

Active Environments Strategy

HYNDBURN

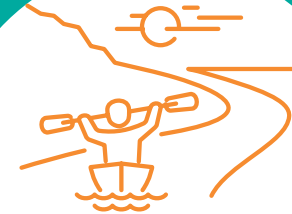
2025 to 2030



PARKS



OPEN SPACES



WATERWAYS

Vision

Hyndburn's Active Environment Strategy is a comprehensive five-year plan aligned with Sport England's Active Environment Framework.

Our commitment to developing sustainable and accessible green and blue spaces across the borough is deeply embedded in this framework, ensuring a strategic, inclusive approach that aligns with both local and national objectives while promoting active engagement in these areas.

Over the next five years, we will focus on enhancing our diverse portfolio of parks, open spaces, and waterways to support physical activity, active lifestyles, and the promotion of active travel. By addressing key components of the Active Environment Framework, such as active design, planning for sport, community engagement, and cycling and walking infrastructure, we will create environments that encourage residents to lead healthier, more active lives.

Building upon our strong foundation of accessible and high-quality green spaces, Hyndburn boasts the largest nature reserves in Lancashire, offering a wide variety of habitats and wildlife for residents and visitors to explore and enjoy. The borough also holds the highest number of Green Flag parks in Lancashire, showcasing the local commitment to maintaining high-quality green spaces for public enjoyment. Our borough serves as a key juncture along the picturesque Leeds to Liverpool Canal, providing residents and visitors with ample opportunities for leisure and recreation, including walking, cycling, and boating activities.

We take pride in meeting national guidelines for greenspace access, with the majority of our residents living within a 15-minute walk of a green space. We have a network of cycling and walking routes, encouraging residents to engage in active travel and outdoor recreation.

Moving forward, we will continue to prioritise equitable access to nature, ensuring that everyone can enjoy the numerous benefits offered by our parks, reserves, and waterways. This strategy reflects our dedication to maintaining and improving Hyndburn's status as a vibrant, accessible, and nature-rich region where residents can easily engage in physical activity, connect with their natural environment, and enjoy the numerous benefits of active living. Through collaboration with local stakeholders and a shared vision for a more active and sustainable Hyndburn, we will drive positive change for the benefit of our entire community.



Contents

- 3. Introduction
- 6. Why do we need an Active Environments Strategy
- 9. Consultation
- 11. Challenges to be Addressed in Hyndburn
- 14. Strategic Objectives for Hyndburn
- 18. Strategic Action Plan



1. Introduction

Partnerships and 'A Whole System Approach' – Why this is Needed

There is a total of 11 green flag awarded parks located across the Borough each with its own individual character and range of facilities. There are also three local Nature reserves in Hyndburn, two of these being the largest in Lancashire.

The Leeds to Liverpool Canal meanders through our Borough and the Church area of Accrington is the central point on this historical waterway. It is marked by a small plaque, jetty and picnic tables at Church. From this point it provides easy access to other parts of the Borough including Altham and Rishton, without the worry of cars and lorries for the cyclist.

Addressing health inequalities is complex. This is a result of the variety of factors and situations that affect a person's health. It is also influenced by the number of interactions and involvement of the various public services and organisations involved in supporting individuals, providing care, and improving health outcomes.

Being able to do this effectively and collaboratively requires all parts of the system to come together to understand their connectivity and use this knowledge to develop new and more aligned ways of designing and delivering support.

Hyndburn is already making great strides in establishing operating models and ways of working to apply whole systems approach to promoting well-being to reduce health inequalities in Hyndburn.

Hyndburn is responding to this at a local level through the development of The Hyndburn Way which has been successful in receiving funding to formalise both the model and associated governance structures to ensure Hyndburn can align and deliver the principles of whole systems thinking and working. This applies to work required on the ground at a very local level and as a key stakeholder and influencer in wider work at a regional level through the NHS Integrated Care Board.

It is widely recognised, including by organisations such as Public Health England (PHE), that adopting community-centred approaches across systems is essential for achieving significant, sustainable, and meaningful improvements. These approaches leverage community assets, promote equity and strengthen social connectedness, that empower individuals to take control of their health and well-being.



To maximize the impact of the Hyndburn Active Environment Strategy, it must closely align with the systems working principles of The Hyndburn Way, a National Lottery-funded initiative designed to enhance local health and reduce health inequalities in the borough. This project adopts a community-led approach, shaping priorities developing solutions that address these needs, whilst continue growth of collaboration through shared agreements with stakeholders who influence systemic change.

How is this already working?

Several partnership-based approaches, both well-established and emerging, are already operational, aiming to collectively tackle health inequalities in Hyndburn. The Hyndburn Active Environment Strategy will be developed under the guidance of the Let's Move Hyndburn partnership and will be integrated into the wider collaborative efforts. It will be recognised and endorsed by local partners as the agreed framework for reducing inactivity through joint efforts.

Figure 1.1 illustrates the current partnership structures that are actively addressing health priorities in the area.

Successes in Active Environments

The Let's Move Hyndburn partnership has already delivered a variety of successful programmes and interventions, such as the Let's Move Park Events and the Walk to the Match initiative, which have made tangible contributions to improving physical activity and community engagement. These successes set a strong foundation for the future implementation of the Hyndburn Active Environment Strategy.



Figure 1.1: Existing Partnerships



The Active Environment Strategy process incorporates Sport England’s Active Design principles to promote environments that encourage physical activity and active lifestyles.

These principles, such as walkability, access to facilities, and high quality streets & spaces, are embedded in the planning and development of both urban and rural areas.

By prioritising active travel routes, integrating green spaces, and ensuring safe, accessible recreational spaces, the strategy aligns with Sport England’s vision of creating spaces that enable Activity for all.

This approach encourages physical activity to become an effortless part of everyday life, fostering healthier, more active communities.

Supported by

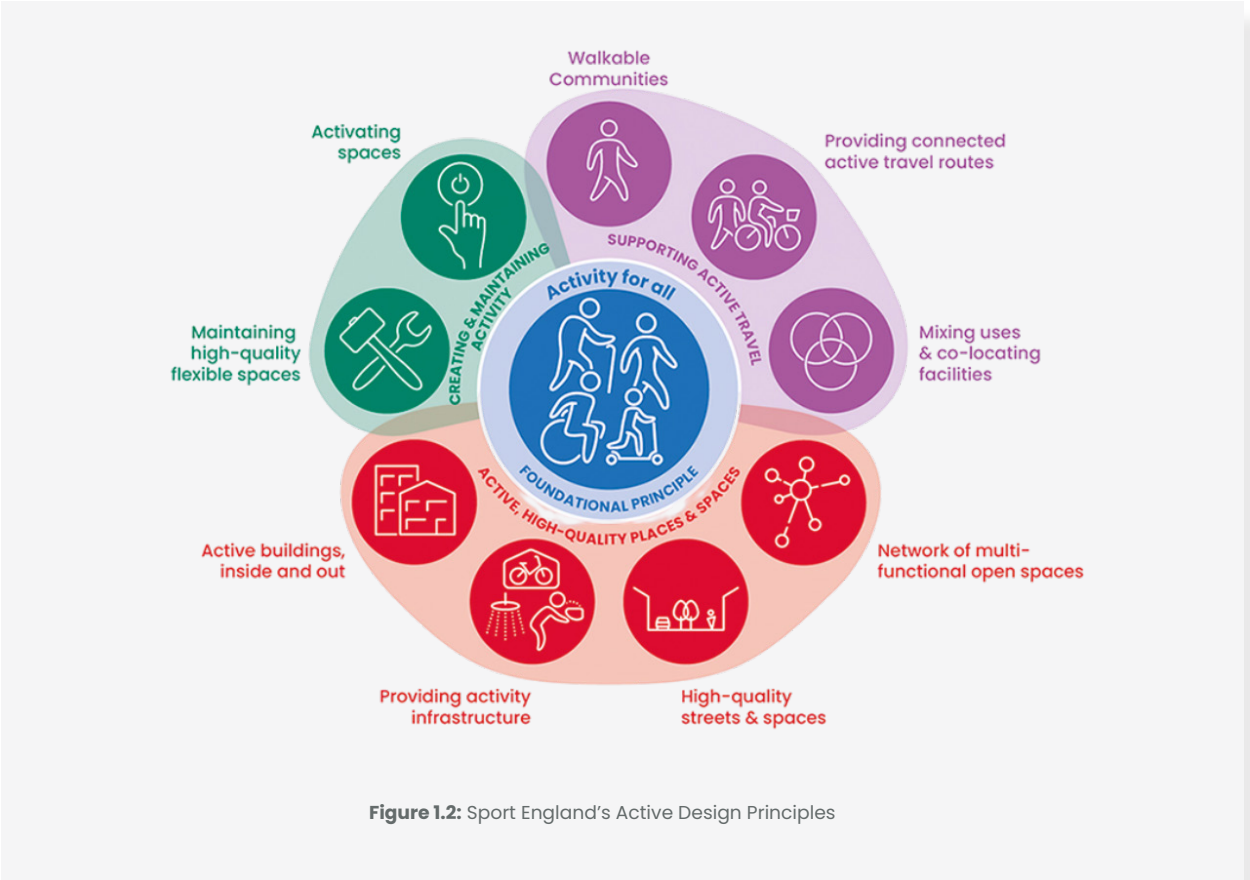


Figure 1.2: Sport England’s Active Design Principles





2. Why do we need an Active Environments Strategy?

High levels of physical activity offer substantial benefits, not only by improving physical and mental health but also by contributing to the local economy. This includes boosting employment, attracting sports mix co locating facilities thus reducing the demand for NHS and other public services.

A study conducted by the Sport Industry Research Centre at Sheffield Hallam University for Sport England highlights the significant social return on investment. According to the report, for every £1 invested in community sport and physical activity in England, £4 of economic and social value is generated.

This contribution, factoring in the benefits to physical health, mental well-being, and economic development, was estimated to add approximately £85.5 billion to the English economy and society.



**£1 spent =
£4 in return**

Every £1 spent on sport and physical activity generates almost £4 in return across health and wellbeing, stronger communities and the economy.



£85.5bn

Community sport and physical activity in England has a social and economic value.



£9.5bn

The value community sport and physical activity in England generates through improved physical and mental health.





Benefits of Physical Activity

Public Health England summarise the health benefits of physical activity shown in **Figure 2.1**

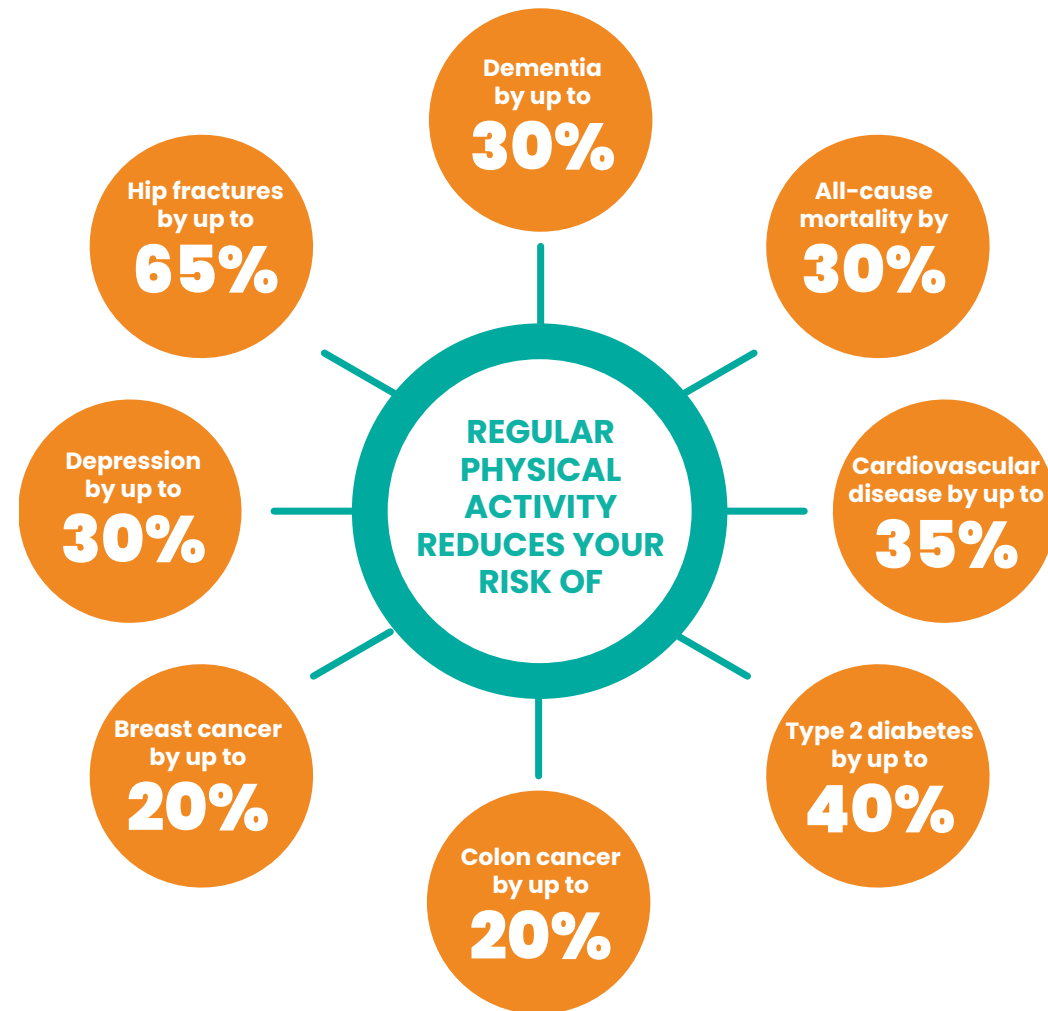


Figure 2.1: Physical Activity Social Return on Investment



Opportunities in Hyndburn

Hyndburn's network of housing, green spaces, and open areas aligns with the Government's Environmental Improvement Plan, which aims to ensure that everyone in England has access to a green or blue space within a 15-minute walk of their home.

This creates a significant opportunity, given the potential social benefits of reducing inactivity and the presence of extensive Active Environments infrastructure in Hyndburn. By adopting a strategic approach and setting clear, shared objectives, partners can enhance the effectiveness of this infrastructure to reduce inactivity and ultimately address health inequalities in the area.

Figure 2.3: Active Environments Opportunities in Hyndburn





3. Consultation

The existence of several diverse networks facilitated and co-ordinated by Hyndburn Leisure Trust, such as the Community Action Group and The Let's Move Hyndburn Partnership, significantly aided the reach and diversity of the consultation process.

Consultation sessions provided background and context of what is defined as an active environment, particular local health and demographic challenges, and an overview of the breadth of local natural assets and resources already available.

Sessions encouraged participants to consider what is working well to encourage and support people to be active, what are the challenges and barriers, and how more joint working can make the best use of available resources, skills, and knowledge to deliver the strategy.

Over 160 responses contributed to the survey questions in addition to partnership workshops and strategy design sessions with the Let's Move Hyndburn Partnership.

62% of survey responses came from the BB5 postcode and the average age of respondents was 55-64, with 18% of respondents had a long-term illness or disability.

To enable the use of insight to inform recommendations, alongside quantitative data and statistics, a qualitative consultation approach was a priority in the development of this strategy.

The consultation plan included a diverse range of stakeholders to ensure that both subjectively broad and personally relevant experience and knowledge could be gathered.

Approaches to the consultation were designed around the preferences of the various cohorts and included: face-to-face conversations in focussed group settings, individual conversations, and mixed groups, as well as online surveying.

Specific focus groups were set up with cohorts experiencing the most severe impacts of inactivity as well as gathering views from the general population.

Relevant data from other recent surveys and reports have been considered and used to inform or support establishing priorities.





Barriers

 *Natural Environment*

Safety concerns
Lack of safe cycle routes
Awareness of cycle routes
Maintenance of paths



Encouragement factors

 *Natural environment*

Increased feeling of safety
Designated areas in parks
Better paths
Improved access
including car parks



General Barriers

Cost
Lack of motivation
Family commitments
Lack of options near me
Lack of time



Encouragement Factors

Lower Costs
Support groups programmes
Outdoor facilities as well as indoor

Figure 3.1: Barriers and Encouragement Factors

3.1.11 Key Findings from the consultations and surveys highlighted the themes illustrated in **Figure 3.1**.

4. Challenges to be Addressed in Hyndburn

Between the last two censuses (held in 2011 and 2021), the following changes have affected the population in Hyndburn as shown in **Figure 4.1**. Challenges in Hyndburn

The most recent Government health data available via the Office for Health Improvement and Disparities, and localised health data, show that Lancashire continues to lag behind many other parts of the country, and the England averages, in relation to lower life expectancy, fewer years in good health, wide disparities of income and multiple deprivation, and lower levels of economic development and productivity.

The lingering impact of Covid on physical activity has been significant as has the impact of the cost-of-living pressures, particularly on those already experiencing health inequalities.



Change	Hyndburn Increase Decrease	Health Impact/ consideration
Increase in population	Increased by 1.9%, from just over 80,700 in 2011 to approx 82,200	The increase is not classed as significant based on the Northwest increase of 5.2% and England's of 6.6%
The number of residents aged 50 to 64 years	Increase by 10.4% which is just over 1,500	The average (median) age remained 39 years in Hyndburn between the last two censuses.
The number of residents between 35 and 49 years	Decreased by 12.8% which is around 2, 200	Accessibility to activity for ethnic groups.
The number of residents identified as being disabled or with a limited condition	Decreased by 2.7% , in 2021, 10.1% decreased from 12.8% in 2011.	Accessibility to activity for those with a disability or limiting condition.
The proportion of people (aged five years and over) providing between 20 and 49 hours of weekly unpaid care.	Increased from 1.7% to 2.4%. The North West's joint second-largest percentage-point rise.	Increased health pressures on those providing care.

NB: Census 2021 was undertaken during the coronavirus pandemic. This may have influenced how people perceived and managed their provision of unpaid care, and therefore may have affected how people chose to respond.

Figure 4.1: Challenges in Hyndburn

Health Challenges in Hyndburn

Public Health data shows the following statistics that highlight specific health challenges for the people of Hyndburn as shown in **Figure 4.2**.

Hyndburn faces significant health challenges, largely due to its ranking as the 16th most deprived Local Authority in England. Contributing factors to this deprivation include employment, income, education, and living conditions. These factors, in turn, fuel health inequalities—avoidable differences in health outcomes, such as life expectancy and preventable diseases.

The Office for Health Improvement and Disparities (OHID) identifies complex causes of health inequalities, ranging from personal health behaviours (e.g., smoking, diet) to access to healthcare, education, and work. Tackling these wider determinants, alongside promoting physical activity, can improve both health outcomes and personal wellbeing by fostering social connections and enhancing skills.

A comparison of all the indices that make up deprivation statistics such as employment, income, education, and the living environment shows that Hyndburn is ranked as the **16th most deprived Local Authority in England**.



Figure 4.2:
Lancashire Insight area profiles – Hyndburn



Hyndburn's Active Environments



Let's explore Hyndburn's **green** and **blue** spaces together.
Connect with nature and scan the QR code to join our vibrant community!



Landscape Design Team
Highways Lancashire
County Council



The principle of high
quality streets and spaces

5. Strategic Objectives

The Active Environment Strategy objectives were developed using Sport England's Active Design principles, in collaboration with partners and through consultation with local residents. Additionally, the Strategy acknowledges and aligns with regional and local strategies, see **figure 5.1**

Activity for all – All environments should support physical activity equitably across all ages, ethnicities, genders, and abilities, enabling everyone to be active and build long-term active habits and behaviours.



Walkable communities

Facilities for daily essentials and recreation should be within easy reach of each other by active travel means, making it more likely that people will make the journey by using active travel modes (defined in Theme 1). Good active travel connections should be provided to extend the range of services that are accessible while remaining physically active.



Mixing uses & co-locating facilities

People are more likely to combine trips and use active travel to get to destinations with multiple reasons to visit. Places with more variety, higher densities, and a mix of uses also reduce the perception of distance when travelling through spaces. They also generate the critical mass of travel demand to better support public transport services.



Providing connected active travel routes

Walking and Cycling -To improve and sustain quality of health and wellbeing and enable the residents of Hyndburn to lead active lifestyles



High quality streets & spaces

Streets and outdoor public spaces should be Active Environments in their own right. They should be safe, attractive, functional, prioritise people and able to host a mix of uses, with durable, high quality materials, street furniture in the right places and easy-to-use signage. High quality streets and spaces encourage activity, whereas poor quality streets and spaces are much less likely to be used to the same degree.



Activating spaces

The provision of spaces and facilities which can help to improve physical activity should be supported by a commitment to activate them, encouraging people to be more physically active and increasing the awareness of activity opportunities within a community.

Priority Groups

Figure 5.1 shows priority groups for the Strategy identified through consultation with partners.

Measuring progress

Key Performance Indicators have been developed to track the progress of the Active Environments Strategy. These are set out in Appendix 2.

Strategic objectives have been developed for the Active Environments Strategy through substantial consultation with partners and drawing on consultation with residents.

Hyndburn Borough Council Corporate Strategy (2023-'28)

Community and collaborative working
Actively participate in and seek to influence local partnerships including the Integrated Care Board, and work with those addressing local health priorities

Lancashire County Council Corporate Strategy (2021-'25)

People and families will live healthier lifestyles

The National Planning Policy Framework (2019)

Sets out the requirement of LAs to establish and provide adequate and proper leisure facilities to meet local needs

Sport England Uniting the Movement (2021-'31)

Here to invest in sport and physical activity to make it a normal part of life for everyone in England, regardless of who you are.



Figure 5.1: Regional and Local Priorities



The approved Hyndburn Borough Council Corporate Strategy for 2023–2028 has prioritised the following themes shown in **Figure 5.2:** Hyndburn Council Corporate Strategy – Themes

Sustainable Growth	Environment & Climate Change	Community & Collaborative Working
● Employment & Business Growth	● To Make the Council Net Zero by 2030	● Partnership Working
● Revitalise Accrington Town Centre	● Green Open Spaces	● Health & Wellbeing
● Housing Growth	● Natural Environment	● Heritage, Culture & Arts
	● Domestic Home Energy Reduction	

These high-level priorities support the development of an Active Environment Strategy and increasing physical activity whilst also improving factors that influence the wider determinants of health, reducing health inequalities.

In recognition of the specific health challenges for Hyndburn residents, Hyndburn Council has included several specific targets and priorities in their Corporate Strategy, under the themes of Partnership Working and Health and Wellbeing that directly support reducing health inequalities and maximising positive health outcomes for the local community. As shown in

Figure 5.3: Hyndburn Council Partnership Working and Health & Wellbeing

Partnership Working

Working with our partners supporting the communities

- Green Open Spaces.
Adopt an Active Environment Strategy improving places and spaces for people to be more active
Maintain the number of parks which are Green Flag accredited
- Support volunteer and community activities, encourage friends' groups, schools, education, and training activities, and generally optimise positive usage of natural spaces, community health groups, thereby increasing social value
- Continue to lead in work with community safety groups and partners making Hyndburn a safer place

Health & Wellbeing

Improve health & wellbeing addressing health inequalities

- Embed health and wellbeing into our policies and activities and work with partners to address inequalities across the borough
- Work with partners such as the Leisure Trust to enhance existing and new Leisure facilities to maximise positive health outcomes for the local community
- Collaborate with partners to improve local people's health and reduce health inequalities through partnership working with the Integrated Care Board, Population Health Board, and the Community Action Network
- Improve accessibility of our environment to enable enjoyment of natural spaces and encourage active travel for all residents of the borough
- Increase economic prosperity which plays a key role in influencing good health and a person's quality of life



Themes

The mission statement for Let's Move Hyndburn is the overarching vision for the Active Environments Strategy:

“We are a community partnership designed to inspire people to move more, connect and unite”.

Partners have agreed Strategic Objectives for the Active Environments Strategy based on the needs of communities in Hyndburn including an asset- based approach. An overarching set of delivery principles were developed as part of the strategy design process:

1. A commitment to work collaboratively across the district with partners across a variety of sectors and roles.
2. A partnership approach to accessing and distributing funding.
3. A partnership approach to designing actions/delivery that is co-designed by those closest to the issues or barriers being addressed.
4. A focus on community capacity building, ownership and collaboration.

Figure 5.4 shows the Strategic Objectives of the Hyndburn Active Environments Strategy.

7 Key themes

- To reduce inactivity levels in Hyndburn
- Providing additional support to enable priority groups in Hyndburn to become more active
- Addressing inequalities in access to activity by removing barriers that prevent people from engaging with physical activity in Hyndburn
- Improving traditional and digital communications to help enable Hyndburn residents to access local opportunities to be more active
- Maximising on funding opportunities for active environments in Hyndburn by working in partnership
- To support and coordinate a network of sustainable community groups that can co-deliver active wellbeing opportunities in Hyndburn
- To continue and expand place-based system working approaches to deliver the strategy including events

Figure 5.4: Active Environments Strategy Strategic Objectives



6. Strategic objectives

Strategic Objective	Why this is important	Action Plan Themes	Performance Indicators
1. To reduce inactivity levels in Hyndburn.	● Inactivity in Hyndburn for both adults and young people is above the national average. ● Physical activity is proven to improve physical and mental wellbeing. ● Physical activity can play a key preventative role	● Programming ● Targeted interventions ● Events. ● Leisure centre usage ● Developing infrastructure via funding bids ● Tackling barriers to participation within priority groups ● Identify resources to run a series of workshops to fully understand barriers within priority groups ● Identify resources to design and deliver pilot programmes and evaluate impact ● Targeted interventions.	1.1 Percentage of Inactive Adults and Young People in Hyndburn determined by Active Lives Survey. 1.2 Resident inactivity levels as a comparison to 'Nearest Neighbours'. 1.3 Percentage of adults using Hyndburn Leisure centres as a percentage of local population. 1.4 Number of residents walking or cycling for at least 1.5 hours per week.
2. Providing additional support to enable priority groups in Hyndburn to become more active.	● Dedicated support to co-ordinate programmes around priority groups will increase success rates of behaviour change at scale and where it is most needed ● Without dedicated support these cohorts will continue to be affected by inactivity	● Create and communicate a series of pathways so that residents and partners can access information that enables them to overcome barriers ● Create tools that will help delivery partners to remove or reduce barriers when designing activity ● Work with infrastructure representatives and stakeholders to address specific barriers highlighted through consultation and service design workshops.	2.1 Inactivity levels amongst priority groups in Hyndburn. 2.2 Leisure facility usage amongst priority groups Hyndburn. 2.3 Number of residents from priority groups engaged with specific health interventions e.g. weight management GP referral.

Strategic Objective	Why this is important	Action Plan Themes	Performance Indicators
3. Addressing inequalities in access to activity by removing barriers that prevent people from engaging with physical activity in Hyndburn.	● Better service design and delivery of activity and opportunities ● Better outcomes are achieved as more people find it easier to be active ● Increase cross-sector working and improve relationships between communities and public services	● Create and communicate a series of pathways so that residents and partners can access information that enables them to overcome barriers ● Create tools that will help delivery partners to remove or reduce barriers when designing activity ● Work with infrastructure representatives and stakeholders to address specific barriers highlighted through consultation and service design workshops.	3.1 Number of residents reporting barriers to participation in activity. 3.2 Percentage of population within walking distance of a park/ recreation ground.
4. Improving traditional and digital communications to help enable Hyndburn residents to access local opportunities to be more active.	● Easy access to information on how to be active will remove numerous barriers ● A single location for all activity related resources will remove duplication and provide a consistent approach to communicating opportunities, ideas, and ways to be active ● Greater scale of impact as partners, care and support providers, and others who support individuals to improve wellbeing through increased activity will be able to use the resource	● Agreement of a single source of information/platform to communicate opportunities and encourage activity ● Develop App technology ● Development of an annual communication and activity plan shared and delivered by the strategy delivery partnerships ● Identify resources to co-ordinate a partnership approach to developing a strategic communications and activity plan.	4.1 Number of website hits on Let's Move Hyndburn website. 4.2 Number of Let's Move Hyndburn App users as % of local population. 4.3 Resident awareness of Active Environments opportunities.
5. Maximising on funding opportunities for active environments in Hyndburn by working in partnership.	● Collaborating to access and utilise funding will make best use of shared resources and enable funding to have maximum impact ● Reduced duplication of achieving similar outcomes across partnerships and systems	● Strategic partners agree to collaborate on funding opportunities ● Identify system partners to collaborate with to deliver shared outcomes and make best use of public funding ● Consider wider funding opportunities such as social value and working with the private sector.	5.1 Level of inward investment and funding for active environment in Hyndburn. 5.2 Number of partnership funding bids submitted.

6.1 Appendix 1: Strategic Objectives and Action Plan Themes

Strategic Objective	Why this is important	Action Plan Themes	Performance Indicators
6. To support and coordinate a network of sustainable community groups that can co-deliver active wellbeing opportunities in Hyndburn.	● Increase in community capacity with more groups supported to increase and manage volunteering opportunities ● More people able to both share and develop new skills and knowledge which increases wellbeing and employment prospects ● Ability for residents to increase social contacts and opportunities, reducing loneliness and improving health conditions ● Sharing of assets and skills across the sector and creating a mechanism for the community and the third sector to influence wider public service changes ● Community events are ideal ways to bring communities together and provide opportunities to engage with large audiences.	● Establish the mechanism and resources required to increase coordination support ● Map and assess community assets, skills and knowledge ● Understand challenges and gaps in support ● Develop support tools to support groups to establish and deliver activity ● Identify ways to share skills and resources to develop tools and resources and deliver activity ● Ensure groups are linked to system partners and able to access opportunities and contribute to developments.	6.1 Number of community groups involved with active environments. 6.2 Number of new community groups formed in Hyndburn involved with Active Environments 6.3 Successful funding bids for community groups
7. To continue and expand place-based system working approaches to deliver the strategy including events.	● Working in a systems approach will deliver significant benefits for residents and lead to more effective use of public resources ● A partnership approach will ensure events are diverse in representation, sustainable, and make the best use of assets, skills and resources ● Linking a more active lifestyle to heritage and culture helps residents to feel part of the community and can add further layers of motivation and interest to being active	● Key strategic partners agree to adopt and co-deliver the strategy ● Review local partnership structures and representation to identify gaps and provide clarity on purpose and interface arrangements for all stakeholders ● Begin baseline data gathering within the delivery partnership future monitoring ● Identify ways to ensure changes in policy at the local level including a mechanism to assess the impact on activity in the built environment decision-making process ● Position the Let's Move Partnership to deliver public health priorities through the award of funding, commissioning and partnership delivery	7.1 Number of events promoting Active Environments in Hyndburn 7.2 Levels of engagement with events from Hyndburn residents. 7.3 User satisfaction with events.

6.1 Appendix 1: Strategic Objectives and Action Plan Themes



Acknowledgements

Let's Move Hyndburn has developed this Strategy with the help and input of the following partners:

- **Hyndburn Borough Council**
- **Sport England**
- **TaAF, Together an Active Future**
- **Lancashire County Council**
- **Hyndburn Leisure**
- **Accrington Stanley Community Trust**
- **Aawaz Accesspoint**
- **Prospects**
- **Canal & River Trust**
- **Super slow way**
- **Spring into Action**
- **Community Solutions NW**
- **England Athletics**
- **British Cycling**
- **Hyndburn's Elected Members**
- **Hyndburn Residents via Public survey**
- **Hyndburn Greenspace Forum.**



Hyndburn
Borough Council



Hyndburn
Leisure

Active Environment Strategy

HYNDBURN

2025 to 2030