everyone Active to communities in North Solihull, strengthening local engagement and maximising the impact of physical activity provision, previously delivered as DocSpot at Smith's Wood Community Gym.

February - March 2026



Physical Activity Clinical Champions Programme (PACC): Commitment was secured from Solihull Clinical Directors to advance the place-based PACC programme, strengthening leadership and advocacy for physical activity across the health system.

Community-Led Activities: Striders and Strollers wellbeing walks and gentle exercise sessions were successfully transitioned to a community-led delivery model, supporting their long-term sustainability.

Indoor Sports Facilities Strategy (ISFS): The Solihull ISFS 2025-2039 was finalised, providing a long-term framework for the development of indoor sports facilities across the borough.



Service User Feedback

- 83.3% were 'satisfied' or 'very satisfied' with the service they received at 12 weeks a slight decline on last years figure of 90%.
- Quote from Better Breathers class, part of our Active Wellbeing Hub at North Solihull Sports Centre "I have found Better Breathers acts as an ideal follow-on programme to the pulmonary rehab course. The programme is well run and there is a good camaraderie between all members of the Better Breathers group. The benefits that I have gained is that the fitness exercise is helping to slowdown the progressive condition of my Pulmonary Fibrosis condition.'
- During last year I had an unexpected cancer diagnosis which fortunately I now have the all clear. I was referred by the Lung CNS to the DocSpot team - all the team really supported me, giving me exercises that I could manage and build up. I also managed to get back to Thai Chi. I'm due surgery for something different but I know I can approach the team to help support my recovery going forward which I really appreciate. It has helped me not just physically but mentally too. The lady who covered reception this morning was also very helpful and kind. Thank you all' North Solihull Sports Centre.
- Amazing workout classes, the instructors really bring a great vibe, especially Sunday spin class and body combat. My kids do the swimming lessons and always enjoy it. A special mention to the teachers that teach children's swim lessons, they are very patient and understanding with my autistic daughter when she is struggling with her regulation' North Solihull Sports Centre.
- I had a few months of personal training at Tudor Grange Leisure Centre and could not recommend enough. Staff were very patient, explained every step, were able to let me guide what we did where I had preferences and overall brought such a positive energy to each workout that left me feeling in a better mood - to anyone new to the gym, I'd definitely!' Tudor Grange Leisure Centre.
- I want to give 5 star for xx Swimming lessons teacher Stage 2 (7+) every Fridays, she's amazing. Engage the children really well. Ever since she took over the class, my boy has grown his confidence for swimming. Growing to love and looking forward to his lessons every week. Thank you' Tudor Grange Leisure Centre.
- Used the gym with a friend of mine who is wheelchair bound with learning disabilities the staff are brilliant had a laugh and a joke treated her normal made her day' Tudor Grange Leisure Centre.
- The successful transition of the Striders and Strollers walking programme following Solihull Council's Healthy Active Lives review. Through collaborative work with local partners, all walking groups were retained and transferred to community organisations including Colebridge Trust, Age Uk, Dorridge U3A, Meriden Women's Institute and CARS Area Together, with additional support from the Ramblers where appropriate, creating a sustainable, partnership-led model with no loss of provision.

Looking to the year ahead 2026-27

Key Work Areas include:

Healthy Environments

- Start influencing planning to deliver healthy neighbourhoods, supporting active travel, inclusive streets and active design.
- Shaping healthier food environments.
- Address cold homes, damp and mould by improving pathways between health, care and housing.
- Collaborate to increase the borough's resilience to climate change and mitigate its impacts on population health.
- Oversee and implement the Air Quality Action Plan.
- Maximise access to high-quality, inclusive sport and physical activity facilities through strategic planning, effective oversight, and the securing and investment of Section 106 contributions.

Health Systems and Policies

- Strengthen the health evidence base for the new draft Local Plan.
- Assess whether the housing growth scenarios review represents a material change that warrants commissioning a full refresh of the PPOSS and ISFS in alignment with the emerging Local Plan.
- Work with the Licensing Committee and Licensing Authorities to improve licensing policy and enhance the Public Health Licensing Tool.
- Embed healthy, active living into social care practice, including progression of the Moving Social Work programme.
- Enhance prevention and health condition management by extending the reach of the Active Wellbeing Hub programme, including DocSpot.
- Integrate healthy, active living into clinical pathways across the system, i.e. BSMHFT policies and Solihull Active Minds.
- Scope how community exercise prehabilitation can add value to existing NHS pathways, e.g. elective care.
- Build workforce confidence and capability to promote healthy, active living through MECC and targeted training, including piloting Physical Activity Clinical Champions.

Healthy Communities

- Expand and formalise community use agreements to maximise access to school and community assets.
- Strengthening community assets and infrastructure, annual update of evidence base for the PPOSS, and ISFS.
- Management of the leisure centre contract a 10 year contract with leisure provider Everyone Active May 2018-May 2028.
- Embed physical activity and healthy lifestyle opportunities into place-based programmes in priority neighbourhoods.
- Establish sustainable cross-sector partnerships, including Sustainable Food Partnership, Solihull Community Partnership and Healthy Active Lives Partnership Board, to deliver coordinated support.

For more information on local physical activity services, visit www.solihullonthemove.co.uk