



Forest of Dean
— DISTRICT COUNCIL —

Strategic Outcomes Planning Model

2026



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Glossary	
Active Travel / Active Transport	'Active travel' (or active transportation or mobility) means walking, wheeling or cycling as an alternative to motorised transport (notably cars, motorbikes/mopeds etc) for the purpose of making every day journeys. ¹
BFS	Indoor Built Facility Strategy
BMA	British Medical Association
Centre	Includes leisure centres managed by Freedom Leisure
CMO	Chief Medical Officer
DCMS	Department for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport
Facility (ies)	The areas available within a centre such as sports hall, pool, tennis courts, changing rooms etc.
FODDC	Forest of Dean District Council
Health Literacy	Health literacy refers, broadly, to the ability of individuals to “gain access to, understand and use information in ways which promote and maintain good health” for themselves, their families and their communities. ²
Healthy Living	The practice of health enhancing behaviours
ICB	Integrated Care Board
Leisure Activity	Activities people do to relax or enjoy themselves outside of work and other duties

Glossary	
Mapping	https://maps.datahubclub.uk/facilities/forest_of_dean_forest_of_dean@4global.com_max@2025
Members	Current leisure centre known users
NPPF	National Planning Policy Framework
PHE	Public Health England
Physical Activity	Active living, recreational activity, sport, exercise, play and dance
Physical Literacy	Physical literacy is our relationship with movement and physical activity throughout life. This changes over our lifetime and is shaped by our experiences and our opportunities to be active
SE	Sport England
SOPG	Strategic Outcomes Planning Guidance
SOPM	Strategic Outcomes Planning Model
Sport	“All forms of physical activity which, through casual or organised participation, aim at expressing or improving physical fitness and mental wellbeing, forming social relationships or obtaining results in competitions at all levels.” (Council of Europe, 2001).

¹ PHE 'Working Together to Promote Active Travel' A briefing for local authorities 2016

² [World Health Organisation \(WHO\) definition](#)

I. **Introduction and Background**

II. Forest of Dean District Council (FODDC) recognises the important role leisure activity has in supporting the wider health and wellbeing agenda and wishes to understand how people choose to use leisure facilities, green and blue spaces and the opportunity within them to address health and wellbeing issues in Forest of Dean. The Council has therefore commissioned a Strategic Outcomes Planning Model (SOPM) for the district.

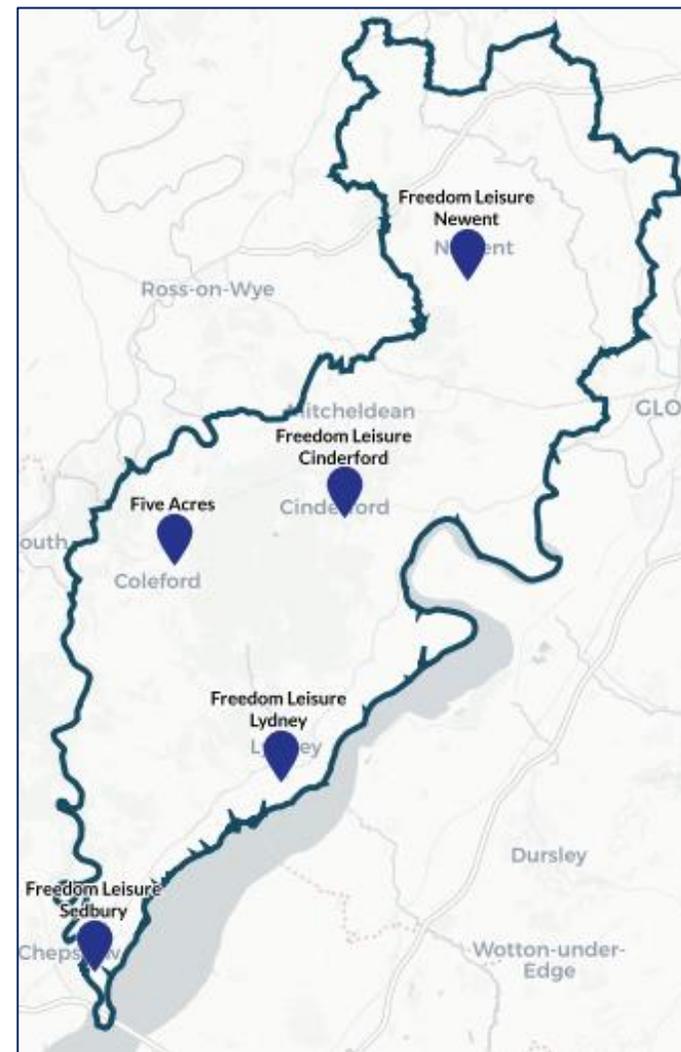
III. In addition to the national and local challenge of inactivity, the financial pressures for councils, and across the sport, physical activity and leisure sector, have increased in recent years with rising costs for service providers and the cost-of-living crisis for residents. Therefore, it is important for the Council to identify where resources should be prioritised to have the greatest impact on increasing activity levels and how working collaboratively in priority areas can have a positive long-term sustainable impact on residents' health and wellbeing.

IV. The SOPM report follows a place-based approach to ensure provision reflects need. The strategy considers leisure provision across the whole council area, however, when assessing the future options for the Council's leisure facilities, the following centres were included:

- Freedom Leisure, Cinderford;
- Freedom Leisure, Lydney;
- Freedom Leisure, Newent; and
- Freedom Leisure, Sedbury.

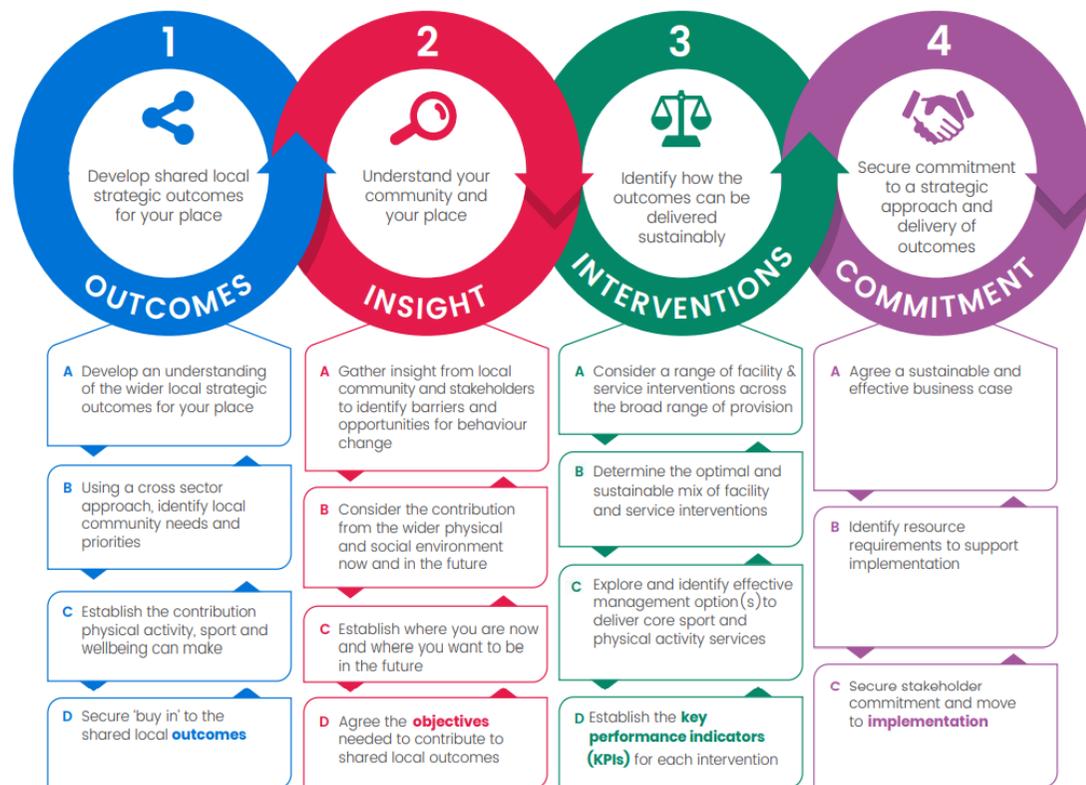
V. The map opposite sets out the location of the Council's core leisure facilities. A group of volunteers also operates Bathurst Open Air Pool in Lydney as a seasonal activity.

Map 1 – Forest of Dean District Council Leisure Centre Sites



- VI. In addition, the Council secured planning permission in February 2024 to develop the first phase of leisure, community and commercial facilities for the regeneration of the Five Acres site, Coleford³ as part of the Levelling Up the Forest programme. Subject to Football Foundation funding approval, work is anticipated to begin on the 3G pitch construction in , early 2026 with the refurbishment and new build construction for the leisure facility in April 2026. There will also be a repurposing of the Speedwell Building to create new offices, community spaces, a cafe and outreach space for Hartpury University’s Aspiration Centre.
- VII. The SOPM also considers physical activity opportunities linked to community-based activity, for example in village halls, active travel and open space. The Council recognises that leisure centres are only one asset people use to be active and that walking, cycling, use of parks, open and water spaces are just as important in providing opportunities for people to be active.
- VIII. This report has been produced using the Sport England Strategic Outcomes Planning Model (SOPM) to ensure that future facility and service interventions are designed to achieve the Council’s strategic priorities and are based on local evidence and behaviours.
- IX. The Strategic Outcomes approach is structured around four stages:
- **Stage 1 – Outcomes** – Develop shared local strategic outcomes for your place;
 - **Stage 2 – Insight** – Understand your community and your place;
 - **Stage 3 – Interventions** – Identify how the outcomes can be delivered sustainably;
 - **Stage 4 – Commitment** – Secure commitment to a strategic approach and delivery of outcomes.

Figure 1 – Sport England Strategic Outcomes Planning Model Approach



³ <https://www.fdean.gov.uk/planning-and-building/regeneration/five-acres-redevelopment-site/>

1. National Picture

1.1. National Strategic Review

1.1.1. There are several national strategies and reports that are important to consider in the shaping of local authority active wellbeing services. It is recognised that increasing participation rates in physical activity can have a far wider impact than an individual’s physical wellbeing. It cuts across all sectors from public health to environmental sustainability and regeneration and economic growth. The priorities from these strategies have common themes including, connecting communities, inclusivity, improving environmental sustainability and taking a place-based approach to the delivery of services and investment⁴.

1.1.2. In August 2023, the Government released its latest strategy, ‘Get Active: a strategy for the future of sport and physical activity’ which details the ambition to help build a healthier nation by tackling high levels of inactivity, and by making sure the sport and physical activity sector thrives for future generations. The Government aims to ensure that everyone has the opportunity to be active with a vision to; make sport and physical activity accessible, resilient, fun and fair, for now and the years to come - for the benefit of individuals and the country. The target by 2030 is to see 2.5 million more adults and 1 million more children being classed as active in England.

Figure 2 – National Strategic Review



⁴ A full list of the strategies and their respective priorities is included in [Appendix 1](#).

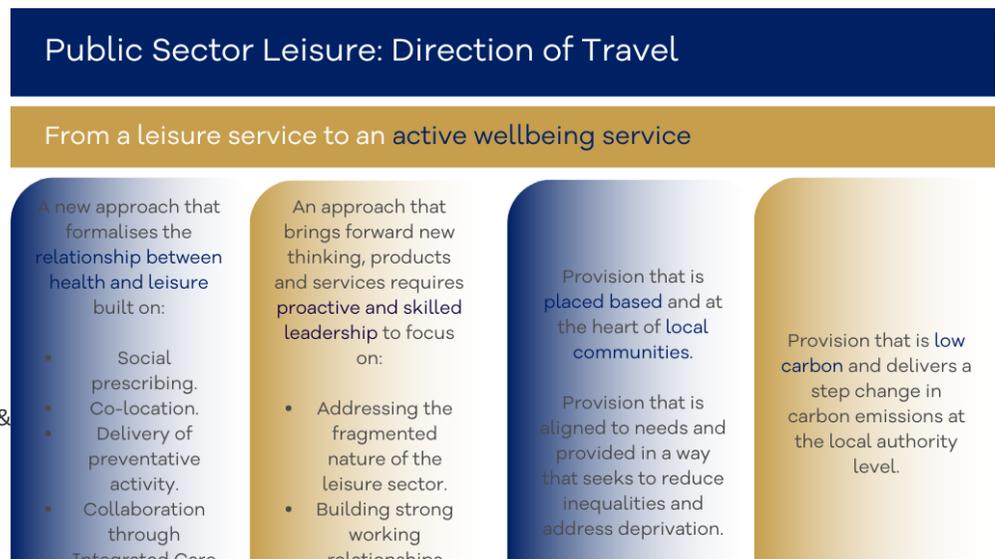
1.2. The strategy highlights that:

1.2.1. **“Public leisure provision has an important role to play in contributing to a happier and healthier society. Providing more than just a venue for people to play sport and get active, public leisure and sport facilities also support wider community wellbeing. For the leisure sector to be fit for the future, it needs to be flexible and innovative in adapting to changes in participation habits and in securing investment. This includes consideration within the wider local authority landscape for how it can contribute to improving physical and mental health outcomes for individuals across the community, rather than sometimes just offering an alternative to other gym provision.”**

1.2.2. In December 2022, Sport England published its “Future of Public Sector Leisure” report. The report prompts local and national partners to re-examine the purpose of their leisure services and assess whether they are delivering local community outcomes and aligning to broader strategic outcomes, particularly around health and wellbeing. It advocates that local authorities follow its direction of travel.

1.2.3. In November 2023 Sport England announced £250m investment into their Place Partnership expansion programme. £190m of this funding will be focused on over 100 new places, which have the greatest need. An additional £35m will be invested to strengthen work with existing place partnerships, with a further £25m being made available to create a Universal Offer of key tools and resources, ensuring every area of England can access support. The first tranche of Places was announced in March 2025.

Figure 3 – Sport England - Future of Public Leisure Services



1.3. **Health of the Nation**

1.3.1. The need to increase participation in physical activity is highlighted when looking at the current health profile of England.

1.3.2. England has an ageing population, with many rural and coastal areas ageing at a faster rate and over recent years (Post-Covid) healthy life expectancy at birth has reduced⁵.

1.3.3. People living with multiple health problems is increasingly common, particularly in people of working age. This includes conditions such as diabetes, heart disease, cancer, mental illness and musculoskeletal conditions, many of which can be positively impacted by increased participation in physical activity.

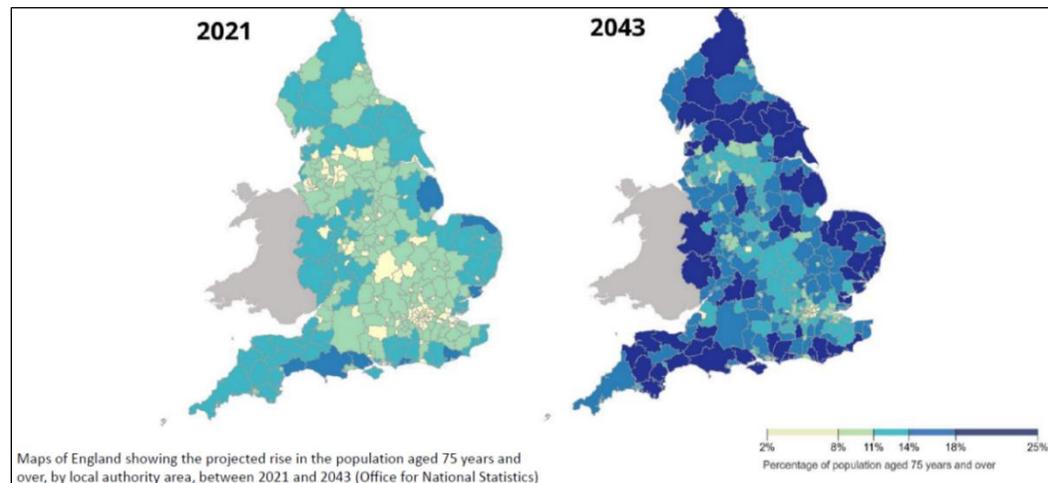
1.3.4. Evidence is also stark when comparing health issues and life expectancy for those living in the most and least deprived areas. The graph opposite⁶ demonstrates how those in the most deprived areas have a significantly lower life expectancy to those in the least deprived areas, as well as a considerably lower healthy life expectancy (how many years spent in good health).

1.3.5. Some of the key national statistics for health conditions across England are set out below.

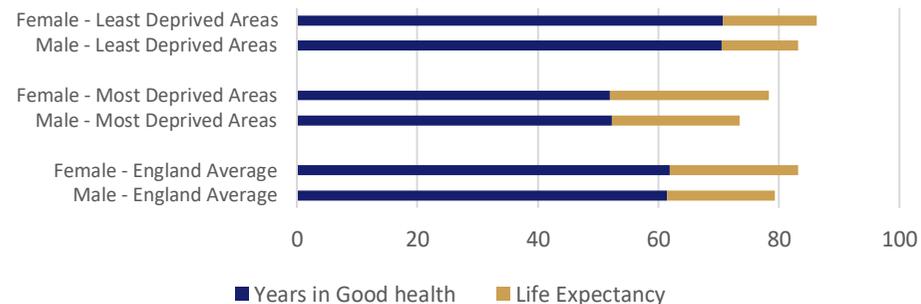
[Inequalities in life expectancy and healthy life expectancy | The Health Foundation](#)

- **64% of adults are overweight (including obesity)**, adult obesity prevalence has doubled over the last two decades.
- Figure - 35.8% of year 6 children are overweight (including obesity).
- From 2021-2022 to 2022/23 **Type 2 Diabetes registrations rose by c.168k.**
- **982k people are estimated to be living with dementia** in the UK and is projected to rise to 1.4m in 2040.
- **20.3% of 8–16-year-olds had a mental health difficulty** in 2023.
- The rate of emergency hospital admissions for **hip fractures is 547 per 100,000 people.**

Figure 4 – Projected Rise in England's Population Aged 75 and Over



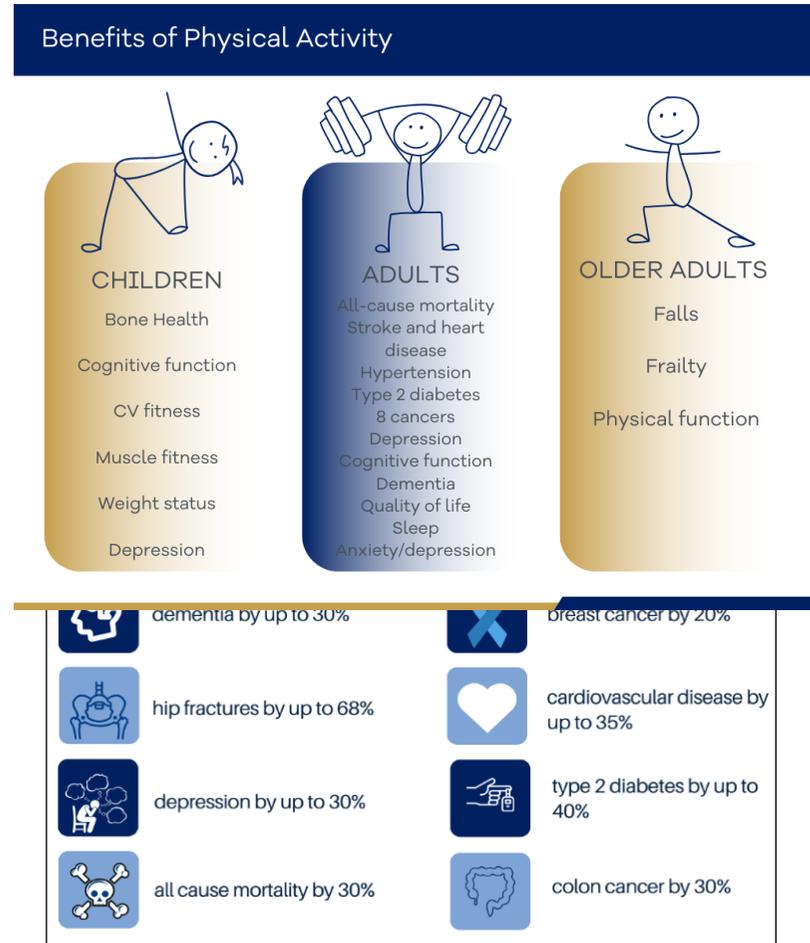
England - Life Expectancy and Years in Good Health



1.4. Benefits of Physical Activity

- 1.4.1. Data shows there is a strong correlation between regular physical activity and reducing the risk of several health conditions, such as those in Figure 4⁷. Given the concerning national health statistics, there is an opportunity for active wellbeing to play a critical role in prevention, treatment and rehabilitation.
- 1.4.2. Additionally, recent research by the Youth Sport Trust⁸ shows sports participation in school is associated with higher levels of wellbeing for young people and a significant predictor of self-belief and mental toughness, which are key life skills for young people.
- 1.4.3. There is also a positive association between activity levels and mental wellbeing in that people who engage in sport and physical activity are less likely to feel lonely.
- 1.4.4. To achieve the benefits highlighted in Figure 6⁹, the following levels of physical activity are recommended by the Chief Medical Office¹⁰.

Figure 6 – Benefits of Physical Activity



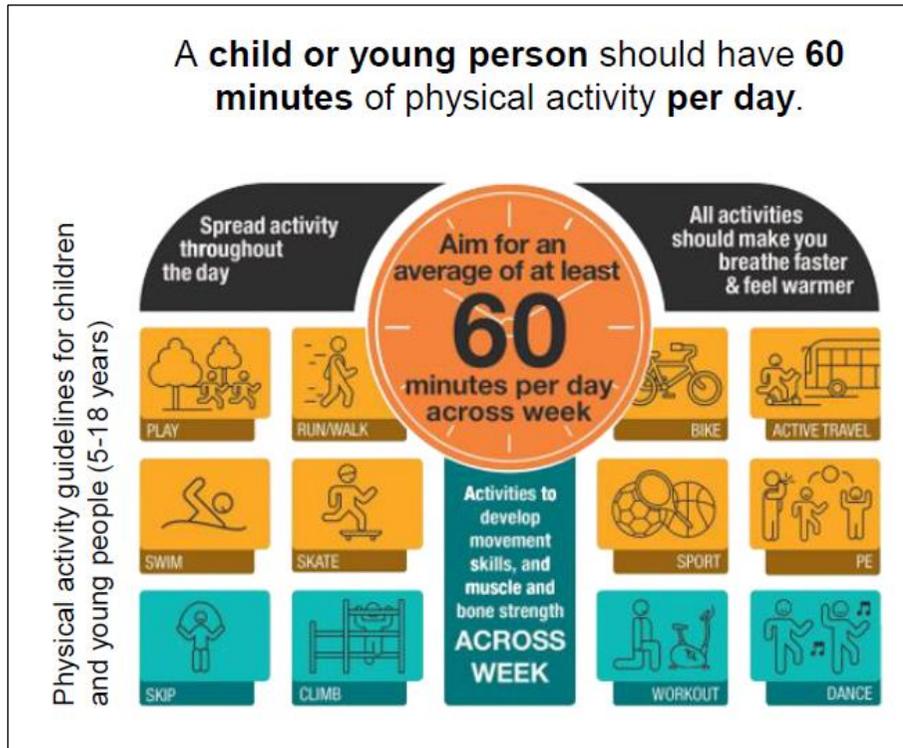
⁷ [UK Chief Medical Officers' Physical Activity Guidelines](#)

⁸ [The benefits of sport participation and physical activity in schools - Youth Sport Trust](#)

⁹ <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/physical-activity-applying-all-our-health/physical-activity-applying-all-our-health>

¹⁰ [UK Chief Medical Officers' Physical Activity Guidelines](#)

Figure 8 – Recommended Levels of Physical Activity

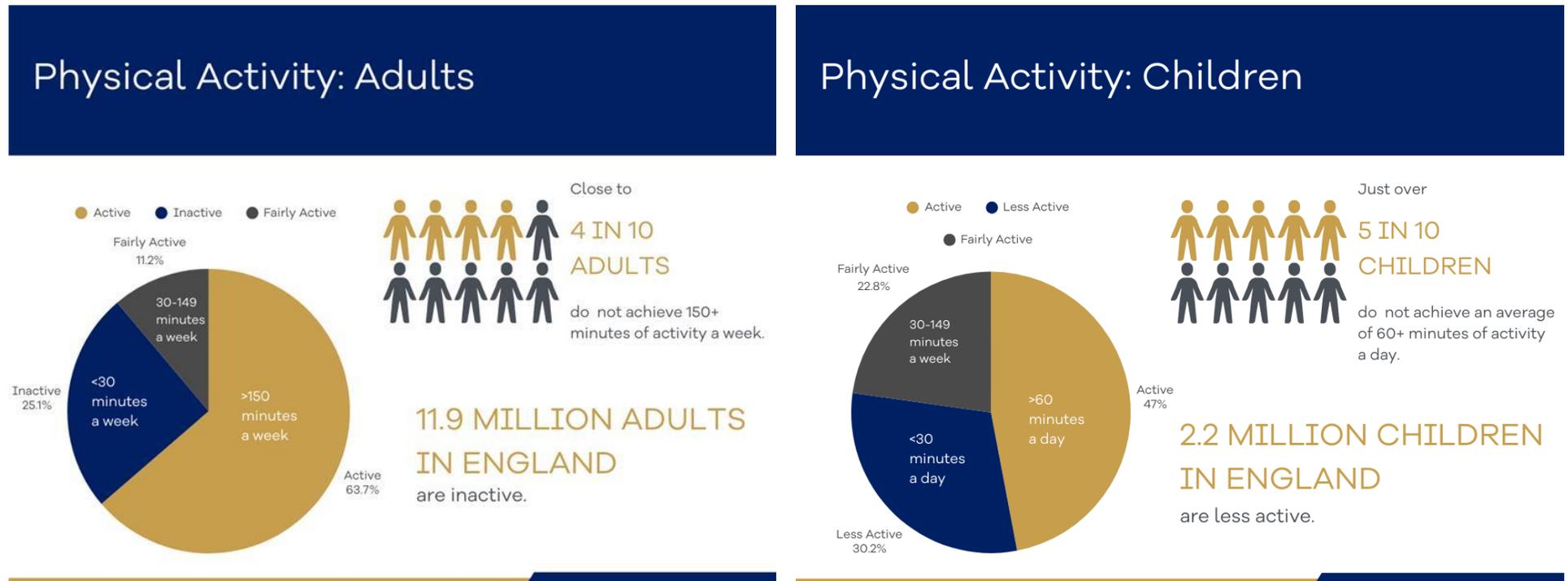


1.5. Physical Activity

1.5.1. The UK population is around 20% less active than in the 1960's and if current trends continue it will be 35% less active by 2030.¹¹

1.5.2. Just over a quarter of all adults aged 16+ in England are classed as inactive and less than 50% of children are reaching the Chief Medical Officers (CMO) Guidelines of being active for at least 60 minutes per day¹².

Figure 9 – Adult & Children Rates of Physical Activity – Sport England (2024)



1.5.3. As with health conditions, there are significant inequalities with regards to physical activity participation in the most and least deprived areas.

1.5.4. However, there are also other demographic factors that impact rates of physical activity including, gender, ethnicity and health.

¹¹ <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/physical-activity-applying-all-our-health/physical-activity-applying-all-our-health>

¹² [Active Lives | Sport England](#)

1.5.5. Figure 10¹³ demonstrates how those aged 75 and over, those who are long-term unemployed or have never worked, those with a disability or long-term health condition, those from ethnic minority groups and women are all likely to be more inactive.

Figure 10 – Physical Activity Participation Across Demographic Groups



¹³ Sport England Active lives Survey 2024

1.5.6. There are a range of barriers that inhibit people from participating in physical activity. These barriers can be split into four key themes. Examples are included in Figure 10¹⁴.

Figure 11 – Example Barriers to Physical Activity

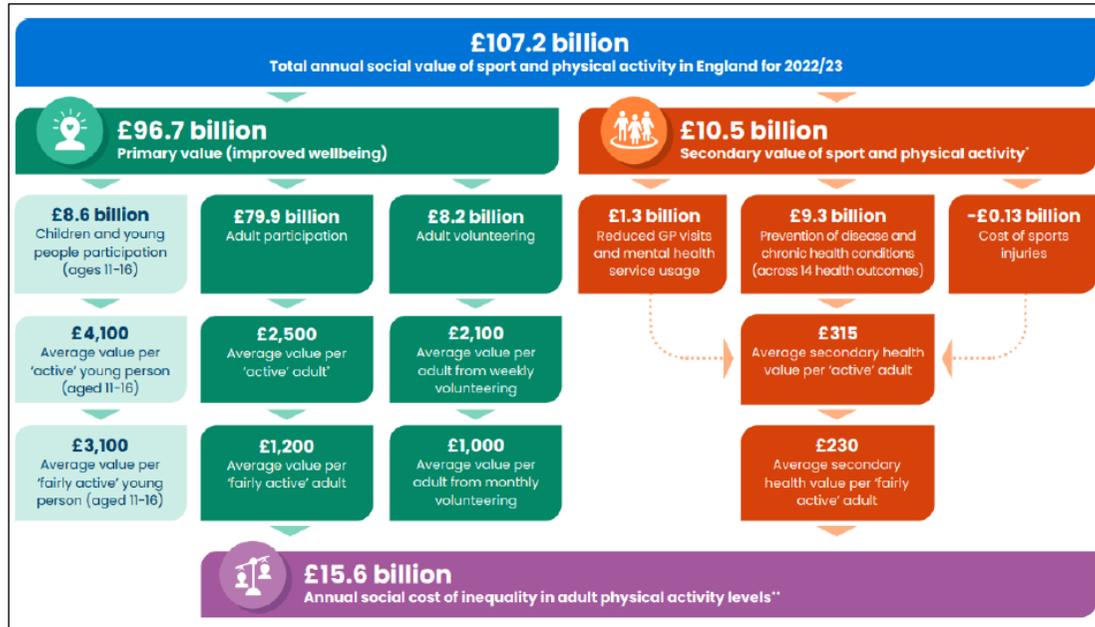


¹⁴ DCMO – Improving Life Expectancy for all through activity and creativity – November 2024

1.6. Wider impact of Physical Activity

1.6.1. As well as the well-known health benefits, physical activity contributes to wider social, community and economic priorities. Recent Sport England data calculates the total annual social value of sport and physical activity in England to be £107.2 billion¹⁵.

Figure 12 – Social Value Impact of Sport & Physical Activity



1.6.2. The report highlights that for those that are more likely to be inactive (as set out in 2.4.2), the wellbeing value is significantly higher. The annual social cost of the inequalities in adult physical activity levels is £15.6 billion (across primary and secondary values¹⁶).

Figure 13 – Wellbeing Impact of Different Demographic Groups



¹⁵ Sport England – Social Value of Sport Report 2024

¹⁶ Primary Value – direct benefit and value to individuals of improved wellbeing. Secondary Value – The wider value to society, including the state.

2. Stage 1 – Outcomes

- 2.1. Stage 1 outlines the key local strategic priorities and considers how sport, leisure and wellbeing can contribute towards achieving them.

Figure 14 – Forest Of Dean – Place Based Narrative



2.2. How is sport and physical activity delivered across Forest of Dean?

- 2.2.1 Discretionary services like public sector sport and leisure and parks are being put at risk as councils are forced to look for ways to protect statutory services. However, there are significant opportunities to link discretionary services into existing council led strategic priorities and plans for active travel, public health, net zero to deliver on these objectives.¹⁷
- 2.2.2 Sport and physical activity provision is delivered by many partners across Forest of Dean, be it the private sector, clubs, charitable organisations, educational sites and the Council.
- 2.2.3 Active Gloucestershire delivers a wide range of initiatives including Glos Girls Can, Special Olympics, Gloucestershire and Get Out Get Active. It is recognised that generally across all Council departments there are limited resources so interventions are targeted.
- 2.2.4 The Council's role is to identify what is being delivered and for whom and to then prioritise its resources to deliver what other partners are not and in areas which will best meet its strategic outcomes. For example, the Council's role is not to compete with the private or budget fitness provision, but it will need to provide swimming opportunities and accessible parks, open spaces and active travel opportunities.

2.3. Local Strategies

- 2.3.1. Figure 16 shows local strategies and plans which physical activity and health can contribute towards. A detailed local strategic review can be found in [Appendix 2](#).
- 2.3.2. The key priorities outlined in these local strategies include:

¹⁷ [Reaching the less active: A guide for public sport and leisure services | Local Government Association](#)

Figure 15 – Delivering sport & physical activity in Forest of Dean



- Encourage resilient, well-connected, active and inclusive communities.

- Help facilitate access to leisure activities to promote and support healthy lifestyles for all ages.
- Addressing health inequalities, social isolation, mental health and adverse childhood experiences.
- Improving early years’ development and giving children the best start in life.
- To protect and improve sports and leisure facilities both indoor and outdoor.
- To make being physically active the social norm.
- Improve the wellbeing of parents, children and young people.
- Encouraging active travel to encourage participation in physical activity and help reduce carbon emissions.

2.3.3. In addition to local strategies Gloucestershire NHS Integrated Care Board has recently set out its draft Strategic Commissioning Framework¹⁸. The key opportunities set out in this framework include:

- 1) Enabling people currently living in good health to remain so for longer
- 2) Taking action to enable people with rising health needs to live well for longer
- 3) Ensuring that the care that people receive is as effective as possible.

2.3.4. The strategic outcomes should align to these opportunities to enable a whole systems approach and collaborative working across the district.

Figure 16 – Key Local Strategies



¹⁸ Draft ICB Strategic Commissioning Framework 2026/27 – 2030/31

2.4. Stakeholder Consultation

- 2.4.1. Key stakeholder consultation was undertaken with over 50 people from across the Council, members, officers and with external partners. A detailed stakeholder consultation report is included at [Appendix 3](#).
- 2.4.2. It was felt that increasing physically activity among target groups¹⁹ could impact a wide range of strategic priorities.
- 2.4.3. Physical activity is not just delivered indoors or in sports facilities. The active environment is a key tool to provide accessible open spaces and places for residents to be more active.
- 2.4.4. It was recognised that Forest of Dean has a wealth of green and blue space that brings visitors from across the country, however it probably isn't being used to its full potential by local residents.
- 2.4.5. There is already a strong partnership network²⁰ in the district. No single organisation can improve health and wellbeing alone. Whole-system collaboration and integrated efforts across public health, council, voluntary organisations and private sector was identified as the enabler to help achieve the main outcomes.

¹⁹ Target groups identified can be found in [Appendix 4](#)

Figure 17 – Forest of Dean Stakeholder Engagement Key Themes & Words



²⁰ Existing partnership working network can be found in [Appendix 5](#)

2.4.6. Purpose of an Active Wellbeing Strategy

- The stakeholder workshops identified that the purpose of the Active Wellbeing Strategy is to develop an inclusive, cohesive strategy that leverages community strengths, addresses systemic barriers and aligns with both local and national priorities around health, inclusion, sustainability, accessibility and social cohesion.
- Holistic Health Focus: The strategy should support not only physical health, but also mental wellbeing, social inclusion and resilience. Improve community wellbeing by increasing the access and opportunities to be active.
- Whole-System Collaboration: the workshops emphasised the need for integrated efforts across public health, local authorities, voluntary organisations and the private sector. It was recognised that Forest of Dean already has an established partnership network, which is positive. Dependency on volunteers poses a risk to the delivery of activities and initiatives that rely on volunteers with many services overstretched.
- Prevention-Oriented: Use physical activity as a tool to reduce long-term health and strain on the adult social care system.
- Climate and Sustainability Integration: Promote active travel and local activity to support net-zero goals and climate adaptation.
- Place-Based Strategy: Encourage planning and placemaking that prioritises accessible, activity-friendly environments.

2.4.7. Priority Groups

- Increasing physical activity should be available to all with a focus on children's and young people's health and demographic groups, such as low-income households, older people and those with long term health conditions.
- It was felt in the workshops that all these groups would gain from 'health and physical literacy' to understand the benefits of physical

2.5. Themes

2.5.1. These key objectives and messages inform the strategic themes and outcomes for Stage 1 and are grouped in four priority strands and the vision as follows:

Figure 18 – Stage 1 Four Priority Strands and Vision

activity to encourage them to be more active and adopt a healthier lifestyle.

2.4.8. Barriers to Participation

- The workshops highlighted that the geography and rural nature of Forest of Dean, whilst providing an abundance of open spaces and nature based opportunities for outdoor activity, also means inadequate public transport and rural dispersion and isolation.
- It was also felt that many residents are unaware of local activities and available support and, despite having a wealth of attractions on their doorstep, these are mainly used by visitors to the area rather than locals who can't afford them.
- Restricted leisure centre opening hours due to dual use sites don't suit working people and facilities require modernisation.

2.4.9. Strengths and Opportunities

- Community-Based Solutions: Activities like walking groups, peer support and inclusive fitness MOTs exist and can be rolled out.
- Underused Assets: Village halls and community spaces present untapped potential for community hubs.
- Cultural Shift Potential: Building a "movement for movement" and normalising physical activity through storytelling, peer-led models and low-barrier events.
- Better Communication: Need for accessible, non-digital promotion of opportunities (e.g. directories, videos).
- Data Sharing and Collaboration: Between local authorities, ICB and community groups.
- Linking with ICB Strategy: Coordinate priorities to avoid duplication and ensure health-system alignment.



VISION

To create healthier and connected communities where everyone can easily engage in accessible, inclusive physical activity and wellbeing opportunities.

2.6. Outcomes

2.6.1. The common themes and key messages that were taken into consideration from the review of national and local strategies and stakeholder consultation are set out below.

Figure 19 – Strategic Themes and Outcomes

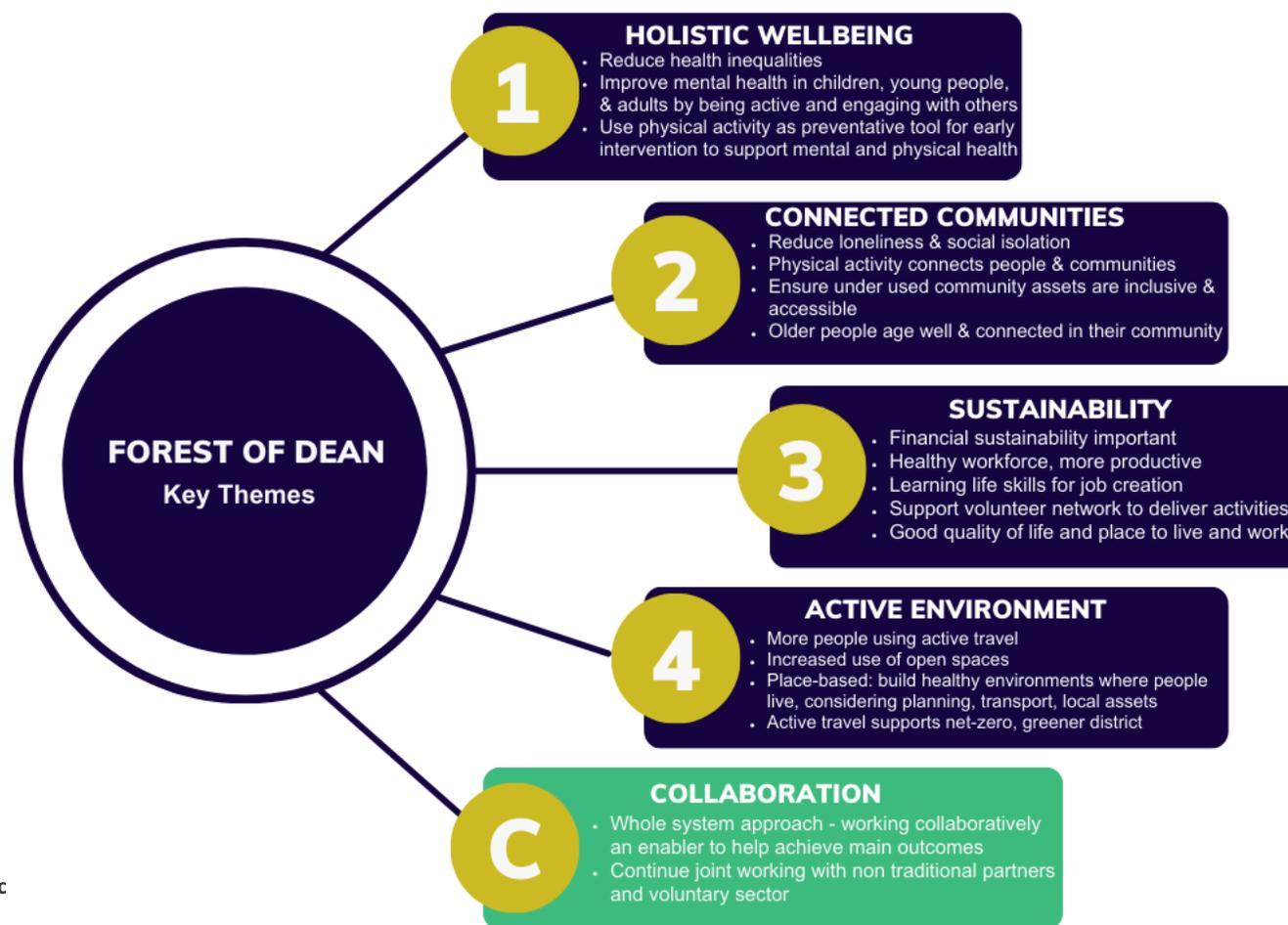


Table 1 – Strategic

Hollistic Wellbeing

Physical activity becomes part of people's everyday life, reducing health inequalities across the District. Children will have the opportunity to have an active start in life, increasing physical literacy and proficiency in life skills, such as swimming. Adults will have an increased awareness and understanding of the physical and mental benefits of being active, to allow them to live longer and better. As adults age they will be encouraged to be active to maintain independence and maintain their quality of life.

Sustainability

The sport, leisure and physical activity network across the Forest of Dean will adopt a whole systems approach, where all stakeholders work collaboratively to support residents to be more active. The leisure facilities will meet community need and be financially and environmentally sustainable, contributing towards the Council's net zero targets. Facilities will support local economies and provide destinations for both residents and visitors.

Connected Communities

Communities are more connected, wherever they live, through increased participation in physical activity. Local communities have the opportunity to input into their future and have a voice in local decisions regarding physical activity opportunities. Communities will have the opportunity to build on strong existing local networks to increase accessibility to physical activity and wellbeing opportunities. Through connected communities loneliness and social isolation will be reduced.

Active Environments

Everyone will be able to enjoy and access activities that use green and blue spaces for movement, physical activity, wellbeing and sport. Active travel will be the easy choice for residents, with increased use of walking and cycling for travel. The principles of an active environment will help shape and influence new housing developments.



3. Stage 2 – Insight

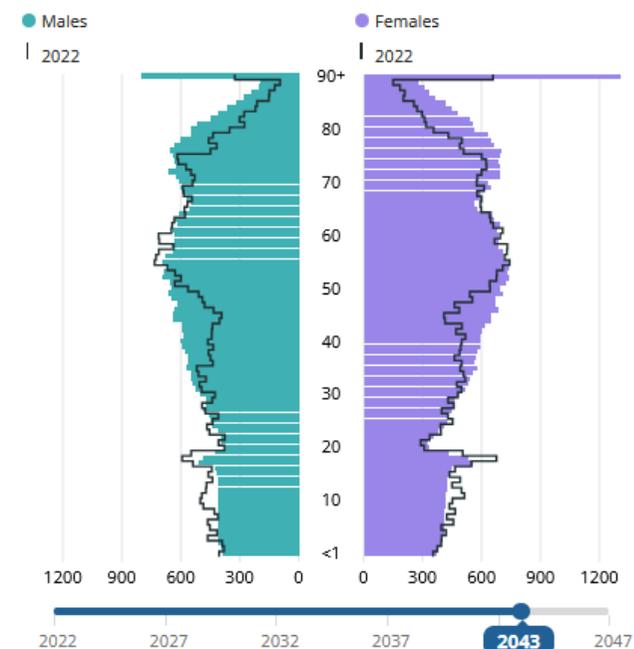
- 3.1. Stage 2 sets out the insight data used to understand the socio demographic context of the Council up to 2043²¹. The services going forward will need to reflect the future and current population and health profile of the area.
- 3.2. It includes a review of the Council’s demographic profile, health profile, physical activity, active travel participation rates and identifies areas of deprivation.

3.3. The Local Context

3.3.1. Forest of Dean’s Population

- 3.3.2. Figure 20, shows the projected change in age structure in Forest of Dean from 2022-2043. The green and purple represent the numbers predicted to 2043 and the black line represents numbers for 2022.
- 3.3.3. The population of the council area in 2022 was 87,934 and is predicted increase to 98,528 by 2043.²² The 80-84 years age group will have the largest rise and 50-54 years will be the largest age group by 2043.²³
- 3.3.4. Work is progressing on a revised draft local plan, to meet the additional housing requirements for the district, building on the Draft Local Plan 2024 consultation document. The uplift in housing numbers amounts to approximately 600 new dwellings per year. The increase in population will need to be accompanied by the planned provision of services and facilities to meet identified need
- 3.3.5. Across the whole council area, currently there are lower numbers of children 0-14 years and people aged 20-49 years, but higher numbers of people aged 50+ than national averages.

Figure 20 – Population Projections in Age Structure for Forest of Dean from



²¹ Local Plan until 2031 (2041 plan in consultation)

²² ONS Data 2022 population projections

²³ ONS Data 2022

3.3.6. The council area has a lower proportion of residents from ethnic minority groups. 97.5% residents class themselves as white, significantly higher than the England average of 81%.

3.3.7. In terms of what the demographics mean for physical activity levels locally, Forest of Dean has high levels of older residents and an aging population. Age continues to be a major factor that determines how likely a person is to be physically active and the older a person is, the less likely they are to meet the Chief Medical Officers' (CMO) guidelines. Data also demonstrates that those that live in deprived areas are less likely to be active.

3.4. Variations by Place

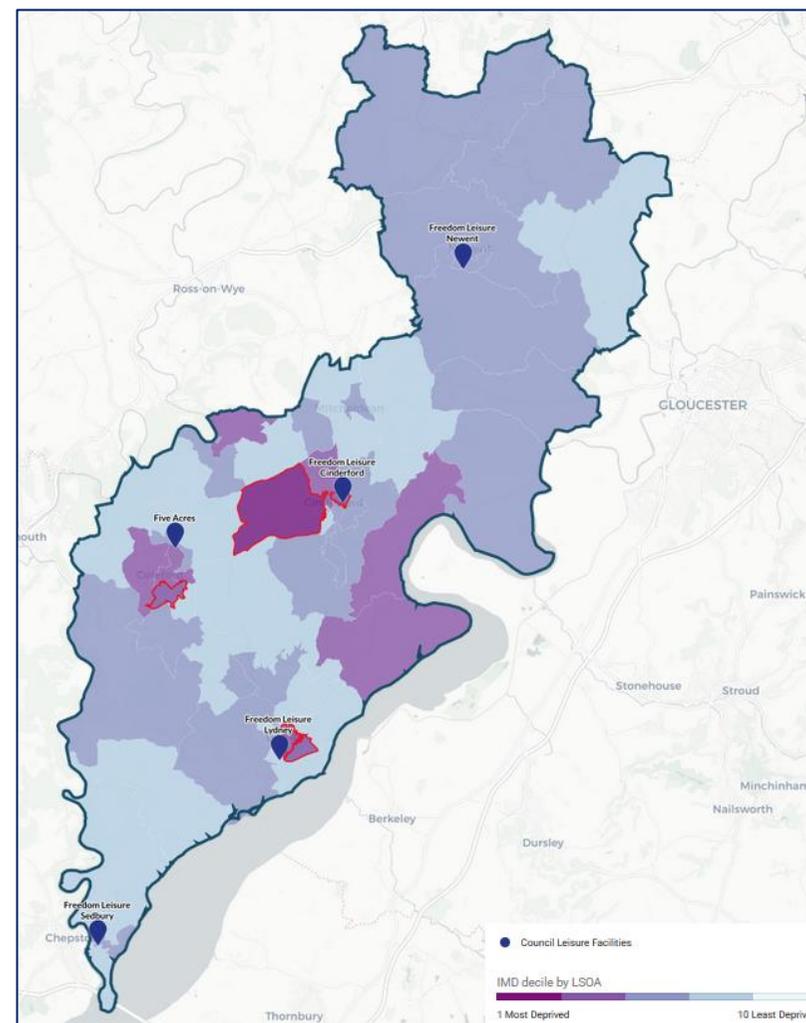
3.4.1. The map opposite shows specific areas of deprivation in Forest of Dean.

3.4.2. The area outlined in red and darkest purple to the west of Cinderford highlights an area in the top 10% most deprived in England.

3.4.3. There are three areas in Forest of Dean that fall within the top 30% most deprived areas in England. One is in Coleford, another in Lydney and the third is in Cinderford.

Map 2 – Forest of Dean Deprivation Map

of



3.4.4. Table 2 below shows the rates of 17 key health indicators for Forest of Dean, Gloucestershire and England. Green represents where Forest of Dean rates are more favourable than England levels, orange represents where they are comparable and red indicates where the rate is less favourable.²⁴

Table 2 – Forest of Dean, Gloucestershire and England Key Health Statistics²⁵

	Forest of Dean	Gloucestershire	England
Male life expectancy (years)	79.1	79.8	79.3
Female life expectancy (years)	83.5	83.9	83.2
Overweight (including obesity) prevalence in adults	66.3%	64%	64.5%
Year 6 prevalence of obesity (including severe obesity)	23%	19.9%	22.1%
Hip fractures in people aged 65 and over*	674	660	547
Under 75 mortality rate from cancer*	95.6	109.5	120.8
% of physically active adults ²⁶	63.9%	67.2%	63.7%
% of physically active children and young people ²⁷	39.7%	46.2%	47.8%
Mental Health Index score ²⁸	99.2	97.4	97.4
Deprivation score (IMD 2019)	18	14.9	21.7
Health index score	110.4	104.7	100.8
Inequality in life expectancy (male) Based on provisional population data ²⁹	5.4	8.2	10.5
Inequality in life expectancy (female) Based on provisional population data ³⁰	2.8	6.6	7.9
Dementia diagnosis rate***	72	65.1	64.8
% Diabetes diagnosis rate	79.6%	77.9%	78%
Admission episodes for alcohol-related conditions*	426	423	504
Emergency hospital admissions for intentional self-harm*	75.7	92.2	117

*per 100,000 people

**meeting CMO guidelines

***per 100 people

3.5.1. As part of the Gloucestershire JSNA 2024, health indicators at a local level were analysed to help understand the socio demographic and health needs of Forest of Dean.

3.5. Forest of Dean’s Health Profile & Joint Strategic Needs Assessment (JSNA)

²⁵ PHE Fingertips 2020-2024/Health Index Score 2021

²⁶ Sport England Active Lives 2023-24

²⁷ Sport England Active Lives academic year 2023-24

²⁸ Health Index and Definitions in England

²⁹ PHE Fingertips 2021-23

³⁰ PHE Fingertips 2021-23

- 3.5.2. Given the links between physical activity and public health priorities, this strategy reflects and supports the work already completed for the JSNA to help target inequalities in specific areas.
- 3.5.3. The following quote is from JSNA Gloucestershire 2022-23 Health Inequalities report and describes the areas of best practice.
- 3.5.4. “In Gloucestershire, we have agreed to take a ‘Community Centred Whole Systems Approach’ to delivering public sector duties and ambitions to improve health equality in our county. An essential part of building an effective whole systems approach to health inequalities is to develop a shared understanding of how they are currently being addressed and to identify assets and opportunities to strengthen the system.”³¹
- 3.5.5. Encouragingly, table 2 shows 13 out of 17 key health indicators for Forest of Dean compared to county and England averages are either comparable to or more favourable than England averages.
- 3.5.6. Hip fractures rates in people aged 65 and over is significantly higher than England levels.
- 3.5.7. Children and young people meeting the CMO guidelines is circa 8% lower than the England average and 6.5% lower than the county average.
- 3.5.8. Life expectancy for males and females is comparable to the England average. There is some inequality in life expectancy for those living in the most deprived areas compared to the least deprived. Within Forest of Dean, for those living in the most deprived areas life expectancy is 5.4 years lower for males and 2.8 years lower for females, however, both of these are lower than the England averages of 10.5 years lower for males and 7.9 years lower for females for the same statistic.
- 3.5.9. The Health Index score for England, shown in Table 2, is a measure of the health of the nation. It uses a broad definition of health including: health outcomes, health-related behaviours and personal circumstances and wider drivers of health that relate to the places where people live. The

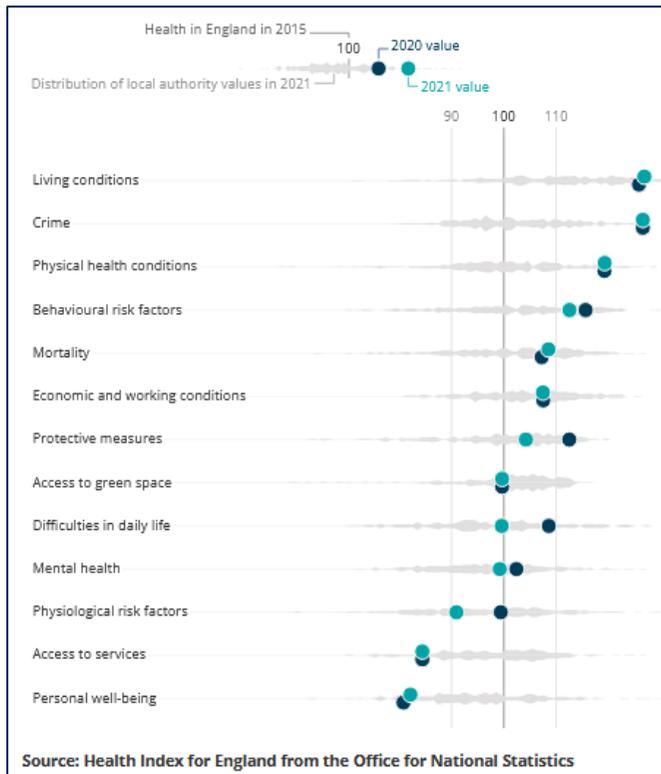
³¹ [JSNA Gloucestershire 2022-23 Health Inequalities](#)

Health Index provides a single value for health that can show how health changes over time. It can also be broken down to focus on specific topics to show the factors that influence these changes. Forest of Dean has a health index score of 110.4 which is down 3.4 points compared with the previous year but is higher than England, meaning better health on average when compared to England.

3.5.10. Within the overall health index score³² Forest of Dean is strongest among measures relating to the "living conditions" subdomain, while Forest of Dean's worst score is for "personal well-being" as shown in figure 21.

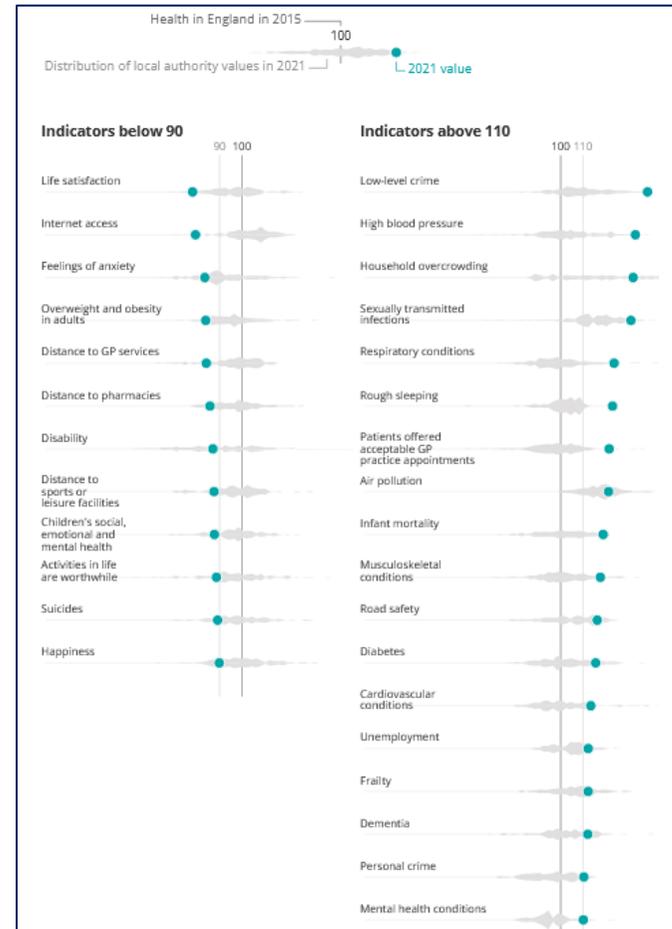
3.5.11. Forest of Dean's score for health relating to "physical health conditions" at 119.2 in 2021 is better than the score for England as a whole. "Physical health conditions" looks at cancer,

Figure 21 – Forest of Dean Health Index Values For Each Subdomain, 2021



cardiovascular conditions, dementia, diabetes, kidney and liver disease, musculoskeletal conditions, and respiratory conditions.

Figure 22 – Forest of Dean Health Index Values For Each Indicator Below 90 Or Above 110, 2021



³²<https://www.ons.gov.uk/peoplepopulationandcommunity/healthandsocialcare/healthandwellbeing/articles/howhealthhaschangedinyourarea2015to2021/2023-06-16>

3.5.12. Indicators below 90, (worse than England), include life satisfaction, feelings of anxiety, overweight and obesity in adults and distance to sports or leisure facilities. These are all important to consider for improving residents' active wellbeing.

3.6. Participation in Physical Activity

3.6.1. This section sets out how active residents are within Forest of Dean compared to the Gloucestershire Active Partnership (Active Gloucestershire) and national rates.

3.7. Current Levels of Physical Activity

3.7.1. It is important to understand the District's current activity levels and whether levels of activity are impacted by socio-economic and geographical factors.

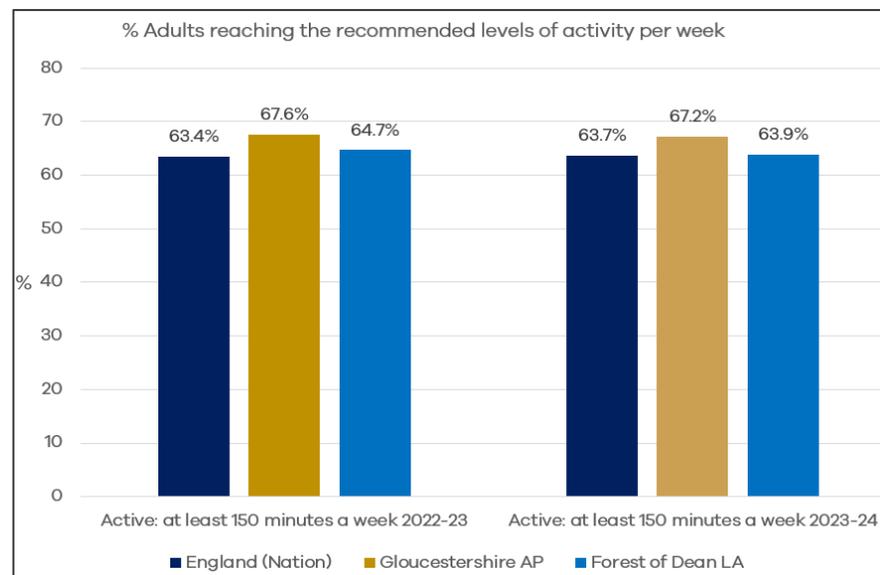
3.7.2. The levels of adults classified as active in Forest of Dean district are detailed in the graph opposite and are compared to Gloucestershire Active Partnership and national levels.

3.7.3. Section 1.4 highlighted that to benefit from the health outcomes of physical activity, adults need to participate in 150 minutes of moderate or vigorous activity per week. In Forest of Dean 63.9% of adults (age 16+) are reaching this level, which is comparable to the national average.

3.7.4. However, regionally, Forest of Dean has lower participation rates of just over 3%.

3.7.5. Over the last two years there has been limited change in participation rates at national, regional and local levels.

Figure 23 – Forest of Dean Adult Physical Activity Profile³³



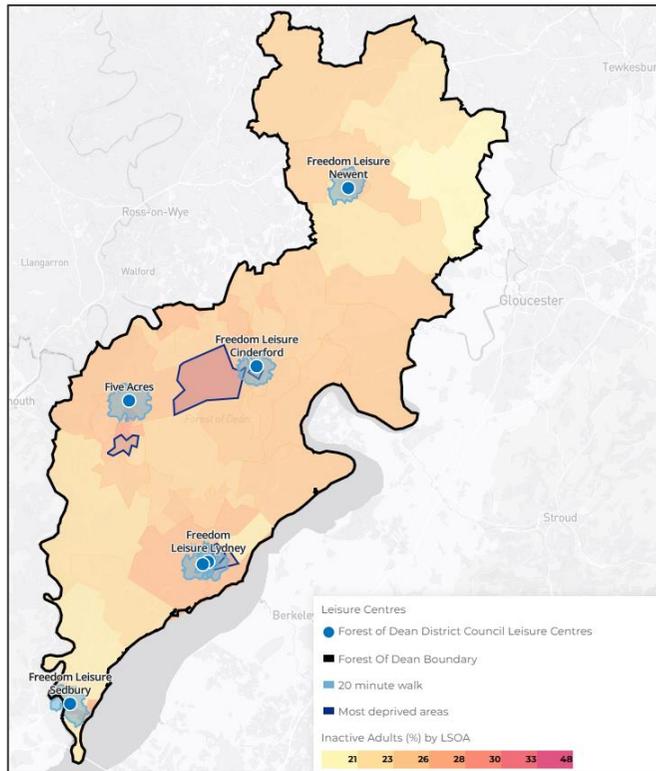
3.7.6. Within Forest of Dean 51.7% agree they have the opportunity to be physically active. This is comparable to the Gloucestershire Active Partnership rate of 50.1% and higher than the national average of 46.4%.³⁴

3.7.7. The map below highlights where the highest rates of inactivity are located against the areas of highest deprivation (top 30% indicated by blue boundary). It also shows a 20 minute walk time catchment from the leisure centres, which, highlights that only the highest areas of deprivation in Ledbury and one in Cinderford are within walking distance of a leisure centre. The areas of higher deprivation have higher rates of inactivity, but not all of the leisure centres are accessible to these communities.

³³ Sport England Active Lives 2021-22/2022-23

³⁴ Sport England Active Lives 2023-24

Map 3 - Rate of inactivity against deprivation and leisure centre location

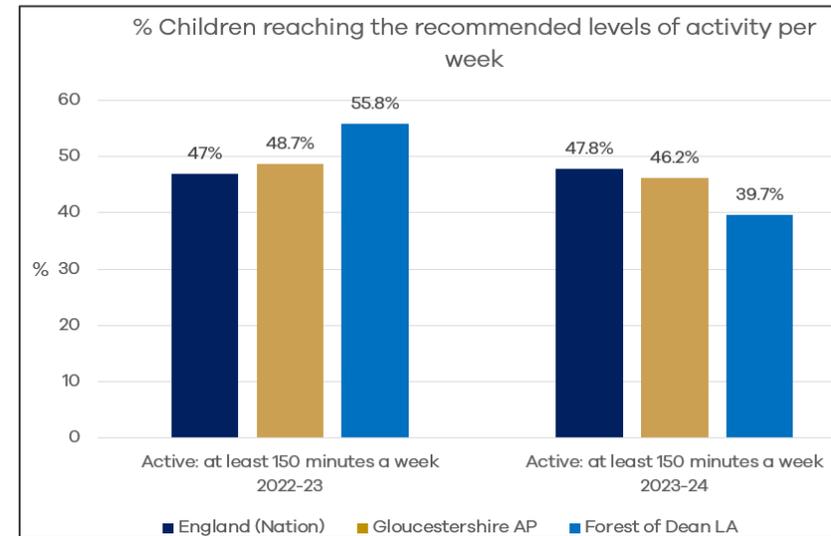


3.7.8. In contrast to adults, children’s activity levels in Forest of Dean are significantly lower than county and national averages and the data shows a significant reduction of over 16% from 2022/23 to 2023/24. At a national level participation has remained relatively consistent over the last two years, whilst at a county level there has been a small reduction of 2.5%.³⁵

3.7.9. The level of children and young people meeting the CMO guidelines in Forest of Dean is also significantly lower than other areas within the county. Available data for the academic year 2023-24 shows that in Cheltenham

rates of children and young people meeting CMO guidelines are 48.3%, Cotswold is 45.8% and Stroud is 47.2%.

Figure 24 - Forest of Dean Children and Young People Activity Profile

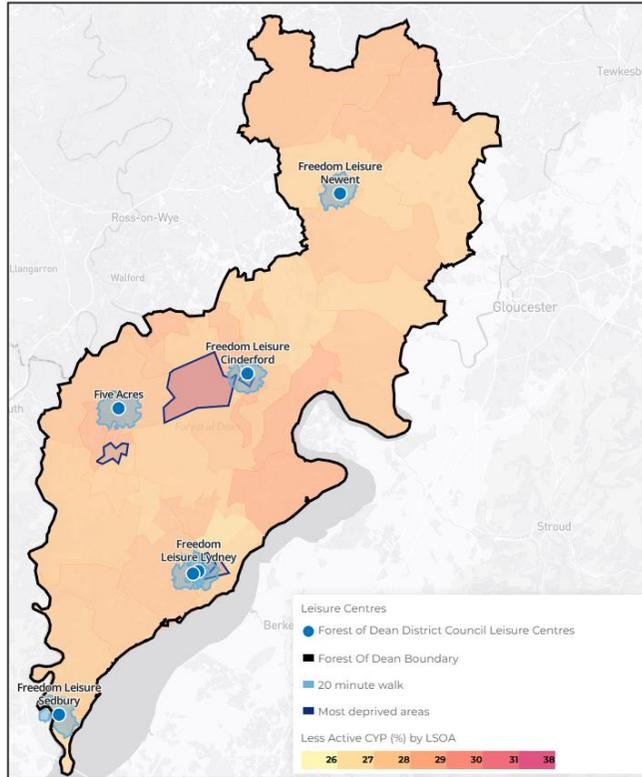


3.7.10. The map below highlights the areas where children and young people are less active. Similarly to adults the areas where children are less active are not all within walking distance of a leisure centre, including areas of higher deprivation.

3.7.11. Highlighting the need for local accessible provision or access to cars/public transport to participate in organised physical activity.

³⁵ Sport England Active Lives Children and Young People Survey Academic Year 2022-23 / 2023-24

Map 4 - Less Active CYP against leisure centre location, walking catchment and areas of deprivation



3.8. Demographic Variations

- 3.8.1. As set out in section 1.5, there are differences in physical activity participation across demographic groups, including gender, ethnicity, and people who have disabilities and long-term conditions.
- 3.8.2. The graph opposite shows active adults in five demographic groups within Forest of Dean compared to the national average for the same demographic groups.
- 3.8.3. Both females and males classed as active are comparable to the national average³⁶. The gap between male and female participation is 3.8% compared to 4.9% nationally.
- 3.8.4. It is also encouraging to see that within Forest of Dean those classed as active within the lower socio-economic group NS SEC 6-8 is circa 5% higher than national average.
- 3.8.5. Those in the 75+ age range classed as active within Forest of Dean and those with a disability or long term health condition are comparable to the national average.
- 3.8.6. For those in the 75+ age this is positive as this age range sees the sharpest decline in activity levels and Forest of Dean has higher than average numbers of residents aged 75+.
- 3.8.7. There is no local data available for ethnic groups.
- 3.8.8. Overall, the statistics are positive as these specific cohorts in Forest of Dean have higher or comparable rates of recommended levels of activity compared to national averages.

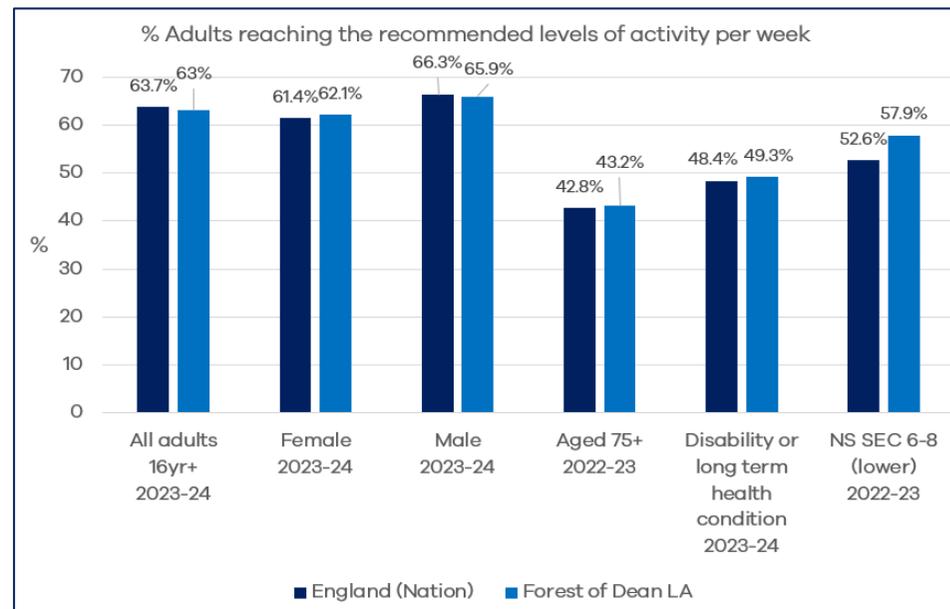


Figure 25 - Forest of Dean Active Adults Within Five Demographic Groups

³⁶ <https://www.ethnicity-facts-figures.service.gov.uk/health/diet-and-exercise/physical-activity/latest/#main-facts-and-figures>

3.9. Wider Impact of Physical Activity in Forest of Dean

- 3.9.1. Being active does not just have positive benefits on physical and mental health. As highlighted in the National Picture section of this report, social value³⁷ is also important for community sport and physical activity, where lots of activity is self-organised or volunteer-led and much of its value to society comes in the form of improved wellbeing and better physical and mental health.
- 3.9.2. Volunteering can also have a positive impact on physical and mental health. In Forest of Dean, 24.9% of adults volunteered within the last year, comparable to the Gloucestershire Active Partnership level of 25.7% and higher than the national average of 22.3%.

- 3.9.3. Social value is measured in two ways - primary value and secondary value. The primary value is the direct benefit and value to individuals of improved wellbeing. The secondary value measures the wider value to society, including the state.
- 3.9.4. Within Forest of Dean the primary value is circa £128m and the secondary value is circa £16.5m, which gives a total annual social value of adult participation in sport and physical activity of nearly £143.5m.³⁸

³⁷ The social value of sport and physical activity in England

³⁸ The social value of sport by local area

3.10. Active Travel

3.10.1. Physical activity does not just take place in leisure venues. The active environment and active travel provide opportunities for people to incorporate movement into their daily lives.

3.10.2. In the Forest of Dean 37.6% of residents own one car or van, which is lower than the national average of 41.3% (12.2% households have no car or van compared to 23.5% across England). However, the percentage of residents owning two or three cars or vans is higher than the England average. Considering the rural nature and inaccessibility of some areas in the District, this higher than average car ownership and lower walking and cycling for travel is expected.³⁹

3.10.3. Figure 26⁴⁰, below outlines the rate of adults within Forest of Dean who walked for travel between November 2023 and November 2024 and the rate of adults who cycled for travel between November 2022 and November 2023⁴¹. Both lower than the regional and England averages.

Figure 26 – Forest of Dean Adults Active Travel Participation Levels



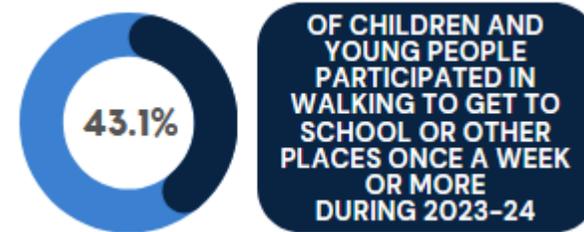
³⁹ Sport England Area Profiles 2021

⁴⁰ Sport England Active Lives 2022-23/2023-24

⁴¹ Walking for travel participation rates are significantly lower than the Gloucestershire Active Partnership average of 50.2% and the England average of 53%. The participation rates for cycling for travel are also lower than the Gloucestershire Active Partnership rate of 13.5% and the England rate of 12%.

3.10.4. For children and young people 43.1% participated in walking to get to school or other places once a week or more during 2023-24, which is a decrease of 12.6% from 2022-23 and lower than the regional and national average.⁴²

Figure 27 – Forest of Dean Children Active Travel Participation Levels⁴³



⁴² The current rate is lower than the Gloucestershire average of 47.8% and the national average of 52.1%.

⁴³ Sport England Active Lives Academic Year 2022-23

3.11. The Most Popular Sports and Physical Activities

3.11.1. According to recent Active Lives data (Nov 23-24) the main activities for adults within Forest of Dean are walking for leisure, gardening and walking for travel.

3.11.2. In Forest of Dean, 56.6% of the population classed as active undertook their activity outdoors.⁴⁴

3.11.3. It can be seen in the table opposite that Forest of Dean has higher participation than England in five of the main sports or activities (green) and lower participation in four sports or activities (red). Participation in fitness classes and cycling for leisure is the same as the England average.

3.11.4. The largest increases from 2022-23 have been in participation in cycling for leisure by circa 9% and weight session by circa 6%. The largest decrease from 2022-23 has been those participating in walking for travel and hill and mountain walking, which have both seen a decrease of circa 4%.⁴⁵

Table 3 – Popular Sports and Physical Activities in England and Forest Of Dean Participation Summary⁴⁶

Type of activity	England	Forest of Dean
Walking for leisure	76%	85%
Gardening	59%	71%
Walking for travel	53%	39%
Swimming	27%	28%
Hill and mountain walking	23%	25%
Fitness classes	24%	24%
Cycling for leisure	23%	23%
Running (including jogging and treadmill)	25%	20%
Exercise machines	23%	21%
Running or track and field athletics	26%	22%
Weights session	19%	22%

⁴⁴ Sport England Active Lives 2023-24

⁴⁵ Sport England Active Lives 2022-23/2023-24

⁴⁶ Sport England Active Live 2023-24

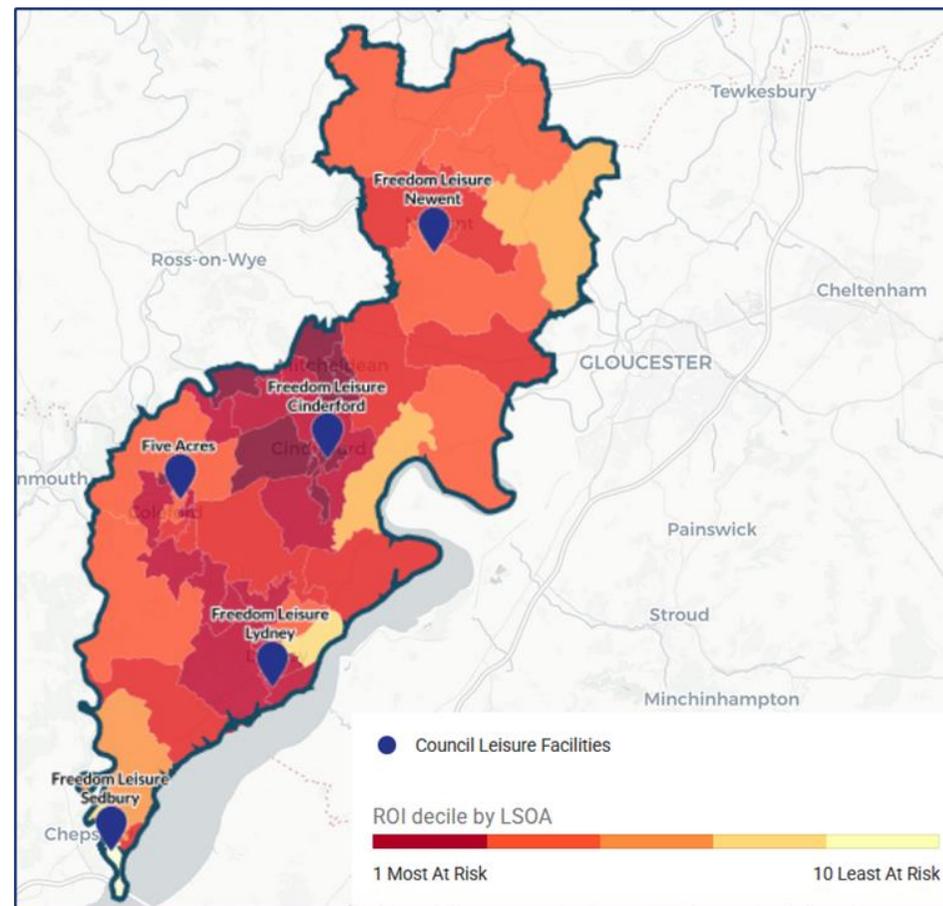
3.12. Understanding who is currently inactive

3.12.1. The mapping sets out geographical areas that have a high risk of inactivity⁴⁷. This highlights that it is not only the more urban areas with higher levels of deprivation that are at high risk of inactivity but also rural communities, who are likely to have an older population. The wards with most high risk areas of inactivity are:

- Cinderford West
- Cinderford East
- Lydney East
- Berry Hill (in the south)
- Mitcheldean, Ruardean & Drybrook
- Newnham (in north west)
- Ruspidge (in the north)

3.12.2. Lack of access to indoor facilities also impacts people’s ability to be active, potentially leading to lower participation rates, increased health disparities and poorer overall health outcomes. Within Forest of Dean, ONS data shows that there are 7.13 sports facilities (excluding grass pitches) per 10,000 people, which is lower than the England average of 9.4 per 10,000.

Map 5 – Forest of Dean Council Risk of Inactivity



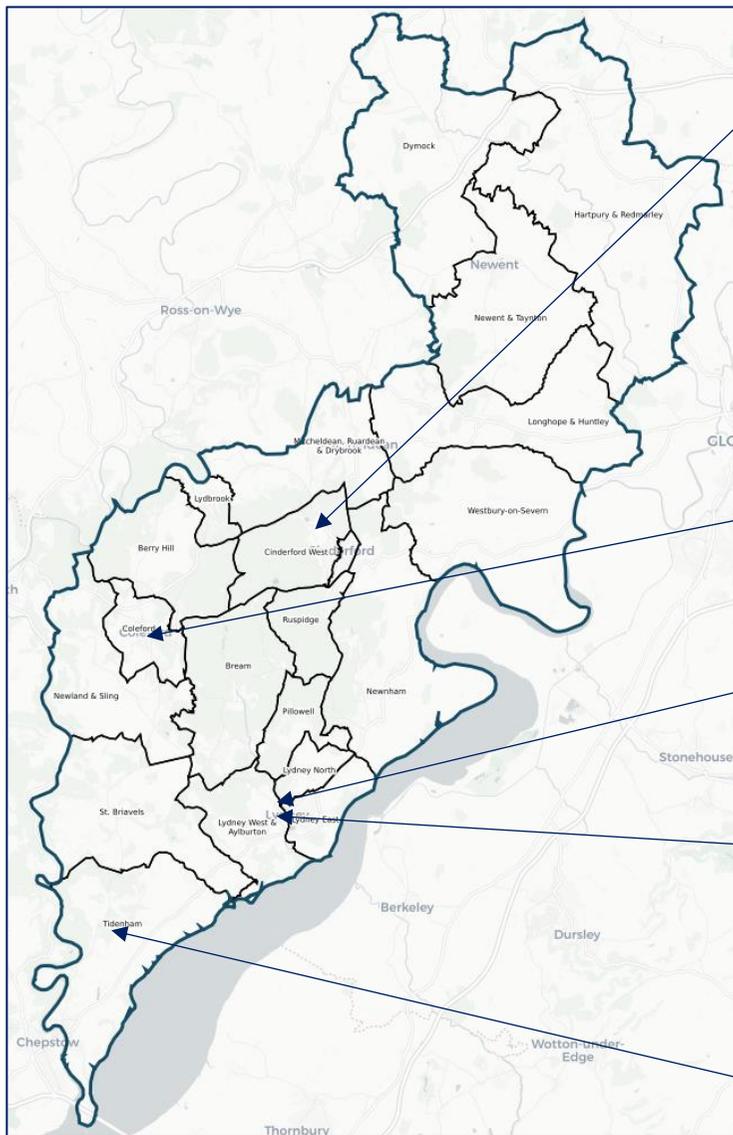
⁴⁷ The risk of inactivity layer is informed by live participation data from over 750 million visits to over 2,000 leisure venues sourced from DataHub since 2012. Using this data we are able to identify which demographic segments (age, gender, deprivation and mosaic group) are likely to participate more or less than others. We overlay this information with the demographic profile of an area, in this case an LSOA, (based on ONS population data and Experian Mosaic information) and can calculate how

at risk the population of the area is at being inactive. This aligns with the Sport England definition of inactivity showing how at risk the people in an LSOA are at doing less than 30 min of physical activity in a week from having the highest risk to having the lowest. Darker reds have the highest risk, whereas the lighter shades have the lowest.

3.13. Inactivity at a Local Level

3.13.1. Lower layer super output area data (LSOA) level provides a detailed insight and local intelligence into which areas have the highest levels of physical inactivity across multiple demographic groups. As shown in the map overleaf areas such as Cinderford, Coleford, Lydney and Tidenham & Woolaston show consistently high inactivity rates among diverse populations, despite having leisure centres in these areas. Services and resource need to target those with greatest need and 'hardly reached' groups to help reduce health inequalities. This underlines the need for targeted, hyper-local outreach and mobile or community-based programmes to effectively engage and support these communities.

Map 6 – Forest of Dean Council LSOA area specific demographic inactivity



3.14. Catchment Analysis

3.14.1. Member Mapping

3.14.2. A catchment analysis of current leisure centre users was completed to understand where existing members live and which groups are currently over or underrepresented. This will help the Council consider how well the centres are meeting the needs of the community in terms of accessibility and attracting all members of the community.

3.14.3. The map opposite shows the catchment area for leisure users with the larger dots representing more people from that postcode area.

3.14.4. There are 5,127 known users of leisure centres, which equates to 5.2% of Forest of Dean residents. Freedom Leisure Lydney has the most users.

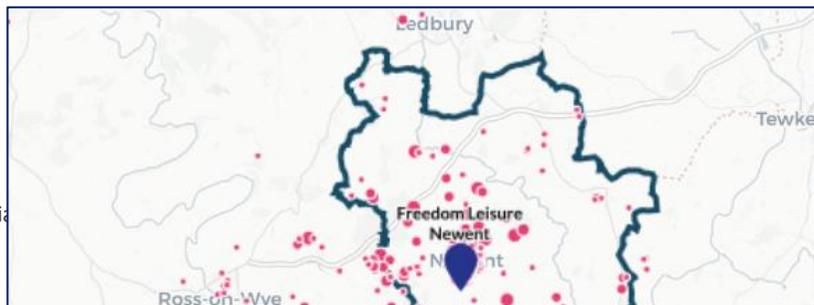
3.14.5. Sedbury Leisure Centre attracts users from outside the council area with 21.9% from across the border in Monmouthshire. Newent attracts users from Gloucester as well as nearby.

3.14.6. The leisure centres do quite well at attracting users from outside of the immediate catchment getting users from surrounding villages.

3.14.7. Interestingly, Coleford has a high number of users who are split between Cinderford and Lydney Leisure Centres. These are likely to transfer to Five Acres, for dry-side activities such as fitness, when it opens.

3.14.8. As shown in the zoomed in map, Cinderford has barely any users from the 10% most deprived area, although it is noted that this area is primarily statutory forest with limited residential areas.

Map 7 – Forest of Dean District Council Leisure Users Catchment Map

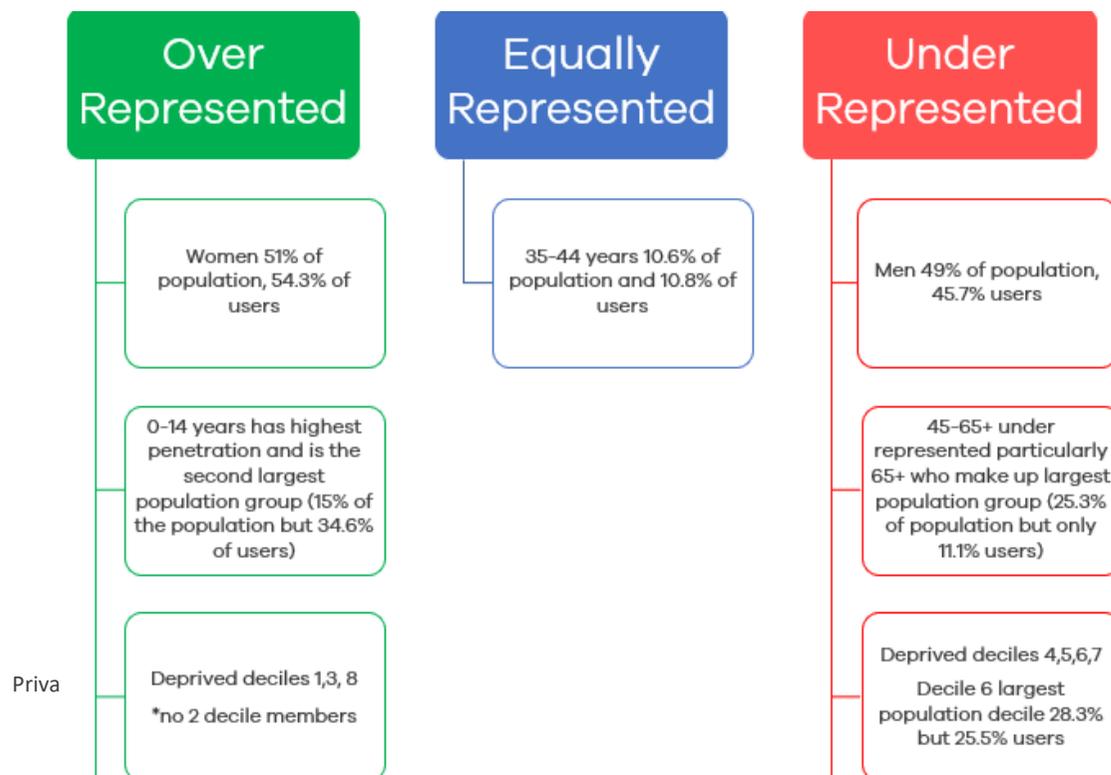


3.14.9. Using Mosaic, a detailed market segmentation system, each leisure centre user's postcode was assigned a Mosaic code. To ensure like for like comparison, leisure centre users are compared to the total population in the same area. This gives us a demographic profile of leisure users and the local population, showing how well the council managed or supported facilities are penetrating the market, as can be seen in the figure overleaf. Further details are found in [Appendix 5](#).

3.14.10. This analysis shows the most under-represented Mosaic group across the Council's leisure centres is:

- **Country Living** - group is under-represented, making up 20.7% of users. Country Living tend to be older people (66+) that own their own home in rural locations and have good income levels.
- **65+** is the most under-represented age group.

Figure 28 – User Profile Findings



Health, Demographic, Physical Activity & Membership Analysis - What does this mean for physical activity in Forest of Dean?

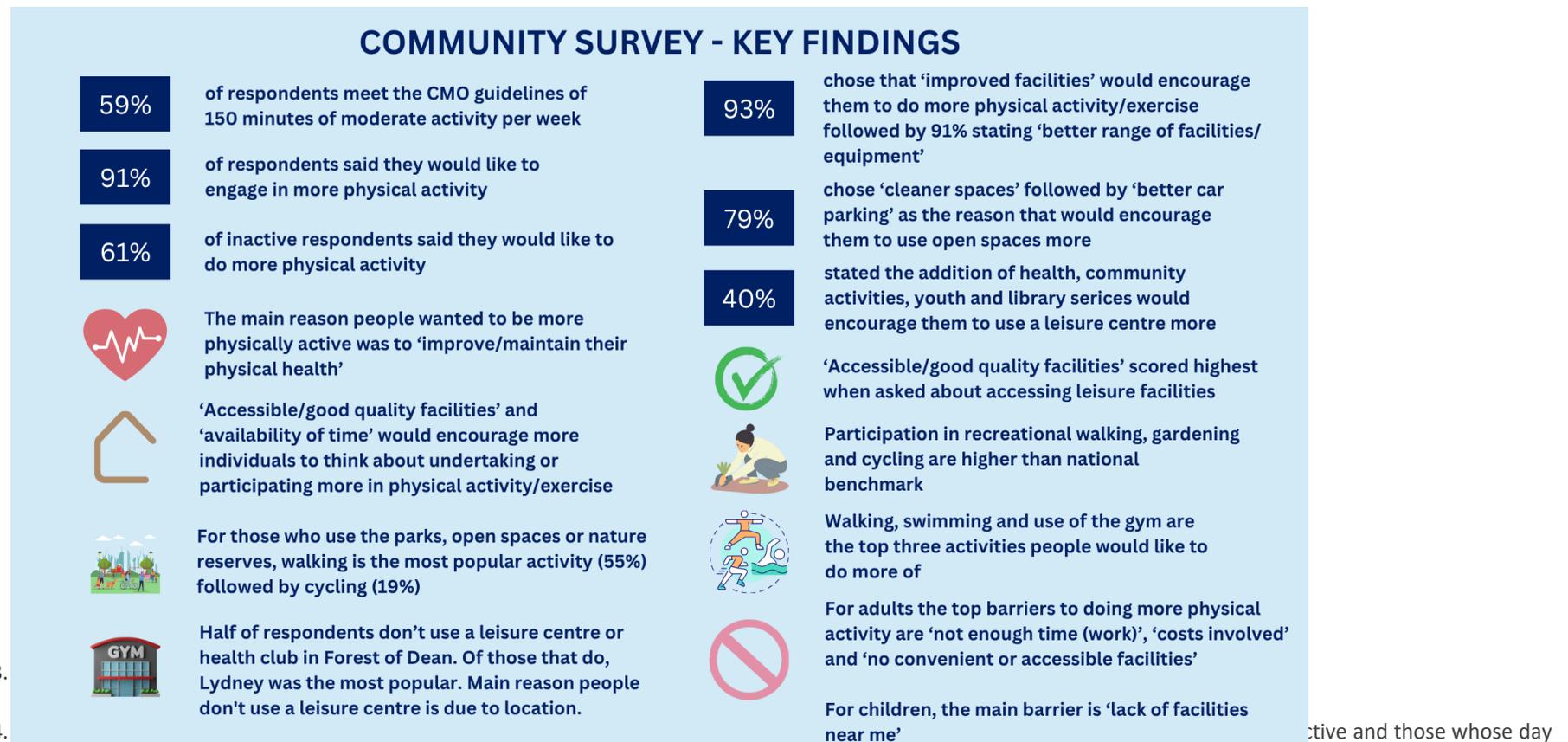
- Children's obesity is higher than average which needs to be addressed to ensure the adult obesity stat doesn't worsen.
- 0-14 age group are a key user as over third of current usage of leisure centres. Important to retain this use, particularly as children's participation and activity levels are low.
- Forest of Dean has an aging population, 65+ are underrepresented in leisure centres so outreach, particularly in rural areas, important to offer an alternative and local activity provision. In addition, LSOA data shows that Cinderford, Coleford and Lydney have high inactivity levels for 75+ residents so these locations should also be targeted with programmes for older residents.
- Increasing physical activity in older people will support local health issues, such as hip fractures, preventative programmes for trips and falls, can help older residents to live independently for longer etc.
- There are pockets of deprivation in Forest of Dean and in the most deprived area the member mapping shows there are hardly any users of leisure centres, so there is a need to engage with the community to understand why they can't access and what can be done to support them being more active. Likely to need solutions within their area - community based not facility based.
- There are differences in physical activity participation across demographic groups, including gender, ethnicity and people who have disabilities and long-term conditions. Overall, in Forest of Dean, the activity rates of these cohorts are comparable or higher than national levels. However, a deep dive using LSOA level insight shows that inactivity and inequalities exist across multiple demographic groups and areas, particularly in Cinderford, Coleford, Lydney and Tidenham & Woolaston. Services and resource need to target those with greatest need and 'hardly reached' groups to help reduce health inequalities. This data provides insight for targeted, hyper-local outreach and community-based programmes to effectively engage and support these communities.
- Demographic data shows low ethnicity in the district overall but Lydney and Cinderford have high inactivity levels for ethnic minority residents. Tailored programmes should be considered in these locations to support these groups.
- The mapping suggests the leisure facilities are in the right place given where people travel from to use them. Five Acres will be a positive addition to serve residents in the area around Coleford.
- There is an opportunity for active travel to be improved, however the opportunity is limited by geography, type of roads, distance, hills etc. But there is potential to consider shorter distances e.g. increasing walking/cycling to schools/within the same town.

3.15. Community Engagement

3.15.1. Community engagement took place to help understand what, where and how residents are accessing leisure facilities and outdoor spaces for physical activity across Forest of Dean, the barriers they face to being active and what improvements should be considered to encourage more participation. Full details can be found in [Appendix 6](#).

3.15.2. Insight was gathered via an online community survey which was open for completion from the 21st of January 2025 and closed on the 19th of March 2025. A focus group with young people took place on the 6th of May 2025 and a survey to parents and carers for children and young adults with disabilities was distributed by Forest Pulse on the 7th of May and was open for completion until Friday the 16th of May.

Figure 29 – Community Survey Key Findings



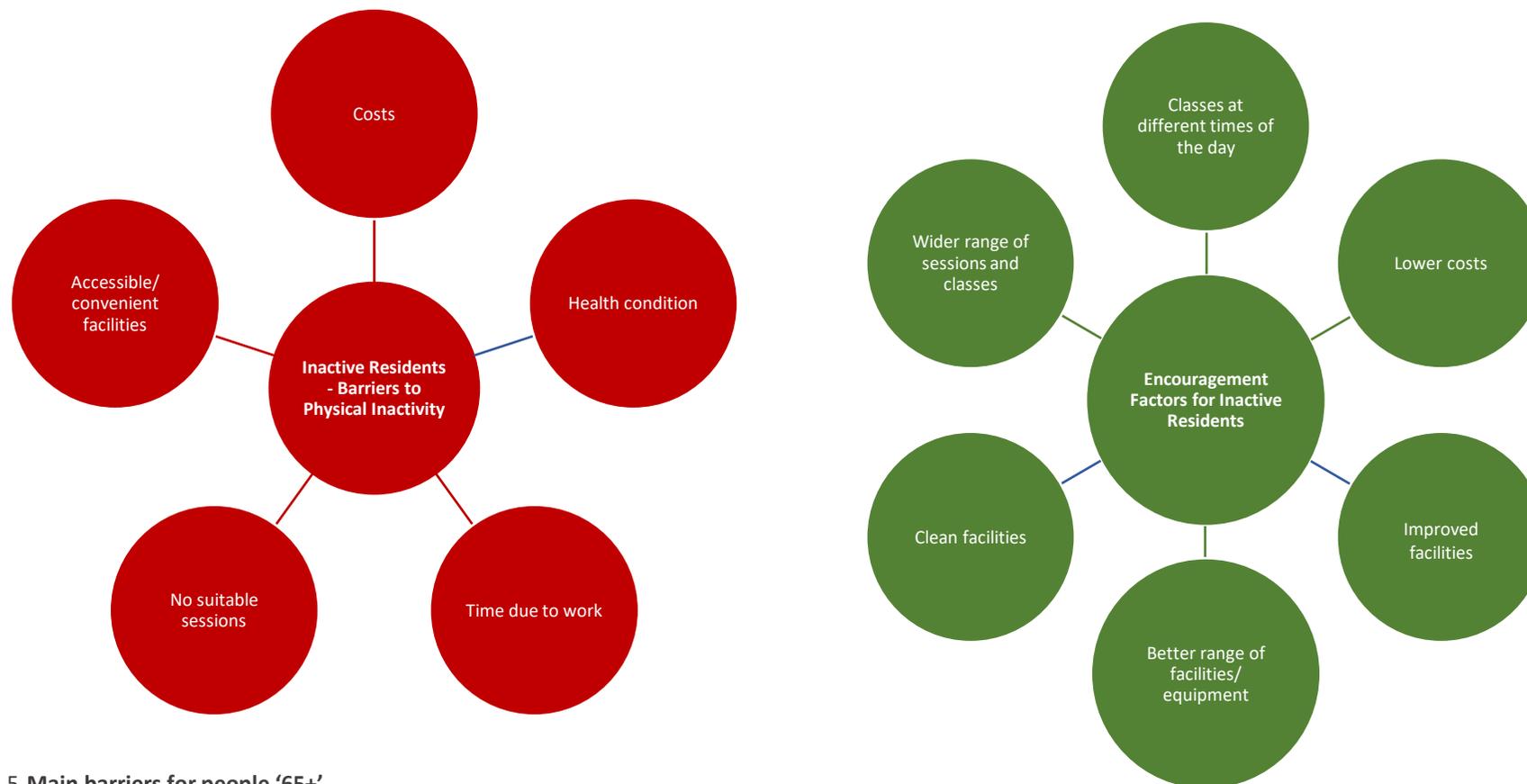
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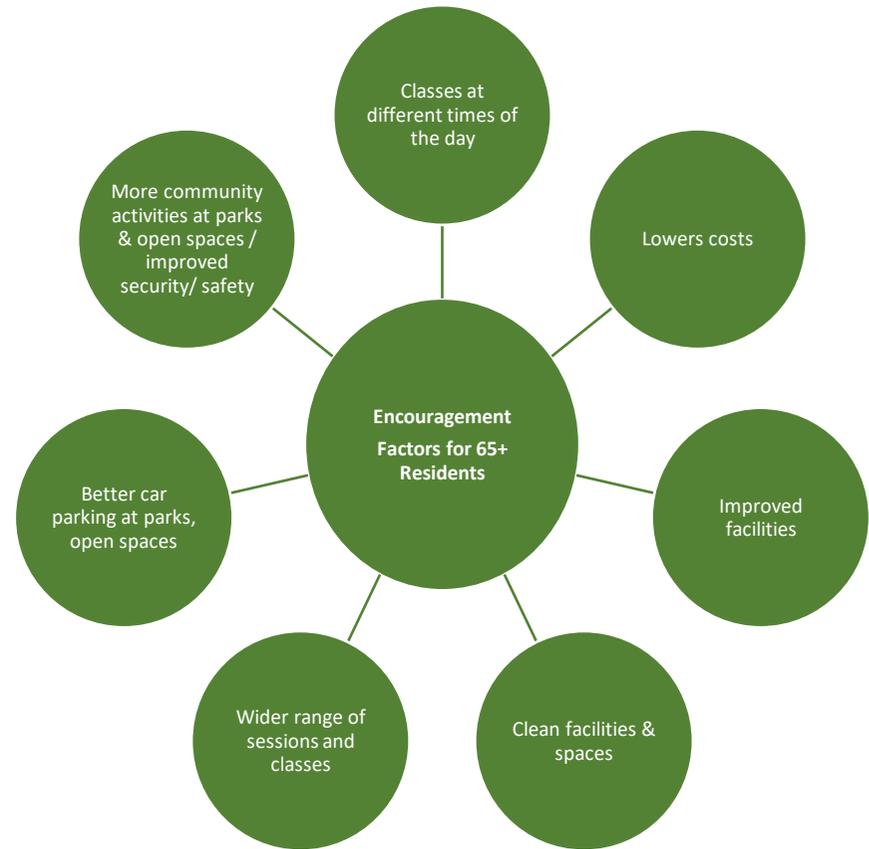
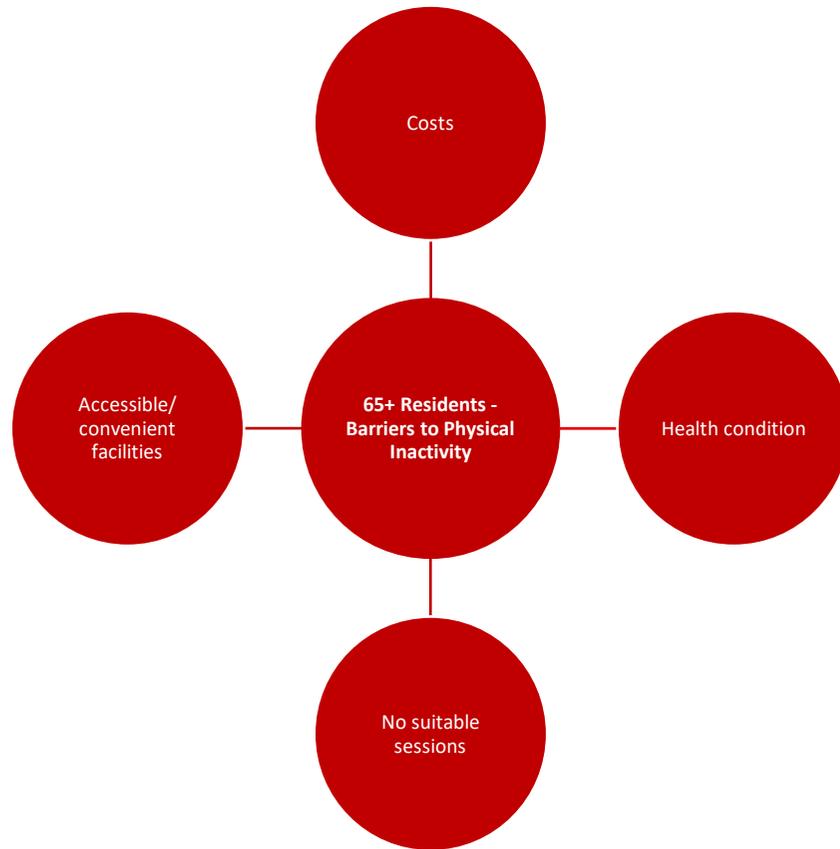
Figure 30 – Main Barriers to Being Active and Encouragement Factors – Inactive respondents



3.15.5. Main barriers for people '65+'

3.15.6. Analysis of the community survey respondents enables the identification of barriers and encouragement factors for those who are 65+. As Forest of Dean has an ageing population, and this age group is under represented in leisure centres, it is useful to have insight into what is stopping them from being active and what would encourage them to be more active.

Figure 31 – Main Barriers to Being Active and Encouragement Factors - 65+ respondents



3.15.7. In Depth Consultation

3.15.8. The infographic below outlines the key findings from a focus group with Year 5 children from four primary schools in Forest of Dean and responses to a survey distributed to Forest Pulse, a group that supports families with children who live with a range of disabilities. The responses were received from parents or carers who use Forest Pulse for activities and support.

Figure 32 - Young People and Disability Group Key Findings



3.15.9. Active Gloucestershire Consultation

3.15.10. In 2024, Active Gloucestershire ran three health and wellbeing workshops based on the GLOBE’s Group Model Building (GMB), through Live Longer Better, a movement which aims to increase activity, increase healthy life expectancy and reduce the need for health and social care.⁴⁸

3.15.11. This community and cross system participatory approach, brings partners together in a series of workshops to begin telling stories of change over time and mapping the systemic interconnected factors in order to gain a deeper understanding of the complex, real-world challenges that impact physical activity in Cinderford.

3.15.12. By involving local stakeholders the process ensured that the insights and solutions were community-driven, had cross system influence, were relevant and grounded in local experiences.

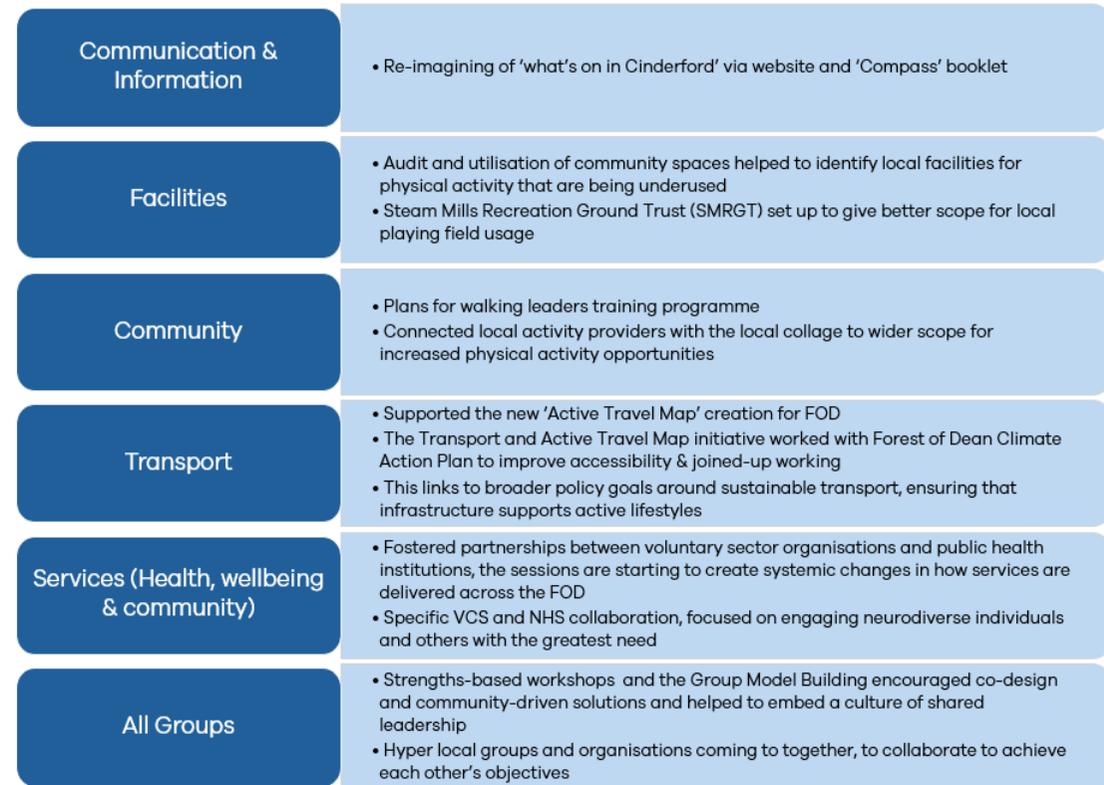
3.15.13. In July 2024, Active Gloucestershire ran one of these workshops in Cinderford⁴⁹. It involved 50 community leaders with 44 total ‘action ideas’ generated, five themes generated and a total of 73 signups across all themes. These five themes became action groups, as shown in figure 33.

3.15.14. Action Group meetings took place in December 2024 to review and update on the progress across all five action groups and discuss next steps. Further action group meetings took place in February, May and Summer 2025.

3.15.15. A Short Film: Cinderford - how collaborative working is sparking positive change is shown on linked in [Short Version](#)

⁴⁸ Active Gloucestershire Impact and Learning Report 2024

Figure 33 – Active Gloucestershire Cinderford Action Groups and Outcomes



Engagement - What does this mean for physical activity in Forest of Dean?

- The consultation supports the member mapping analysis showing Lydney is the most popular leisure centre. One reason may be due to longer opening hours compared to the dual use school sites. However, half of consultation respondents don't use a leisure centre mainly due to location. This emphasises the importance of having alternative indoor and outdoor activities and facilities, such as community halls, offering physical activity locally.
- The survey highlighted that an accessible, clean, improved facility would encourage more people to visit a leisure centre. The opening of Five Acres meets this criteria by offering a new modern facility and is likely to increase leisure centre usage particularly in and around Coleford.
- As per the physical activity stats, consultation also indicated that cycling participation is low, but nearly half of respondents want to cycle more. This reinforces the opportunity for active travel to be improved. However, as limited by geography, type of roads, distance, hills etc. the potential would be for shorter distances e.g. increasing walking/cycling to schools/within the same town. This would also help to overcome the barrier of not enough time to be active due to work by encompassing activity as part of everyday.
- Children also stated that 'time' and 'getting to places' was a barrier so incorporating active travel for shorter distances would help them to be active daily. There is an opportunity to work with local schools to support walk and cycle to school initiatives to help increase children's activity levels.
- Children like being active at school or with friends but a lack of facilities near them is a main barrier. Opportunity to promote group activities and address lack of facilities by increasing availability of safe, accessible places for children to engage in physical activity. This could include local parks, playgrounds, recreational areas and youth sports programmes. Community initiatives like family fitness events or after-school activity programmes could encourage physical activity among children and help alleviate some of the barriers for families and carers.
- A high number of survey respondents regularly use parks, open spaces or nature reserves, which correlates to data showing that over half of residents classed as active in Forest of Dean exercise outside. Maintaining and improving the cleanliness of these spaces and ensuring there is sufficient parking is important to increase and retain usage.
- Walking for leisure is the most popular activity in both the consultation and physical activity data. Maintaining public rights of way and signposting existing walks and walk leader initiatives will help sustain walking's popularity which, as well as the health benefits, is low-cost and widely accessible.
- Gardening is also a popular activity with an opportunity for outreach work at allotments, community gardens and links with GP surgeries.
- A high proportion of residents recognise the benefits of physical activity for physical and mental health wellbeing. It is worth emphasising these benefits in communication and information when encouraging people to be active.
- Over a third of survey respondents stated that adding services such as health, community activities, youth services or library services would encourage them to use a leisure centre more. This supports community spaces and a café being part of the facility mix for Five Acres.
- For the disability groups, 'lack of suitable sessions' is a major barrier to being more active and with swimming being one of the most popular activities, there is an opportunity to create closer links to swimming sites and offer activities that are inclusive and ones that families could do together.
- Cost is mentioned as a barrier and an encouragement factor for those considered inactive, therefore pricing structures should be inclusive to ensure that those who have a lower income are not excluded from opportunities to be active.
- Encouragement factors for those considered inactive and 65+, in addition to cost, include wider range of sessions and classes and classes at different times, therefore more in-depth engagement with these groups will help develop solutions for tackling inactivity. As the 65+ age group are underrepresented in leisure centres and the district has an ageing population, it is key to understand what type of activities they would like to participate in.
- There is an opportunity to replicate or use the Active Gloucestershire consultation work as a tool to implement actions from this strategy.

3.16. Places and Spaces in Forest of Dean to be active

3.16.1. Forest of Dean has a wide variety of places and spaces to be active, ranging from local open spaces, the statutory Forest, playing pitches, greenways, and blue spaces to leisure centres and other dedicated routes for walking and cycling to village halls and community centres.

3.16.2. These spaces play a vital role in enabling physical activity and supporting overall wellbeing.

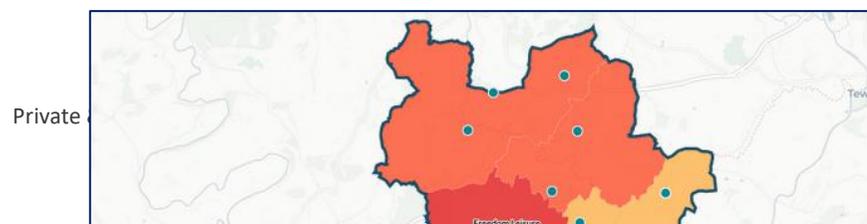
3.17. Current Leisure Provision

3.17.1. The supply and demand of the existing indoor provision has been assessed in the Forest of Dean Built Facilities Strategy.

3.17.2. In addition, an audit of the village and community halls where physical activity is being offered has been undertaken. Local community spaces offer places to be active in Forest of Dean, often in spaces where residents feel more comfortable and which are more accessible, particularly in rural areas.

3.17.3. These community spaces are mapped, as shown opposite, in relation to the council leisure centres and areas at risk of inactivity. This emphasises the importance of community spaces serving local communities not within a walking catchment of a leisure centre and at risk of inactivity e.g. Mitcheldean Community Centre. There is no community space or facility in the most deprived and at risk of inactivity area in Cinderford West. This supports the need to provide outreach work in this area.

3.17.4. Community spaces also provide alternative places to be active in areas where leisure centres are on dual use sites with restricted opening hours during the school day, e.g. Pauntley Village Hall Brand Green near Newent.



Map 8 – Forest of Dean Current Community Space Provision in Relation to Risk of Inactivity Map and 20 Minute Walk Time of Leisure Centres

3.18. Indoor Built Facility Strategy

3.18.1. There is a good supply of indoor facilities spread across the district. Most of the facilities are based at the four council run leisure centres.

Table 4 – Sports Provision

Sport	Provision
Sports Halls	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Six four court sports halls across six sites
Swimming Pools	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 3 public pool swimming sites each with one main pool No teacher / learning pools
Health & Fitness	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 11 health & fitness facilities, four of these 11 are managed and operated by Freedom Leisure on behalf of FoDCC Three facilities commercially operated, two managed by community or sports club organisations, one by school and one by education college Total current estimated supply of fitness stations is 404
Squash	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Four public pay and play squash courts across Forest of Dean
Gymnastics	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Indoor gymnastics is provided at Forest of Dean Gymnastics Centre, Coleford GGA is gymnastics academy based at Freedom Leisure Lydney
Indoor Bowls	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> No formal full-size indoor bowls facilities in Forest of Dean. Short mat bowls can be provided at the leisure centres and Bells Hotel, Coleford
Indoor Tennis	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> There are no indoor tennis court facilities Four court badminton sports halls can provide one court indoor tennis

3.19. Commercial Leisure Provision

3.19.1. A review of commercial leisure competition within the council area was undertaken. Commercial leisure provides an opportunity for children and adults to be active. The level of current provision is illustrated in the map overleaf.

3.19.2. The activities included in this analysis are as follows:

- Cycle hire
- Outdoor activities
- High ropes
- Indoor climbing
- Laser/active Tag
- Soft play

3.19.3. The overall analysis shows that the highest concentration of commercial leisure competition is in the central and southern areas of the district.

3.19.4. There is only one type of commercial competition within close proximity to Freedom Leisure Newent, an outdoor adventure centre. There are low levels of any other competition in this part of the district. However, Newent is approximately an 11 mile drive to Gloucester, therefore residents may have to travel to Gloucester to take part in activities such as Laser/Active Tag, ten pin bowling and soft play.

3.19.5. There are two Go Ape sites within the district offering high ropes and activities such as outdoor segways as well as four adventure centres offering a variety of outdoor activities that cater to groups on a day basis and residential stays.

3.19.6. Three cycle hire sites are within the district. One, Wye-Bikes focusses on E-Bikes and Pedalabikeaway are partnered with a company that offers a cycling uplifting service that takes you to the top of one of their mountain biking routes. All three of these sites are towards the south of the district.

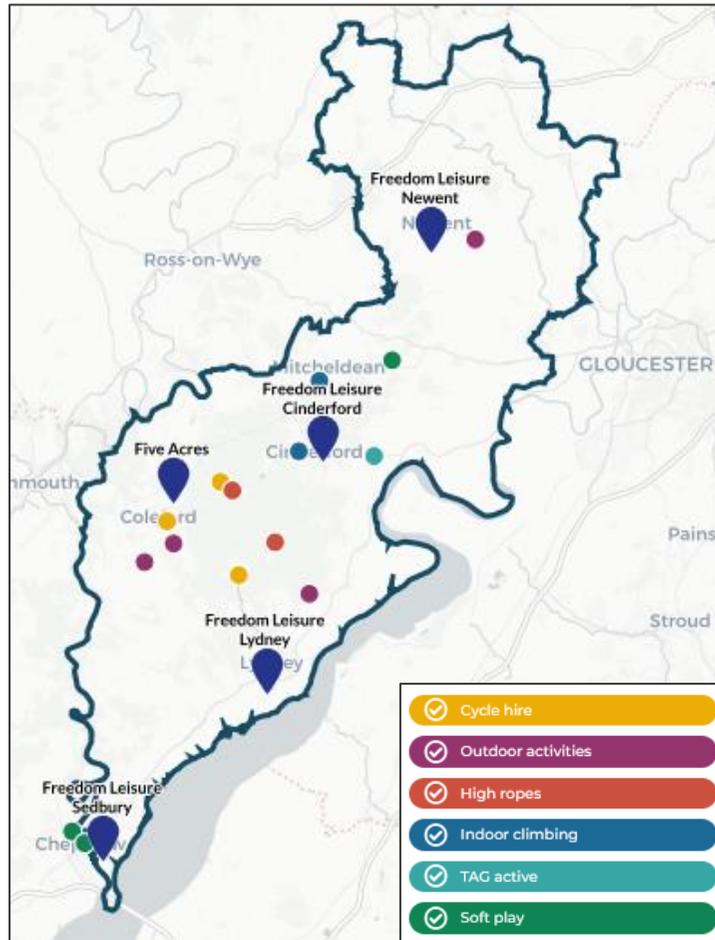
3.19.7. There is only one outdoor laser tag facility situated to the east of Cinderford. There are no indoor laser/active tag, TAGactive, paintball or Airsoft sites.

3.19.8. There are two indoor climbing centres, one in Mitcheldean which is a bouldering gym and one in Cinderford which has a small indoor climbing wall. Both sites are in the central area of the district.

3.19.9. There are two established soft play sites in the district, both cater to children with varied play zones and party hosting options. Dick Whittington Park is to the north of the district near Mitcheldean and Whirlikids is located in just outside of the District in Chepstow.

3.19.10. There is a commercial offer across the district, but the types of commercial leisure are more tailored for tourists and visitors rather than the residents of Forest of Dean.

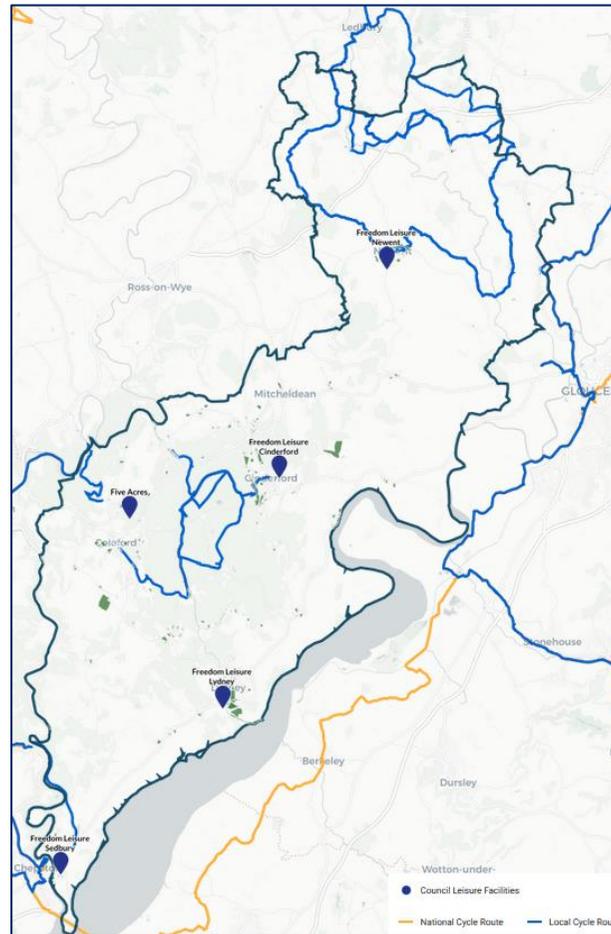
Map 9 - Commercial Leisure Provision



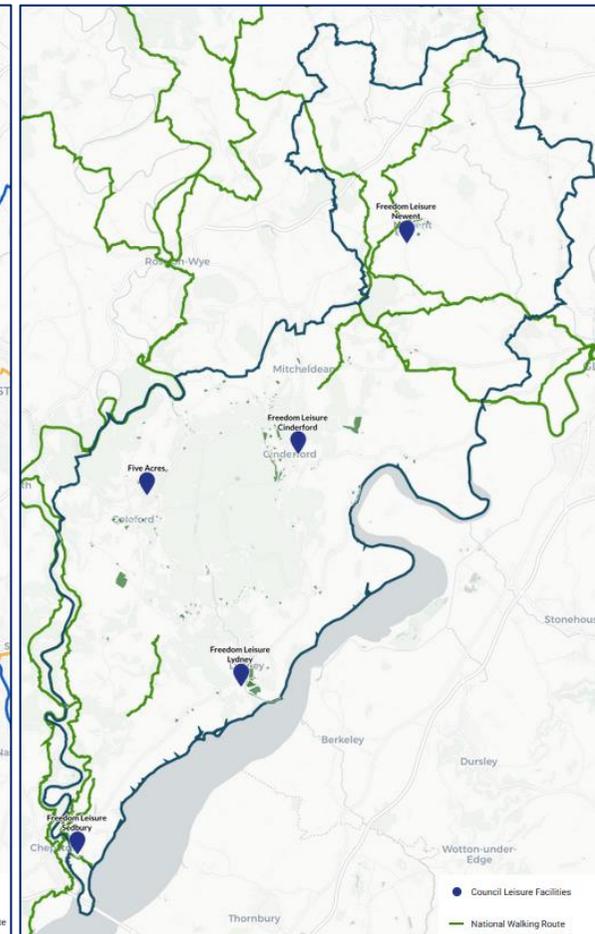
3.20. Outdoor Provision

- 3.20.1. Leisure centres are not the only environment for people to be active. The wider physical environment, green infrastructure and open spaces play an important role in enabling more people to get active through active design and active environment to help improve the health of residents.
- 3.20.2. Forest of Dean has a wealth of outdoor spaces to be active. These are shown on the maps opposite.
- 3.20.3. According to **Forestry England**, Forest of Dean features “hundreds of miles of trails” suitable for walking, cycling and horse riding and these routes are part of the official public rights of way network.
- 3.20.4. Forest of Dean also contains numerous nature reserves, such as Woorgreens Lake and Marsh and Foxes Bridge Bog, which have way-marked trails and, in some places, wheelchair and pushchair access.
- 3.20.5. Other outdoor activities available in the district include adventure and water sports, such as rock climbing, abseiling, caving, gorge walking, canoeing, kayaking on the River Wye, paddleboarding at some river sections or lakes, fishing, archery and orienteering. Regular Forest of Dean Community Walks⁵⁰

Map 11 – National and Local Cycling Routes in Forest of Dean

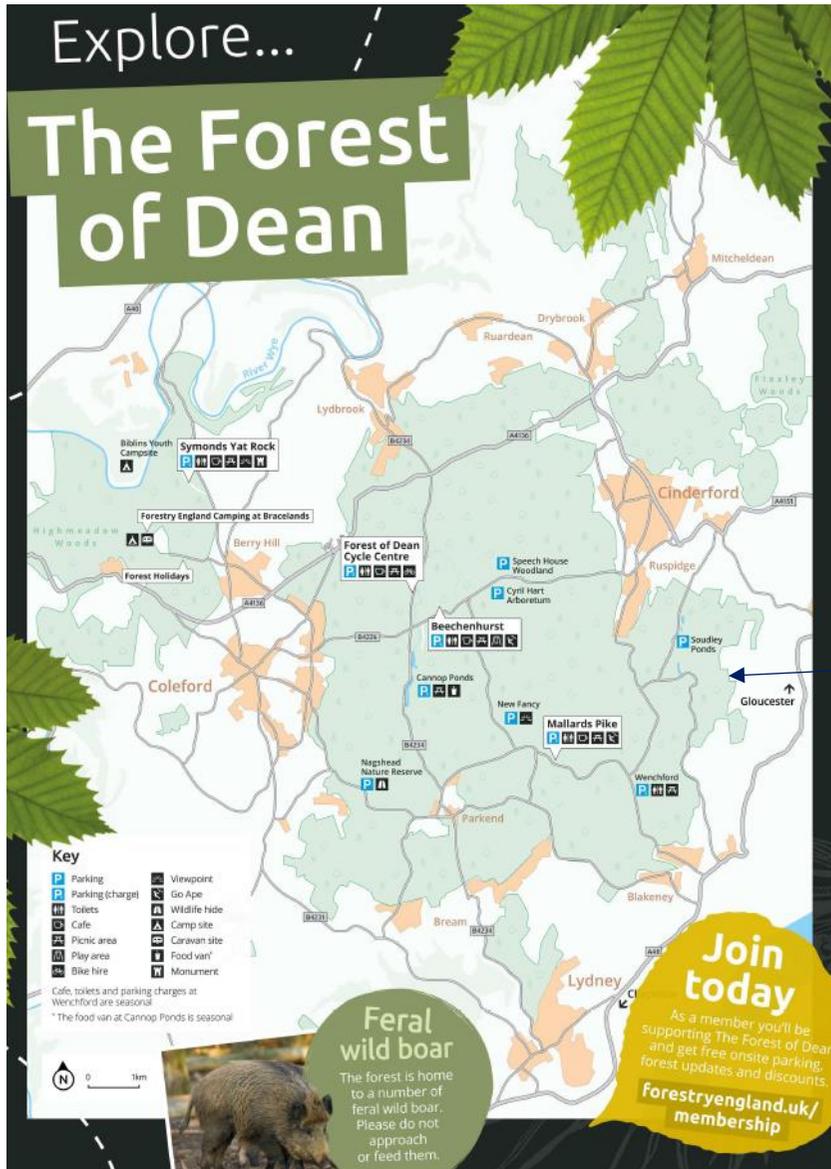


Map 10 – National Walking Routes in Forest of Dean

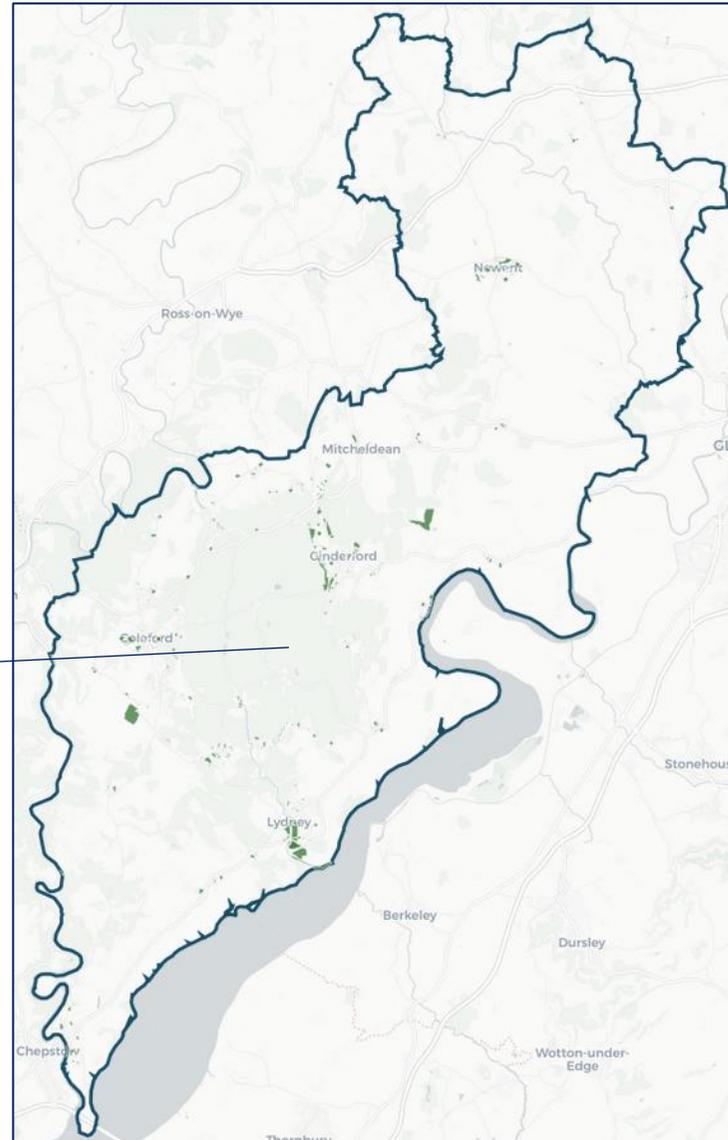


⁵⁰ [Free organised walks | Forest of Dean Community Walks | United Kingdom](#)

Map 12 –Forest of Dean Activities



Map 13 – Parks and Recreation Spaces in Forest of Dean



3.20.6. **The Playing Pitch Strategy**, developed in January 2023, highlights existing outdoor provision and shortfalls in Forest of Dean.

3.20.7. Due to the rural nature of the district, most pitches are owned by town/parish councils, although some sports clubs have ownership of provision. The District Council does not directly own any sites.

Table 5 – Existing Outdoor Provision

Sport	Provision
Football	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 72 grass football pitches across 51 sites Current grass pitch capacity shortfalls for adult and youth football pitches
3G	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Three full size 3G pitches Current shortfall of two full size 3G pitches across the district, increasing to a future shortfall of three
World Rugby compliant 3G	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> There are two World Rugby compliant full size 3G pitches located at Hartpury College and Cinderford RFC There is sufficient provision for demand
Cricket	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 21 grass cricket squares with all 21 available for community use Minor future shortfall for cricket squares when accounting for future demand
Rugby Union	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 33 rugby union pitches in Forest of Dean across 16 sites. There are 24 senior pitches, six dedicated mini pitches and three junior size pitches Shortfall of rugby union pitches now and in future
Hockey	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Two full size hockey suitable AGPs Current demand for hockey is able to be met by existing provision in the district
Tennis	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 36 tennis courts identified in Forest of Dean across 13 sites, all of which are available for community use Current capacity shortfalls for tennis courts
Outdoor bowling greens	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Four flat bowling greens in Forest of Dean provided across four sites Current supply of outdoor bowling green provision is sufficient to meet both current and future demand expressed by Lydney Borough Council and Cinderford Borough Council
Athletics Tracks	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> One formal athletics track in Forest of Dean, located at Five Acres High School. The track has a cinder surface and is in poor condition and no longer fit for purpose Current capacity shortfalls for athletic tracks

Indoor, Commercial and Outdoor Provision - What does this mean for physical activity in Forest of Dean?

Indoor

- The main indoor facilities are located at council run leisure centres but Newent, Cinderford, Lydney and Sedbury are all dual use sites so limited to school opening hours during term time. Lydney and Cinderford have daytime access during the school term. Sedbury and Newent are limited to after school hours. This restricts residents who wish to be active during the day and may explain why 65+ users are underrepresented in leisure centres.
- Community spaces, such as village halls, are important in the district to serve areas out of catchment of a traditional indoor facility, providing local activities during the day.

Commercial

- The types of commercial leisure that are on offer within Forest of Dean are mainly targeted at tourists or visitors, not for residents.
- Ten pin bowling, TAG Active, paintball and airsoft are under supplied in the district. These are all activities that could appeal to younger residents which is important considering children and young people physical activity rates are significantly lower than regional and England averages.
- There may be an opportunity to offer a resident loyalty card to encourage residents to use the commercial facilities out of season.

Outdoor

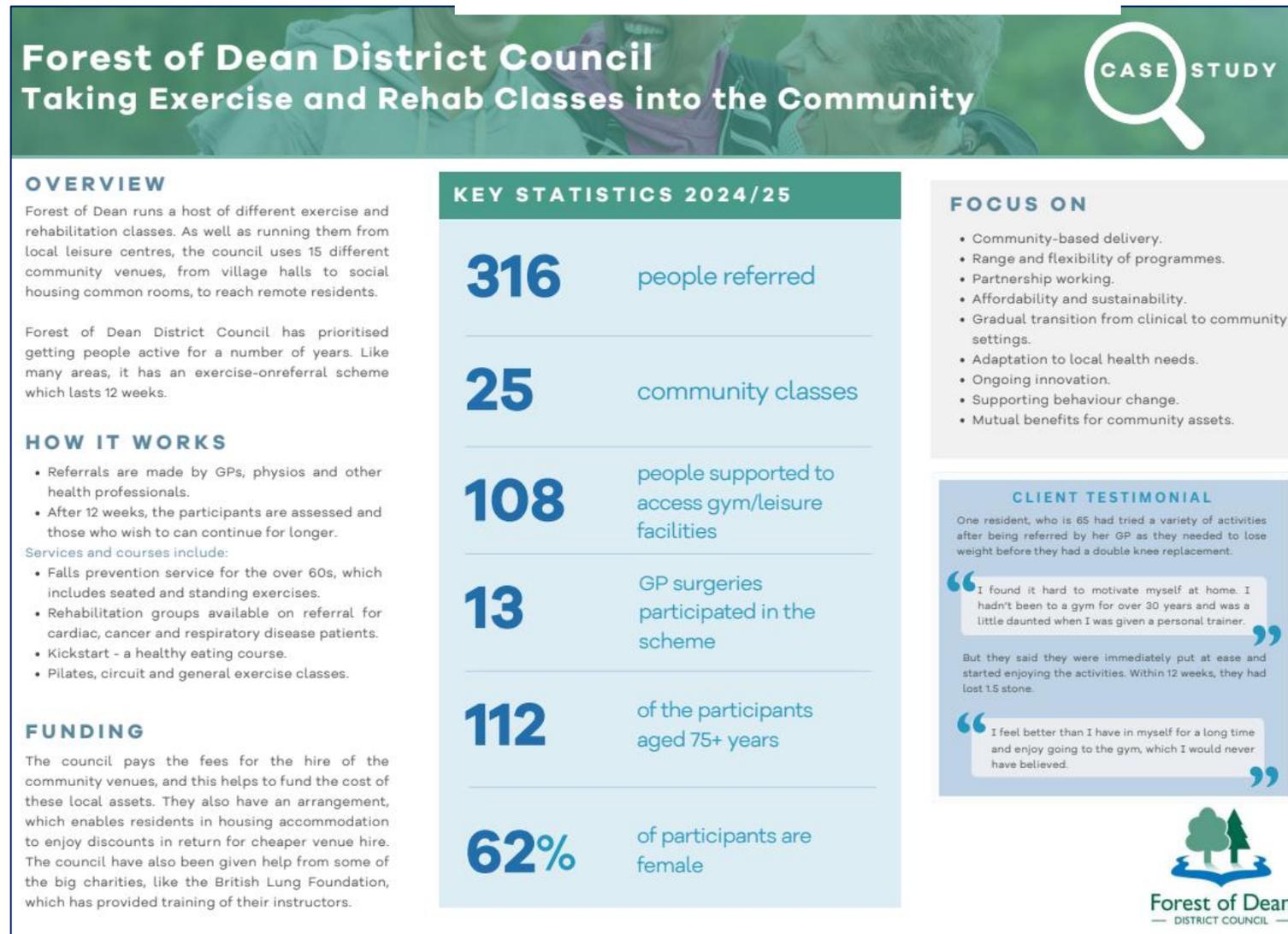
- There is sufficient outdoor provision in Forest of Dean for World Rugby compliant 3G, cricket squares, hockey and outdoor bowls.
- There are shortfalls in football pitches, 3G, rugby union pitches, tennis courts and athletic track.
- Forest of Dean has a wealth of blue, green, parks and outdoor spaces which provides alternative opportunities for people to be active outdoors that don't fall into the 'traditional' sports e.g. mountain biking, hill walking and kayaking. In many cases, these are free activities so help overcome the 'cost' barrier to people being active.

3.21. Current Services – Success Stories

3.21.1. Across Forest of Dean there are some excellent examples of services being delivered that are helping communities get active. One of these is outlined below and should be considered as best practise to roll out to other localities and should continue to be provided.

3.21.2. This example shows how partnership working can have a real impact on strategic outcomes and target community groups that are more likely to be inactive, such as those living in deprived areas or people with long term health issues.

Figure 34 – Community exercise & rehab classes case study



3.22. Where Are We Now

3.22.1. Utilising all the insight data the tables below show ‘where we are now’, under the same themes of Holistic Wellbeing, Connected Communities, Sustainability and Active Environment.

Table 6 – Where we are now

Holistic Wellbeing			
Outcomes	Where we are now: demographic, health and activity profile	Where we are now: facilities and assets	Where we are now: engagement
<p>Physical activity becomes part of people’s everyday life, reducing health inequalities across the District. Children will have the opportunity to have an active start in life, increasing physical literacy and proficiency in life skills such as swimming. Adults will have an increased awareness and understanding of the physical and mental benefits of being active, to allow them to live longer and better. As adults age they will be encouraged to be active to maintain independence and maintain their quality of life.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ageing population and age related health issues Hip fractures in people age 65+ significantly worse than England average Low levels of overall deprivation, although West Cinderford is 10% most deprived area Number of adults classed as active slightly higher than England average Number of children classed as active significantly lower than England average & decrease by 16% from 22-23 Adult classed as obese or overweight is 66.3% higher than national average (64.5%) Children (Year 6) rates of obesity are higher than regional and national average 23% (England 22.1%) 65+ users underrepresented in leisure centres 0-14 years over represented in leisure centres High inactivity overall in Cinderford, Coleford & Lydney 75+ high inactivity in Cinderford, Coleford & Lydney Ethnic group inactivity in Cinderford & Lydney Disability inactivity in Cinderford & Coleford and Tidenham & Woolaston Women inactivity in Tidenham & Woolaston, Lydney and Coleford Higher than England average health index score 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Four Council leisure centres New Five Acres leisure centre planned for Coleford Six four court sports halls across six sites Three public pool swimming sites each with one main pool No teacher / learning pools 11 health & fitness facilities, four of these 11 are managed and operated by Freedom Leisure on behalf of Council. Three facilities commercially operated, two managed by community or sports club organisations, one by school and one by education college Three public pay and play squash courts Indoor gymnastics at Forest of Dean Gymnastics Centre, Coleford. GGA gymnastics academy based at Freedom Leisure Lydney No formal full-size indoor bowls facility. Short mat bowls at leisure centres and Bells hotel Coleford No indoor tennis court facilities 	<p>Community Survey</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Walking & swimming most popular activities 91% expressed desire to engage in more physical activity 61% of inactive respondents would like to do more physical activity ‘Not enough time due to work’ followed by ‘no convenient and accessible facilities’ main barrier to be physically active, the latter is higher than national benchmark ‘Lack of facilities near me’ is primary barrier when attempting to engage their children in physical activity Children like being active at school and with their friends ‘Accessible/ good quality facilities’ most crucial factor when individuals think about undertaking more physical activity/exercise and for using a leisure centre ‘Improved facilities’ primary factor to encourage individuals to participate in more physical activity or exercise. Followed closely by ‘Better range of facilities/equipment’ Half of respondents don’t use a leisure centre. For those that do, Lydney was most popular and using the gym as the activity. Main reason people don’t use a leisure centre is due to location

Holistic Wellbeing

Outcomes	Where we are now: demographic, health and activity profile	Where we are now: facilities and assets	Where we are now: engagement
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Mental health index 99.2 comparable to England 97.4 		

Connected Communities

Outcomes	Where we are now: demographic, health and activity profile	Where we are now: facilities and assets	Where we are now: engagement
<p>Communities are more connected, wherever they live, through increased participation in physical activity. Local communities have the opportunity to input into their future and have a voice in local decisions regarding physical activity opportunities. Communities will have the opportunity to build on strong existing local networks to increase accessibility to physical activity and wellbeing opportunities. Through connected communities loneliness and social isolation will be reduced.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 25.7% of residents have volunteered in the last year, higher than England average of 22.3% Social value nearly £143.5m Life satisfaction 7.2 (out of 10) Established voluntary 'Know your Patch' network Wide range of community activities to encourage participation in physical activity e.g. The Red Hot Chilli Steppers, Mothers in Mind, Walking with wheels, NHS Home First and Reablement 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 59 community spaces (village halls, chapels, social halls) that offer physical activities ranging from Pilates, dance, table tennis, badminton, yoga 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Accessibility (or lack of) is a common theme through all the engagement Children and young people – main barrier is not being able to get to places Disability – have to travel out of area to access many activities Lack of accessible facilities a key barrier for adults and children Community survey showed strong desire to use community/village halls 40% of respondents would use leisure centres more if additional services were available on the same site

Sustainability			
Outcomes	Where we are now: demographic, health and activity profile	Where we are now: facilities and assets	Where we are now: engagement
<p>The sport, leisure and physical activity network across the Forest of Dean will adopt a whole systems approach, where all stakeholders work collaboratively, to support residents to be more active. The leisure facility provision will meet community need and be financially and environmentally sustainable for the Council, contributing towards the Council’s net zero targets. Facilities will support local economies and provide destinations for both residents and visitors.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Housing growth – Lydney and other strategic development areas Freedom Leisure manages four council leisure sites in partnership with the Council 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Lydney installed solar panels to reduce carbon emissions and promote sustainability, with the solar panels expected to generate renewable energy for both the leisure centre and The Dean Academy Cinderford requires significant investment (£13.5m in next 10 years) New Five Acres Leisure Centre will provide a state of art leisure and community centre in Coleford when open 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Co-location of services would encourage more people to use a leisure centre and create a community hub

Active Environment			
Outcomes	Where we are now: demographic, health and activity profile	Where we are now: facilities and assets	Where we are now: engagement
<p>Everyone will be able to enjoy and access activities that use green and blue spaces for movement, physical activity, wellbeing and sport. Active travel will be the easy choice for residents, with increased use of walking and cycling for travel. The principles of an active environment will help shape and influence new housing developments.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 39.3% adults walked for travel 2023-24, lower than national average 8.7% of adults cycled for travel 2022-23, lower than national average 43.1% of children walked to get to school or other places (no data for cycling) Most popular activity walking for leisure Forest Of Dean 85%, England 76% 23% cycle for leisure 25% hill and mountain walk In Forest of Dean, 56.6% of the population classed as active undertook their activity outdoors Car/van ownership higher than national average Regular Forest of Dean Community Walks 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 72 grass football pitches Three full size 3G pitches One World Rugby compliant full size 3G 21 grass cricket squares 33 rugby union pitches Two full size hockey astrotrurf pitches 36 tennis courts Four flat bowling greens One athletics track at Five Acres school Wide array of outdoor spaces and activities across the district 42sq miles of mixed woodland and ancient forest River Wye Valley Numerous nature reserves Hundreds of miles of way-marked trails and cycle routes Go Ape Adventures 	<p>Community Survey</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Participation in walking, cycling and gardening are higher than national benchmarks (adults) Walking was one of top activities people stated as wanting to do more of 82% of respondents use public rights of way in Forest of Dean for walking, cycling or horse riding 80% of respondents regularly use parks, open spaces or nature reserves 56% of respondents use a small or medium car to travel to their main place of work or study. Nearly half respondents would like to do more cycling, walking or running if easier Main reasons for choosing car travel include ease of use (33%), lack of other options (32%) and speed or time efficiency (25%). Safety concerns, especially regarding cycling and better footpaths for walking are critical factors in encouraging more active travel.

Active Environment			
Outcomes	Where we are now: demographic, health and activity profile	Where we are now: facilities and assets	Where we are now: engagement
			Active Travel Strategy 2025 Survey <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Main reason respondents choose to use active travel is for health and fitness followed by environmental concerns and cost savings. • Main improvements that would encourage active travel use are more dedicated cycle lanes, better-maintained footpaths



4. Stage 3 – Interventions

4.1. Stage 3 identifies how the outcomes can be delivered sustainably.

4.2. Facility Interventions

4.2.1. The following facility interventions have been identified based on the evidence identified in Stage 2 that will enable the Council to effectively deliver the strategic outcomes.

Table 7 – Facility Interventions

Facility Intervention	Rationale	Strategic Outcome
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Support and maintain community spaces that offer physical activities, particularly in areas at risk of inactivity, deprivation and out of leisure centre catchments e.g. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Risk of inactivity <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Mitcheldean Community Centre The Pludds Village Hall Berry Hill Memorial Hall Park Rd (risk of inactivity) Alvington Memorial Hall (risk of Deprivation <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Coalway Methodist Hall (close to Coleford area of deprivation) The Main Place (close to Coleford area of deprivation) Alternative day time provision <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Pauntley Village Hall Brand Green (near Newent) runs regular coffee mornings and walks with option to hire during the day 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Restricted hours at dual use sites during term time. Provides alternative places to be active during the school day provision Rural communities at risk of inactivity Appeals to 65+ residents Mitigates location as a barrier 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Reduce health inequalities Reduce loneliness and social isolation Communities more connected wherever they live through increased participation in physical activity Support and build on strong existing local delivery networks in communities to increase accessibility to physical activity and wellbeing opportunities Physical activity opportunities are available at every stage of life
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ensure best value secured through leisure management contract for the Council owned leisure centres and that any future management contract and service specification put in place after the current contract incorporates the strategic outcomes identified in this strategy. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Continuity and sustainability Align leisure management contract to the strategic outcomes 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Leisure facilities support local economies and provide destinations for both residents and visitors Leisure provision meets community need Leisure facilities are environmentally sustainable
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Prioritise capital investment into Cinderford Leisure Centre (£13.5m identified in next 10 years), to ensure centre remains operational, efficient and accessible 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Key leisure facility in Cinderford area that needs protecting and enhancing to serve local population Cinderford area of highest deprivation in district 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Reduce health inequalities Leisure provision meets community need Ensure leisure services and facilities support local economies and provide destinations for both residents and visitors Leisure facilities are environmentally sustainable

Facility Intervention	Rationale	Strategic Outcome
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop an ongoing investment strategy for the refurbishment and redecoration of the leisure portfolio to enhance customer experience and accessibility. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Clean spaces Reliable well-maintained equipment Up to date equipment and machines Ensure facilities and spaces are accessible for individuals with different abilities and needs 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Consultation showed that improvements in facilities, equipment and cleanliness most significant factors to encourage usage of leisure centres. Make physical activity more inviting Also key factor for 65+ and inactive groups 65+ users who are underrepresented at leisure centres but part of ageing population 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Reduce health inequalities Active start in life Increased physical literacy in children Older adults encouraged to be active, to maintain independence and their quality of life
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Establish community spaces and café at Five Acres for co-location of health care clinics and community activities 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Evidence shows that co-locating health care clinics within leisure facilities can make it easier for people, particularly those with a health condition, to engage in physical activity⁵¹ Beneficial to those who otherwise might not visit a leisure facility Synergy between health, wellbeing and physical activity 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Reduce health inequalities Active start in life Older adults encouraged to be active, to maintain independence and their quality of life Leisure facilities meet community need Reduce loneliness and social isolation Connected communities through physical activity
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A flexible facility mix such as at the new Five Acres Leisure Centre can maximise opportunities for funding to deliver services such as the recent Family Hubs and Start for Life programme, which has allocated £126m funding to support local authorities in delivering essential services.⁵² 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> With pockets of deprivation and high levels of child inactivity, there is an opportunity for leisure provision to provide key community services working in partnership with local providers and stakeholders such as Gloucester and the Forest of Dean Children and Family Centres. Support Low-Income Family Tracker (LIFT) scheme to better identify those in need of support across the district and provide targeted support where needed. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Reduce health inequalities Active start in life Increased physical literacy in children
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Work with town and parish councils to increase availability of safe, accessible places for children to engage in physical activity. This could include local parks, playgrounds, recreational areas and youth sports programs. Additional play features for children and teenagers in green spaces 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Lack of local facilities highlighted from consultation work as barrier to children and young people being more active. Children and young people activity levels need improving 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Reduce health inequalities Active start in life Increased physical literacy in children
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Work with the County Council to develop and improve pedestrian and cycling infrastructure, creating a network of safer, more accessible walking, wheeling and cycling routes such as dedicated well-lit paths, traffic-calming measures, cycle lanes and pedestrian crossings. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Supports Active Travel strategy and provides residents with real alternatives to driving short journeys Helps increase activity levels and overcome barrier of 'not having enough time to be active' and 'cost' Reduces carbon emissions 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Everyone can access blue and green spaces for physical activity Active travel is the easy choice Principles of active environments will shape new housing developments

⁵¹ [The Co-Location of health care and leisure as part of a whole-system approach to physical activity promotion 2023](#)

⁵² <https://www.gov.uk/government/news/government-revives-family-services-supporting-500000-more-kids>

Facility Intervention	Rationale	Strategic Outcome
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop and maintain mixed use paths on public rights of way that can accommodate walkers, cyclists and horse riders 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Public rights of way already well used by walkers, expands opportunities for other users 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Everyone can access blue and green spaces for physical activity Active travel is the easy choice
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ensure all new housing developments are within a short walk or cycle or everyday services, green spaces and activity opportunities 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Active travel is the easy choice Principles of active environments will shape new housing developments
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provision of facilities in parks, open spaces, town centres such as toilets and cafes, resting points, signage and inclusive design features (e.g. benches, accessible paths) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Supports older adults, people with disabilities and low confidence in being active 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Everyone can access blue and green spaces for physical activity Active travel is the easy choice Principles of active environments will shape new housing developments

4.3. Service Interventions

- 4.3.1. The table below includes service interventions, which have been identified from Stages 1 and 2 of this report and taken from industry best practice. These interventions include some specific recommendations to help encourage the target groups⁵³ to be more physically active. These interventions should inform future service delivery and priorities, including future leisure management contracts.
- 4.3.2. Service interventions that aim to reduce health inequalities and increase participation in physical activity as a means of prevention and/or rehabilitation directly support Gloucestershire NHS Strategic Commissioning Framework opportunities. The interventions below are also closely aligned with the principles of the framework of a whole systems approach and working in collaboration with stakeholders.

Table 8 – Service Interventions

Service Intervention	Rationale	Strategic Outcome
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provide additional support for those who are just beginning their fitness journey or those considering starting. Beginner programmes, such as introductory fitness classes, low intensity exercise options, flexible fitness programmes, walking groups, or accessible online resources, could make it easier for these individuals to develop a regular activity habit Specific areas from the LSOA data with high inactivity overall are: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Cinderford, Coleford and Lydney (E01022256) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Offering low-pressure, welcoming environments can help these participants feel supported and encouraged as they begin or return to exercise 66% of survey respondents are maintaining their physical activity, and 16% are just starting, which is above the national average. Key to encourage those just starting Supports the Local Government Outcomes Framework priority ‘Health and Wellbeing’ outcome for people live healthier lives for longer and health inequalities are reduced⁵⁴ 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Reduce health inequalities Physical activity opportunities at every stage of life Increased understanding of the benefits of physical activity Older adults encouraged to be active to maintain independence and quality of life Reduce loneliness and social isolation
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Consider specific programming for 65+ e.g. tai chi, fall prevention Find out what activities this age group enjoy Liaise with Falls Assessment and Education Service to work in partnership and signpost their functional fitness MOT sessions (8 different tests within the home). Opportunity for their work to be extended into outreach work & other groups Signposting to rehab activities 75+ inactivity high in the following areas: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Cinderford, Coleford and Lydney 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 65+ group significantly underrepresented at leisure centres Increasing physical activity in older people will support local health issues e.g. high hip fractures in 65+ group through preventative programmes, helping older residents to live independently for longer Ageing population Promoting rehabilitation Highlighting importance of maintaining activity levels to prevent deconditioning Removing myths associated with the risk of physical activity Supports the Local Government Outcomes Framework priority ‘Health and Wellbeing’ outcome for people live 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Reduce health inequalities Physical activity opportunities at every stage of life Increased understanding of the benefits of physical activity Older adults encouraged to be active to maintain independence and quality of life Reduce loneliness and social isolation Local communities have the opportunity to have a voice to input into physical activity opportunities Build on strong local networks

⁵³ [Appendix 4](#)

⁵⁴ [LGovernment Outcomes Framework priority outcomes and draft metrics 1.pdf](#)

Service Intervention	Rationale	Strategic Outcome
	healthier lives for longer and health inequalities are reduced	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Consider specific activities for those with long term health conditions (LTHC). Use resources from 'We are Undefeatable' campaign to support people with a range of LTHCs to be more physically active in ways that work for them⁵⁵ 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Increasing physical activity in people with LTHCs will support local health issues e.g. high hip fractures in 65+ group through preventative programmes, helping residents to live independently for longer Those who have LTHCs less likely to be active Empowering people to make informed choices Supports NHS 10 year health plan for England for sickness to prevention: power to make the healthy choice⁵⁶ 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Reduce health inequalities Reduce loneliness and social isolation Stakeholders work collaboratively Whole systems approach Older adults encouraged to be active to maintain independence and quality of life
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Consider specific outreach work or specific programming for those with a disability LSOA data showed high inactivity for this group in the following areas: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Cinderford, Coleford, and Tidenham & Woolston 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Those with disability have high inactivity levels Empowering people to make informed choices 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Reduce health inequalities Reduce loneliness and social isolation Stakeholders work collaboratively Whole systems approach
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Data and evidence should be utilised in the development of programmes and initiatives to ensure they are tailored to specific groups and local need. For example using market segmentation data. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Tailored programmes and initiatives are more likely to engage more people and achieve a higher success rate if the right communities are engaged with. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Local communities have the opportunity to have a voice to input into physical activity opportunities Increased understanding of the benefits of physical activity
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Implement a specific programme to tackle childhood obesity. Consider where and when this takes place, recognising that 0-14 years olds are over-represented in leisure centres and there is still a local issue. Work with local stakeholders to deliver alternative activity provision in local communities. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Obesity rates in children (Yr 6) are higher than the national average Children's participation rates in physical activity is significantly lower than the national average Help form healthy habits into adulthood 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Reduce health inequalities Active start in life Increased physical literacy in children Stakeholders work collaboratively
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Tailored programmes should be considered in Lydney and Cinderford for ethnic minority residents 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Low ethnicity in the district but Lydney and Cinderford have high inactivity levels for ethnic minority resident 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Reduce health inequalities Active start in life Increased understanding of the benefits of physical activity Connected communities through physical activity Stakeholders work collaboratively
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Improve access in rural and deprived communities via: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Mobile or pop-up outreach activity services Transportation support and locally-delivered sessions Specific deprived areas include 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Those in deprived areas experience greater health inequalities and are less active 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Reduce loneliness and social isolation Communities connected through physical activity

⁵⁵ <https://weareundefeatable.co.uk/>

⁵⁶ <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/10-year-health-plan-for-england-fit-for-the-future/fit-for-the-future-10-year-health-plan-for-england-executive-summary>

Service Intervention	Rationale	Strategic Outcome
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ West Cinderford, Coleford, Lydney 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • West Cinderford is most deprived area but Cinderford Leisure Centre attracts no users from this area. Need to go to them • Resource need to target those with greatest need and ‘hardly reached’ groups to help reduce health inequalities • Supports NHS 10 year health plan for England for sickness to prevention: power to make the healthy choice 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Local communities have the opportunity to have a voice into physical activity opportunities • Build on strong local networks • Reduce loneliness and social isolation
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Raise awareness of existing community spaces by promoting free or low-cost fitness programmes, outdoor exercise zones and local activity groups • Couch to 5k / Active 10 free tools • Expand affordable pricing models, to improve accessibility for low income groups <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Subsidised memberships and pay-as-you-go options ○ Family discounts and off-peak rates ○ Free / low-cost community sports events ○ Affordable swimming lessons and aqua fitness 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Those in deprived areas are in low income households experience greater health inequalities and are less active • Cost one of the main barriers to being active 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improved physical literacy in children • Reduce health inequalities • Build on strong local networks • Active start in life • Older adults encouraged to be active, to maintain independence and their quality of life • Increased understanding of the benefits of physical activity
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Foster social interaction through group activities and community led events focused on wellness, such as walking groups, or mindfulness in nature could attract individuals interested in overall wellbeing 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reduces social isolation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Connected communities through physical activity • Everyone can access green and blue spaces for physical activity • Reduce social isolation and loneliness
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Promote wellness through community driven initiatives through; local success stories, local champions, wellness workshops, This Girl Can campaign • While health remains a key motivator, broaden messaging around physical activity to highlight other key benefits. Use motivational messaging targeted to various demographics to emphasise: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Stress relief ○ Preventative health ○ Social connection ○ Mental wellbeing 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The consultation work showed that adults and children were aware of the benefits of physical activity for mental and physical wellbeing 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improved physical literacy in children • Increased understanding of the benefits of physical activity • Connected communities through physical activity • Local communities have the opportunity to have a voice to input into physical activity opportunities • Build on strong local networks • Stakeholders work collaboratively
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Introduce flexible and family-friendly options to accommodate busy family routines, such as: 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consultation identified ‘time’ as barrier for adults and children to being more active 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improved physical literacy in children

Service Intervention	Rationale	Strategic Outcome
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Shorter exercise sessions ○ Parent-child programs ○ Inclusive family activities / family fitness events ○ After-school and weekend sessions ○ play-focused Family Hubs, with parent play champions to support and encourage play⁵⁷ 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● High levels of children’s obesity which needs to be addressed to ensure adult obesity stat doesn’t worsen ● Children and young people significantly less active than national levels. Activities would encourage physical activity among children ● Children, young people and young families identified as target groups 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Increased understanding of the benefits of physical activity ● Active start in life ● Older adults encouraged to be active, to maintain independence and their quality of life
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Conduct regular user feedback to identify areas for improvement in leisure facilities, spaces and programming 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Consultation identified ‘cleanliness, accessibility and well maintained facilities as encouragement factors for participation ● Enhance the customer journey ● Overcomes barriers to participation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Local communities have the opportunity to have a voice to input into physical activity opportunities
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Create and promote scenic walking routes, organising walking groups ● Encourage gardening initiatives, such as community gardens, gardening workshops, potential to link with local GP surgeries to further support active lifestyles. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Walking and gardening popular in the district, focus on making these activities more accessible and enjoyable for a wider demographic ● Forest of Dean has a wealth of blue, green, parks and outdoor spaces which provides alternative opportunities for people to be active outdoors that don’t fall into the ‘traditional’ sports e.g. walking. In many cases these are free activities so help overcome the ‘cost’ barrier to people being active 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Reduce health inequalities ● Older adults encouraged to be active, to maintain independence and their quality of life ● Everyone can access green and blue spaces for physical activity ● Active travel is the easy choice
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Offer flexible and time-efficient exercise options, such as shorter sessions during lunchtime or after-work hours ● Encourage employers to offer flexible working hours or workplace wellness programmes could help employees incorporate more physical activity into their routines 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Overcome time constraints ● Not enough time due to work and no convenient and accessible facilities were main barriers to engaging in more activity ● Working age ‘time poor’ individuals identified as key target group 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Reduce health inequalities ● Older adults encouraged to be active, to maintain independence and their quality of life ● Active start in life ● Whole systems approach
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Consider diversifying the offerings at leisure centres by incorporating services such as health check-ups, community programs, youth activities and library services. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Consultation showed that the addition of services like health, community activities, youth services and library services could encourage 40% of respondents to use leisure centres more ● This holistic approach would appeal to a wider audience, particularly families and individuals looking for more than just fitness options. Makes leisure centres a more integral part of community life, increasing overall usage 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Leisure facilities meet the need of local communities ● Reduce health inequalities ● Whole systems approach

⁵⁷ Raising the National Play report, June 2025 <https://www.centreforyounglives.org.uk/play-commission>

Service Intervention	Rationale	Strategic Outcome
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Introduce carpooling, active travel, 'walk to work', bike sharing schemes and challenges at work, providing showers and secure bike storage at work locations 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Reduce reliance on cars Encourages individuals to track their active travel journeys and earn rewards, promoting healthy competition and highlighting the benefits of leaving the car behind Reduce carbon emissions, improved air quality, less noise pollution Healthier workforce Normalise cycling or walking as everyday choice for shorter journeys 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Active travel is the easy choice
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Work with schools to introduce travel award schemes such as Modeshift STARS that reward schools for their efforts in promoting active and sustainable travel e.g. walking, cycling and scooting to and from school Introduce new government junior active travel inspectors scheme⁵⁸ to help more kids cycle, walk, wheel and scoot to schools. Pupils will audit their school run on a new 'kid-friendly app' to boost health and safety, while reducing congestion. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Improved social interaction, enhanced public spaces Increased physical activity levels 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Active travel is the easy choice Active start in life
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Expand Bikeability cycle training programs for children and adults 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Equips them with skills and confidence to cycle safely 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Active travel is the easy choice Active start in life
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Introduce Big Bike Revival type free events and workshops to help people get back on their bikes, fix existing bikes and learn new cycling skills 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Equips them with skills and confidence to cycle safely 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Active travel is the easy choice Active start in life Connected communities through physical activity
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Tracking effectiveness of active travel through data collection and analysis to see what is / isn't working 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provides measurables to analysis initiatives 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Active travel is the easy choice Whole systems approach

⁵⁸ <https://www.gov.uk/government/news/school-run-superheroes-to-boost-cycle-lanes-and-walkways-to-schools>

4.4. Monitoring and Measuring Success

4.4.1 The performance indicators⁵⁹ below are the overarching indicators to measure the success of the Strategic Outcomes Planning Model. Utilising the performance indicators and benchmarks available the Council can test that the interventions are delivering value.

Table 9 – Key Performance Indicators

Theme	Outcome	Key Performance Indicators
 <p>Holistic Wellbeing</p>	<p>Physical activity becomes part of people’s everyday life, reducing health inequalities across the District. Children will have the opportunity to have an active start in life, increasing physical literacy and proficiency in life skills such as swimming. Adults will have an increased awareness and understanding of the physical and mental benefits of being active, to allow them to live longer and better. As adults age they will be encouraged to be active to maintain independence and maintain their quality of life.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Rates of physical inactivity across Forest of Dean (Active Lives data) • Life expectancy gap between most and least deprived areas • Participation rates in activities and programmes delivered within targeted communities, broken down by age, gender, ethnicity • Percentage of children in Year 6 who are overweight or obese • Percentage of adults who are classed as overweight or obese • Mental health index score • Emergency admissions due to falls • Number of referrals • Attendance of health and wellbeing programmes, including monitoring those from areas of deprivation • Participant surveys to be completed at the end of each targeted programme/initiative to monitor qualitative feedback • Number of co-delivery services/programmes in place • Partnership maturity matrix
 <p>Connected Communities</p>	<p>Communities are more connected, wherever they live, through increased participation in physical activity. Local communities have the opportunity to input into their future and have a voice in local decisions regarding physical activity opportunities. Communities will have the opportunity to build on strong existing local networks to increase accessibility to physical activity and wellbeing opportunities. Through connected communities loneliness and social isolation will be reduced.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Number of locations delivering health and wellbeing programmes (urban and rural) • Attendance of health and wellbeing programmes, including monitoring those from areas of deprivation • Rates of walking and cycling for travel • Mental health index score • Reduction in levels of loneliness (Active Lives data) • Delivery of capital investment plan • Refurbishment or replacement of leisure assets that have reached the end of their economic life • Number of Active Wellbeing Champions • Rates of physical inactivity across Forest of Dean (Active Lives data) • Participant feedback/surveys • Increased levels of ‘I feel I have the opportunity to be active’ (Active Lives data)

⁵⁹ It is important to note that other factors outside of the influence of this strategy, might impact achieving the outcomes: for example – reductions in low-level antisocial behaviour and some of the health outcomes.

Theme	Outcome	Key Performance Indicators
 <p>Sustainability</p>	<p>The sport, leisure and physical activity network across the Forest of Dean will adopt a whole systems approach, where all stakeholders work collaboratively, to support residents to be more active. The leisure facility provision will meet community need and be financially and environmentally sustainable for the Council, contributing towards the Council's net zero targets. Facilities will support local economies and provide destinations for both residents and visitors.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Regular monitoring of Council documents, marketing material, social media posts etc. • Number of training courses delivered • Number of apprenticeships delivered • Number of volunteers in Active Wellbeing services • Number of work experience placements • Financial subsidy of the Councils active wellbeing offer • Customer satisfaction scores • Net Promoter Score • Attendance figures of leisure centres – adults/children/areas of deprivation
 <p>Active Environment</p>	<p>Everyone will be able to enjoy and access activities that use green and blue spaces for movement, physical activity, wellbeing and sport. Active travel will be the easy choice for residents, with increased use of walking and cycling for travel. The principles of an active environment will help shape and influence new housing developments.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Rates of walking and cycling for travel (Active Lives data) • Number of programmes delivered that supports or enables walking and/or cycling for travel e.g. Bikeability • Attendance of active travel initiatives and programmes • Number of visits across The Forest and country parks • Council is implementing a Planning Policy than embeds Active Environment principles • Active Environment principles incorporated into Health Impact Assessment template used by Planning Team • Reduced carbon footprint of leisure venues

APPENDIX 1 – National Strategies Vision and Key Priorities

Outlined below are the key national strategies that influence a local authority’s approach to delivering leisure and physical activity services to local communities.

Table 10 – National Strategic Review

Document	Vision / description	Key Priorities
 <p>Ministry of Housing, Communities & Local Government</p> <p>National Planning Policy Framework (Dec 2023) (DLUHC)</p> <p>National Planning Policy Framework - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk) (updated Dec 2024)</p> <p>An updated version was published on 12 December 2024 (replacing the previous December 2023 version). The NPPF states that planning policies should be based on robust and up-to-date assessments of the need for open space, sport and recreation facilities and opportunities for new provision.</p>	<p>The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) sets out government’s planning policies for England and how these are expected to be applied.</p> <p>It sets out the government’s vision for achieving healthy, inclusive and safe places.</p>	<p>Promoting Healthy and Safe Communities</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Plan positively for shared spaces and community facilities, such as sports venues and open spaces, to enhance community sustainability. • Support local strategies aimed at improving health, social, and cultural well-being across all community sections. • Guard against the unnecessary loss of valued facilities and services, ensuring communities can meet their day-to-day needs. • Ensure that established facilities can develop and modernize for community benefit. • Adopt an integrated approach when considering the location of housing, economic uses, and community facilities and services.
 <p>Ministry of Housing, Communities & Local Government</p> <p>National Planning Practice Guidance (DLUHC)</p> <p>Planning practice guidance - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk) (updated Jan 2024)</p>	<p>National Planning Practice Guidance (NPPG) is a web-based resource which brings together planning guidance on various topics into one place. It adds further context to the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • When considering how local planning authorities and developers assess the needs for sports and recreation facilities the guidance states that authorities and developers may refer to Sport England guidance

Document	Vision / description	Key Priorities
 <p>Department for Culture Media & Sport</p> <p>Get Active: a strategy for the future of sport and physical activity (2023) (DCMS) Get Active: a strategy for the future of sport and physical activity - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk)</p>	<p>Our vision is to make sport and physical activity accessible, resilient, fun and fair, for now and the years to come - for the benefit of individuals and the country</p> <p>Building a healthier nation by tackling high levels of inactivity, and making sure that the sport and physical activity sector thrives for future generations</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Being unapologetically ambitious in making the nation more active, whether in government or in the sport sector • Making sport and physical activity more inclusive and welcoming for all so that everyone can have confidence that there is a place for them in sport • Moving towards a more sustainable sector that is more financially resilient and robust
 <p>Public Health England</p> <p>PHE Strategy 2020 – 2025 (2019) (PHE) PHE Strategy 2020 to 2025 - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk)</p> <p>This strategy sets out Public Health England's priorities for the next 5 years</p>	<p>Our vision for 2025</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lower smoking rates • Less sugar, calories and salt in the food eaten every day • Less pollution in the air that we breathe • Measurable improvements in mental health • Improved mental health literacy 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Take steps towards creating a smoke-free society by 2030; • Help make the healthy choice the easy choice to improve diets and reduce rates of childhood obesity; • Develop and share advice on how best to reduce air pollution levels and people's exposure to polluted air; and • Promote good mental health and contribute to the prevention of mental illness
 <p>BMA</p> <p>BMA Get Moving Report 2019</p>	<p>This briefing paper does not have a vision but its purpose is to highlight the wide range of benefits of physical activity and where policy should be influenced to increase activity levels.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Travel (increased investment in active travel); • Leisure (access to open spaces and recreation facilities); • School (physical education recognised and protected as an essential part of the school curriculum); and, • Work (encourage active travel)
 <p>Department for Transport</p> <p>Our vision for cycling and walking (2020) (DFT)</p>	<p>England will be a great walking and cycling nation. Places will be truly walkable. A travel revolution in our streets, towns and communities will have made cycling a mass form of transit. Cycling and walking will</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Better Streets for cycling and people • Putting cycling and walking at the heart of transport, pace-making, and health policy • Empowering and encouraging local authorities • We will enable people to cycle and protect them when they cycle

Document	Vision / description	Key Priorities
<p>Gear change: a bold vision for cycling and walking (publishing.service.gov.uk)</p> <p>The second cycling and walking investment strategy (CWIS2) - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk) (updated 2023)</p>	<p>be the natural first choice for many journeys with half of all journeys in towns and cities being cycled or walked by 2030</p> <p>A “cycling and walking on prescription” programme to overcome health inequalities and increase levels of physical activity</p>	
 <p>Uniting the Movement 2021-2031 (2021) (Sport England)</p> <p>Uniting the Movement Sport England 2021-2031</p>	<p>Imagine a nation of more equal, inclusive and connected communities. A country where people live happier, healthier and more fulfilled lives</p> <p>A ten year vision to transform lives and communities through sport and physical activity</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Recover and Reinvent; • Connecting Communities; • Positive Experiences for Young Children and Young People; • Connecting with Health & Wellbeing; and, • Active Environments
 <p>Future of the Public Sector Leisure (2022) (Sport England)</p> <p>Future of public leisure Sport England 2022</p>	<p>Vision: We will evolve the sector, transitioning from traditional leisure services into an active wellbeing service</p> <p>This report provides an overview of the current position of leisure services in the public sector and outlines a model that will enable the sector to create a more sustainable future.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A new approach that formalises the relationship between health and leisure on; social prescribing, co-location, delivery of preventative activity and collaboration through integrated care systems • Provision that is place-based and at the heart of local communities • An approach that brings forward new thinking, products and services requires proactive and skilled leadership • Provision that is low carbon and delivers a step change in carbon emissions at the local authority level
	<p>Vision for the sector: A positive and regenerative sport and physical activity sector</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Just transition: inequalities, inclusion and participation • Carbon emissions: travel and facilities • Circular economy: supply chains, products and waste • Blue-green environment quality and use

Document	Vision / description	Key Priorities
<p>Every Move: Sustainability Strategy and Action Plan (2024) (Sport England)</p> <p>Every Move sustainability strategy and action plan 2024 (sportengland-production-files.s3.eu-west-2.amazonaws.com)</p> <p>A strategy to lead, inspire and support the sport and physical activity sector to become environmentally sustainable, enabling greater opportunity for all people to participate in sport and physical activity, now and in the future.</p>	<p>championing environmental sustainability with every move</p> <p>Mission: Sport England will lead, inspire and support the sector to become environmentally sustainable, enabling greater opportunity for all people to participate in sport and physical activity, now and in the future</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Biodiversity • Adapting to climate change and extreme weather events

The table overleaf shows the priority of the government department, the Office for Health Improvement and Disparities and the importance of achieving net zero by 2050.

These both highlight the focus central government is putting on physical activity and levelling health inequalities and the green agenda.

Table 11 – National Priorities

National Priority	Vision	Key Priorities
 <p>Office for Health Improvement & Disparities</p> <p>Office for Health Improvement and Disparities – part of DH&SC</p> <p>Office-for-health-improvement-and-disparities</p>	<p>We focus on improving the nation’s health so that everyone can expect to live more of life in good health, and on levelling up health disparities to break the link between background and prospects for a healthy life</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identify and address health disparities, focusing on those groups and areas where health inequalities have greatest effect • Take action on the biggest preventable risk factors for ill health and premature death including tobacco, obesity and harmful use of alcohol and drugs • Work with the NHS and local government to improve access to the services which detect and act on health risks and conditions, as early as possible • Develop strong partnerships across government, communities, industry and employers, to act on the wider factors that contribute to people’s health, such as work, housing and education • Drive innovation in health improvement, harnessing the best of technology, analytics, and innovations in policy and delivery, to help deliver change where it is needed most
 <p>Department for Energy Security & Net Zero</p> <p>Net Zero Strategy – build back greener October 2021</p> <p>Net Zero Strategy: Build Back Greener</p>	<p>Levelling up the country, ending our domestic contribution to climate change, and leading the world to a greener, more sustainable future</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • This strategy sets out this Government’s long-term plan to finish the job and end the UK’s domestic contribution to man-made climate change by 2050 • Work with the grain of consumer choice • Ensure the biggest polluters pay the most for the transition • Ensure that the most vulnerable are protected through Government support • Work with businesses to continue delivering deep cost reductions in low carbon tech

Whilst the delivery of sport and physical activity is not a statutory service for local authorities, the following summaries outline the statutory requirements which have implications for the delivery of sports, swimming and physical activity facilities and opportunities.

Table 12 – National Legislation

National Legislation	Key Priorities
 <p>Department of Health & Social Care</p> <p>Integrated Care Systems (ICS)</p> <p>Government guidance-on-the-preparation-of-integrated-care-strategies</p>	<p>42 Integrated Care Systems (ICSs) were established on a statutory basis on 1st July 2022. ICSs are partnerships of organisations that come together to plan & deliver joined up health and care services and to improve the lives of people who live and work in their area. The Integrated Care Partnership (ICP) is responsible for producing a strategy on how to meet health and wellbeing needs of the population in the ICS area to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • improve outcomes in population health and healthcare and tackle inequalities in outcomes, experience and access • ICSs will help health and care organisations tackle complex challenges, including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ improving the health of children and young people ○ supporting people to stay well and independent ○ acting sooner to help those with preventable conditions ○ supporting those with long-term conditions or mental health issues ○ caring for those with multiple needs as populations age
 <p>Department of Health & Social Care</p> <p>Health and Social Care Act</p> <p>government health-and-social-care-act-2012-fact-sheets</p>	<p>Local authorities’ statutory responsibilities for public health services are set out in the Health and Social Care Act 2012. The Act conferred duties on local authorities to improve public health.</p> <p>It abolished primary care trusts and transferred much of their responsibility for public health to local authorities from 1st April 2013. From this date local authorities have had a new duty to take such steps as they consider appropriate. Local authorities may deliver this by providing a “health wellbeing service”, across their leisure portfolio and service; contributing to health prevention and help address health inequalities</p>

National Legislation	Key Priorities
 <p>Department for Education</p> <p>National Curriculum (Jul 2014) (DoE)</p> <p>National curriculum in England: physical education programmes of study - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk)</p> <p>The national curriculum sets out the programmes of study and attainment targets for all subjects at all four key stages. All local-authority-maintained schools in England must teach these programmes of study.</p>	<p>As part of The Department of Education national curriculum for physical education all schools must provide swimming instruction either in key stage 1 or key stage 2. In particular, pupils should be taught to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • swim competently, confidently and proficiently over a distance of at least 25 metres • use a range of strokes effectively [for example, front crawl, backstroke and breaststroke] • perform safe self-rescue in different water-based situations
 <p>Department for Education</p> <p>The School Sport and Activity Action Plan (July 2019) (DoE)</p> <p>https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/school-sport-and-activity-action-plan The action plan was updated in July 2023.</p>	<p>To ensure that PE and sport are an integral part of both the school day and after-school activities</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • aims to improve the quality of PE and school sport provision • encourages 2 hours of PE a week • helps to ensure equality of access to sport for girls and boys <p>helps to increase the number of children playing sport in school and meeting curriculum expectations, including for swimming and water safety</p>

Incorporating opportunities to be active in the wider environment are acknowledged within national strategies and guidance, which are set out in the summary below.

Table 13 – Active Design, 20-Minute Neighbourhood and Active Transport Principles

Strategy/Guidance	Key Priorities
 <p>Active Design</p> <p>https://www.sportengland.org/news-and-inspiration/new-active-design-guidance-published</p> <p>May 2023</p>	<p>Sport England’s Active Design guidance, developed in partnership with Active Travel England and the Office for Health Improvement and Disparities (OHID), sets out how the design of our environments can help people to lead more physically active and healthy lives. The foundation principle of ‘Activity for all’ is supported by three themes of;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Supporting active travel • Active, high-quality places and spaces • Creating and maintaining activity
<p>The 20-Minute Neighbourhood</p> <p>Town and Country Planning Association / Sport England (March 2021)</p> <p>https://www.tcpa.org.uk/resources/the-20-minute-neighbourhood/</p>	<p>The idea of the ‘20-minute neighbourhood’ is around the importance of the ‘liveability’ of where we live. It is a complete, compact, and connected neighbourhood, where people can meet their everyday needs within a short walk or cycle. It presents multiple benefits including boosting local economies, improving people’s health and wellbeing, increasing social connections in communities and tackling climate change.</p>

APPENDIX 1 – Local Strategies Vision and Key Priorities

The Council is working on a new Local Plan to 2041, which is currently in consultation.

Table 14 – Local Strategies Vision and Key Priorities

Strategy	Vision/Purpose	Key Priorities
<p>Forest of Dean District Council Local Plan 2021-2041 (draft)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The district is actively engaged in pursuing a low carbon future and new development is designed to enable this while being able to adapt to climate change. In 2041, younger people are more likely to want stay in the district with good access to education, employment and housing. The needs of an ageing population have also been incorporated into the design of new development. It is a place where healthy lifestyles are an everyday part of living and working in the district. The implementation of sustainable development enhances the quality of life for residents and visitors alike. The diverse landscapes and heritage of the area is so distinctive that it is nationally and internationally recognised. A thriving tourism market is underpinned by a high quality natural and built environment. The lack of affordable housing has been addressed through imaginative and sustainable ways providing an appropriate range of tenures which support local communities, services and facilities. The district is better connected through improved transport, digital and mobile data connections which reduce the need to travel and provide a distinctive local offer. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Community – Improve community wellbeing, supporting and celebrating our distinctiveness. Economy – Develop a vibrant economy that is resilient and future proofed. Housing – Provide a range of affordable housing to meet the needs of the district. Environment – Protect and enhance the local environment and address the climate change emergency further progressing the case for protective designations. Service and Finance – Deliver great services through achieving financial sustainability.
<p>Council Plan for Forest of Dean District Council 2024-2028</p>	<p>This plan for FODDC is more than simply a strategy document; it is a commitment to the people who live here, to our natural environment and to future generations. It is our local response to the worldwide climate and nature emergency.</p> <p>The plan will help us outline a path to create thriving communities, decarbonising, protecting nature and fostering a sustainable local economy.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Thriving Communities - Encourage resilient, well-connected and active communities that take responsibility for their own and everyone’s health and wellbeing. Help facilitate access to leisure and cultural activities to promote fun and healthy lifestyles for all ages. Decarbonisation and nature recovery - Promote public transport, cycling and walking by improving infrastructure and offering incentives for eco-friendly commuting. Support the electrification of public transport and promote the adoption of electric vehicles by expanding charging infrastructure. Encourage the reduction of commuter travel via remote working where appropriate. Sustainable Economy.

Strategy	Vision/Purpose	Key Priorities
<p>Forest of Dean Indoor Built Facilities Strategy 2020</p>	<p>To provide a robust and objective assessment of the current public, private and voluntary sports club provision and to be the baseline document for future leisure facility development, identifying optimum locations.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Protect - To provide evidence to inform policy and specifically to support Site Allocations and Development Management Policies which will protect sports facilities and their use by the community, irrespective of ownership. • Enhance - To ensure that sports facilities are effectively managed and maintained and that best use is made of existing resources - whether facilities, expertise and/or personnel to improve and enhance existing provision – particularly in the light of pressure on local authority budgets. • Provide - To provide evidence to help secure external funding for new facilities and enhancements through grant aid and also potentially through Community Infrastructure Levy (if on the Regulation 123 List) and Section 106 agreements. Sport England and local authorities can then use the strategies developed and the guidance provided in making key planning decisions regarding facility developments in the area and to support or protect against loss in relation (refused planning application) to planning applications brought forward by developers.
<p>Forest of Dean Playing Pitch Strategy 2022</p>	<p>To provide a robust and objective assessment of the current quality and quantity of pitch provision and changing facilities, to determine the need now and in the future.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To protect the existing supply of outdoor sports facilities where it is needed to meet current and future needs. • To enhance outdoor sports provision and ancillary facilities through improving quality and management of sites. • To provide new outdoor sports facilities where feasible and there is current or future demand to do so.
<p>Forest of Dean District Council Climate Emergency Strategy and Action Plan 2022-2025</p>	<p>The Climate Emergency Strategy sets out the context, rationale and direction for action needed to tackle the climate emergency in the district. It formalises a high level of ambition, commensurate with the Council’s declaration of a climate emergency in December 2018 and sets out the high-level principles that will underpin the development and execution of climate action by the Council.</p>	<p>Council emissions</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Investigate and start implementing a plan for decarbonising the Council’s vehicle fleet, particularly the replacement of its waste collection vehicles with low carbon equivalents. An appropriate pathway for rural settings is still not clear. • Working with partners, develop and start implementing a plan for decarbonising the Council’s leisure centres, whilst also continuing to transition electricity and heat supplies to renewable energy generation in the Council’s other buildings. • Reduce unnecessary staff business travel and decarbonise journeys that cannot be eliminated. • Divest the Council’s investments and pensions from fossil fuels and other polluting industries. <p>District-wide emissions</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Prioritise actions that will help reduce emissions from road transport in the district. • Establish a positive planning policy framework for maximising the use of renewables within new developments and opportunities for the deployment of larger scale renewable energy generation. • Explore and identify ways that the Council can help facilitate an increase in the retrofit of existing buildings.

Strategy	Vision/Purpose	Key Priorities
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identify ways of supporting industry to use renewable energy to substitute for fossil fuels used during industrial installations. • Identify ways of supporting the implementation of carbon sequestering and ecologically regenerative land management and farming practices in the district. • Support partners to promote and facilitate the development of local low carbon skills. • Explore ways to reduce emissions from waste and encourage a circular economy.
<p>Gloucestershire Joint Health and Wellbeing Strategy 2020-2030</p>	<p>Gloucestershire where everyone can live well, be healthy and thrive</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Physical activity - We want to make being physically active the social norm and get 30,000 inactive people in Gloucestershire active. • Adverse childhood experiences - We want to build resilient communities and organisations that take action to prevent the potential lifelong impacts of adverse childhood experiences. • Mental wellbeing - We want every Gloucestershire resident to enjoy the best possible mental health and wellbeing throughout their life. • Healthy lifestyles – We will aim to halve the level of childhood obesity on Gloucestershire and reduce the gap in obesity rates between the most and least deprived parts of the county. • Early years and best start in life – We want to ensure every child in Gloucestershire has the best start in life. • Social isolation and loneliness – We want to enable local people to build and nurture strong social networks and vibrant communities. • Housing – We want to improve the quality, affordability and suitability of housing.
<p>ONE PLAN for all Children and Young People in Gloucestershire 2024-2030</p>	<p>A great place to grow up where children and young people thrive and live lives of choice and opportunity</p>	<p>To achieve our vision - four objectives:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Equity – close the gap and eliminate inequalities • Access – right help at the right time for all children • Inclusion – a county where everyone belongs and we celebrate diversity • Quality – effective, outstanding services. <p>Four Pillars:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Starting well – pre-birth through early years to reception age • Growing well – primary through to early secondary • Being well – middle teenage through post 16 to 25 years • Living well – creating the conditions to thrive.
<p>Gloucestershire All Age Mental Health and Wellbeing Strategy 2018 – 2023</p>	<p>For every resident of Gloucestershire to enjoy the best possible mental health and wellbeing throughout the course of their life</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increase the focus in the wider factors of mental wellbeing and promote good mental health for all • Get better at spotting the signs of mental ill health and intervening earlier • Improve the outcomes for people experiencing mental health crisis • Improve the wellbeing of parents, children and young people

Strategy	Vision/Purpose	Key Priorities
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continue to improve joined up approaches to reducing suicide rates across Gloucestershire • Focus on recovery and resilience • Ensure Gloucestershire is a mental health friendly county
<p>Gloucestershire JSNA 2024</p>	<p>A joint Strategic Needs Assessment looks at the current and future health and care needs of local populations to inform and guide the planning and buying of health, wellbeing and social care services within an area and is a responsibility of Gloucestershire Health and Wellbeing Board.</p> <p>Our local approach is to ensure that data and insight is available to those planning and commissioning services, but also that best evidence and practice is highlighted to help improve population health and wellbeing and reduce inequalities in access to services and in health and wellbeing outcomes.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Adults and older people • Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACE's) • Best start in life • Children and young people • Health inequalities • Health protection • Healthy weight • Long term conditions • Mental wellbeing • Physical activity • Social isolation
<p>Active Gloucestershire – we can Move Strategy 2021-2030</p>	<p>Everyone in Gloucestershire living healthy, happy lives.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Proactively working with marginalised and under-represented people, such as those from Black or Asian or minority ethnic groups, is crucial. • Young people are the key to a lifetime of good health. • Older people can enjoy good health for longer by starting or maintaining an active lifestyle. • Disability or health conditions shouldn't stop anyone from enjoying an active life. • Active design, facilities and travel all play an essential role in enabling everyone to become and stay active. • We must remain flexible to respond to external challenges and opportunities.
<p>Building Back Better in Gloucestershire 2022-2026</p>	<p>To make the most of all that Gloucestershire has to offer, help improve the quality of life for every community, support businesses to be successful and make sure the county is a place where people want to live, work and visit.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Transforming children's services • Transforming adult social care • Levelling up our communities • Tacking climate change • Improving our roads • Sustainable growth • Securing investment for Gloucestershire • .Improving customer experience
<p>Forestry England Cycling Strategy</p>	<p>Help connect everyone with the nation's forests by providing England's favourite off-road cycling experience.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Support the government's agenda by working with cross-sector partners to connect our shared strategies and goals for cycling. • Use our expertise and the accessibility of the nation's forests to achieve a lasting behaviour change for recreational and active travel cycling. • Increase cycling activity to help tackle health and wellbeing inequality.

Strategy	Vision/Purpose	Key Priorities
		<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Keep customers at the heart of what we do enabling us to identify and address the barriers that prevent people from cycling.• Get maximum value for Forestry England and society by focusing investments towards projects which support this strategy.• Use insight to shape our cycling offer to meet the needs of current and future users.• Manage the growing opportunities and challenges presented by unauthorised trails.

APPENDIX 2 – Stakeholder Report

A detailed report with key findings from the stakeholder workshops can be found here [FOD-Stakeholder-Summary-Report-Client-Draft-April-2025.docx](#)

APPENDIX 3 – Target Groups

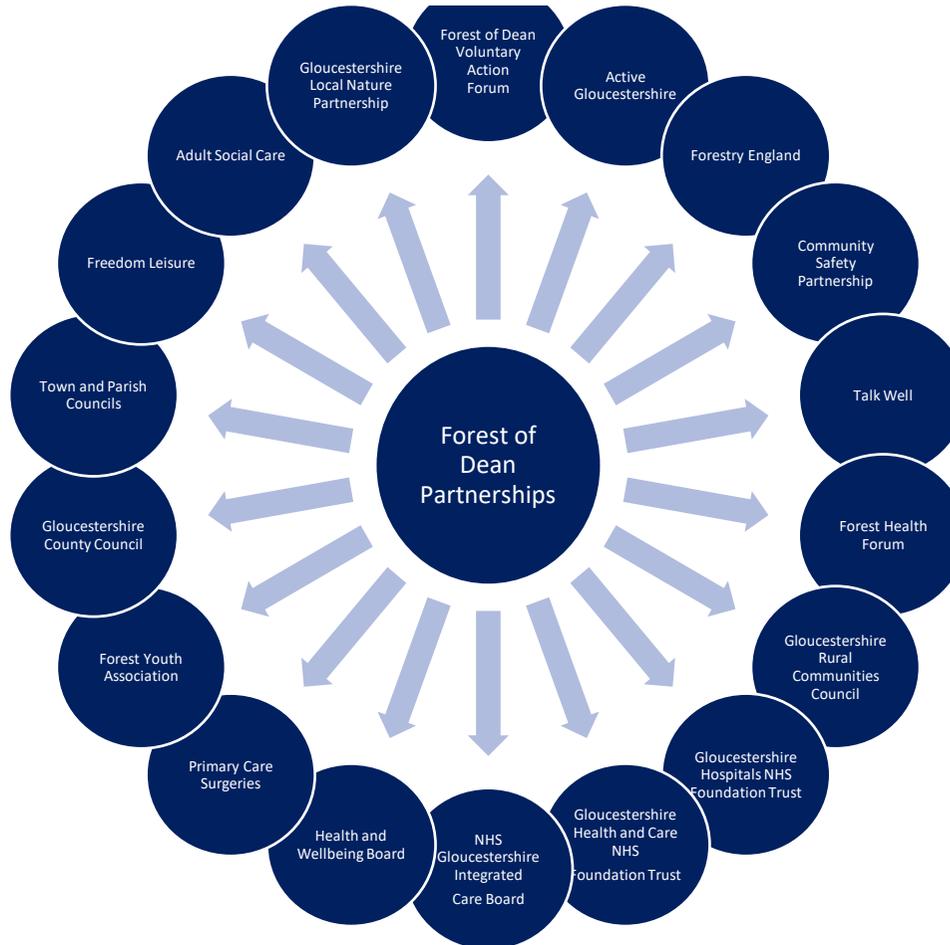
The diagram below illustrates the target groups identified in the stakeholder workshops with larger circles depicting those mentioned the most.

Figure 35 – Target Groups



APPENDIX 4 – Existing Partnerships ^{60,61}

Figure 36 – Forest of Dean Existing Partnerships



⁶⁰ Active Gloucestershire is also undertaking place based work in Cinderford with Collective Community Action using Group Model Building with local stakeholders. This partnership targeted approach hopes to build capacity and capability in local communities to live more active lives

⁶¹ NHS Gloucester Integrated Care Board (ICB) is an active member of the Health & Wellbeing Board, working alongside wider partners from across the local NHS, local government, and the statutory, voluntary and community sector

APPENDIX 5 – Member User Analysis

Figure 37 – Age Profile Comparison

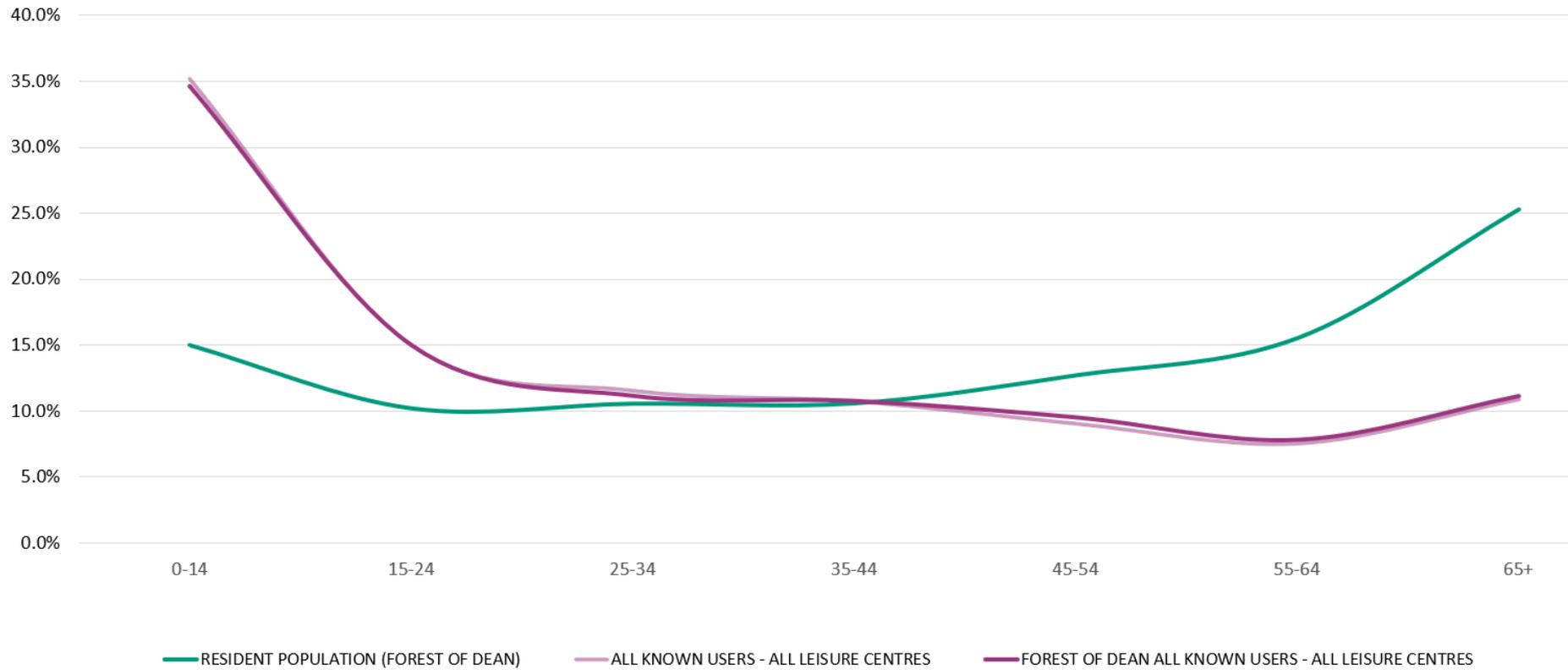


Figure 38 – Gender Profile Comparison

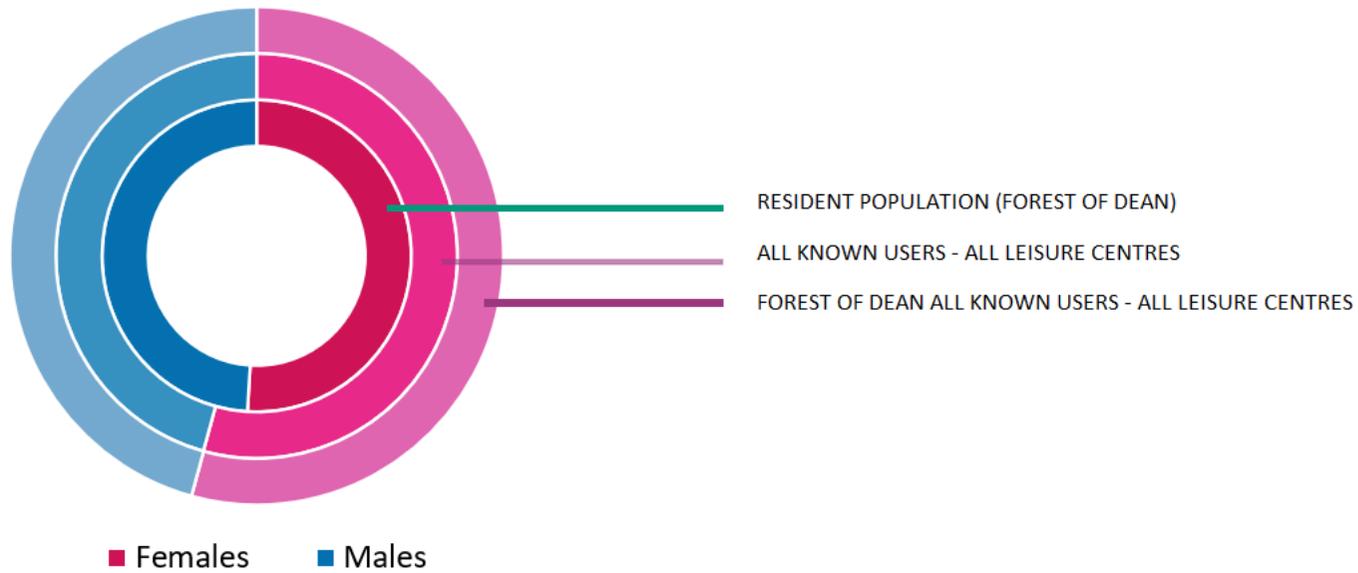


Table 15 – Mosaic Profile Summary

EXPERIAN MOSAIC GROUP***	RESIDENT POPULATION (FOREST OF DEAN)	RESIDENT POPULATION (FOREST OF DEAN) PERCENTAGE	ALL KNOWN USERS - ALL LEISURE CENTRES		FOREST OF DEAN ALL KNOWN USERS - ALL LEISURE CENTRES		PENETRATION RATE (FOREST OF DEAN)
			TOTAL	PERCENTAGE OF USERS	TOTAL	PERCENTAGE OF USERS	
A City Prosperity	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0		
B Prestige Positions	914	1.0%	70	1.4%	23	0.5%	0.48
C Country Living	25,611	29.1%	1,039	21.5%	946	20.7%	0.71
D Rural Reality	42,013	47.8%	2,500	51.6%	2,484	54.4%	1.14
E Senior Security	4,042	4.6%	174	3.6%	158	3.5%	0.75
F Suburban Stability	1,319	1.5%	90	1.9%	80	1.8%	1.17
G Domestic Success	1,469	1.7%	154	3.2%	129	2.8%	1.69
H Aspiring Homemakers	4,091	4.7%	354	7.3%	327	7.2%	1.54
I Family Basics	1,477	1.7%	100	2.1%	87	1.9%	1.13
J Transient Renters	2,522	2.9%	147	3.0%	143	3.1%	1.09
K Municipal Tenants	426	0.5%	33	0.7%	31	0.7%	1.40
L Vintage Value	2,595	3.0%	53	1.1%	49	1.1%	0.36
M Modest Traditions	906	1.0%	59	1.2%	53	1.2%	1.13
N Urban Cohesion	0	0.0%	1	0.0%	0		
O Rental Hubs	552	0.6%	30	0.6%	21	0.5%	0.73
U Unclassified	0	0.0%	39	0.8%	35	0.8%	
Unknown	0		284		0		
Total	87,937		5,127		4,566		

APPENDIX 6 – Community Online Survey Report

Full report sent to client 9.4.25.

Disclaimer

Although the information in this report has been prepared in good faith, with the best intentions, on the basis of professional research and information made available to us at the time of the study, it is not possible to guarantee the financial estimates or forecasts contained within this report. Max Associates assumes no responsibility or liability for any errors or omissions in the content of this report.

Max Associates cannot be held liable to any party for any direct or indirect losses, financial or otherwise, associated with any information provided within this report. We have relied in a number of areas on information provided by the client and have not undertaken additional independent verification of this data.