

6.2 Physical activity

The Chief Medical Officer's Report *At least five a week: Evidence on the impact of physical activity and its relationship to health*¹ evidences the preventative and therapeutic benefits of physical activity on a range of conditions including obesity, cardiovascular disease, diabetes, cancer, musculoskeletal disorders and mental wellbeing. It is estimated that the consequences of physical inactivity in the Walsall population cost the local economy £33m per year and NHS Walsall £4.3m.

Sport England's Active People Survey data² show that more than 30% of Walsall residents take part in no recreational physical activity, compared to 27.7% nationally and 29.1% in West Midlands. Compared to Black Country partners, inactivity levels are worse than Wolverhampton but ahead of Sandwell and Wolverhampton. The proportion of adults who take part in 150 minutes of physical activity is just below 50% and remains well below the national (57%) and West Midlands average (55.7%).

Indicators:

The indicator used for physical activity in adults is:

"The percentage of adults taking part in no physical activity per week"

"The percentage of adults achieving at least 150 minutes physical activity per week".

Priorities for action:

The overriding principle of tackling physical inactivity in Walsall needs to be the *Proportionate Universalism* advocated in The Marmot Review:

- *Increasing and supporting attendances at leisure centres, community centres and other physical activity provision*
- *Increasing usage of the borough's green spaces, parks, green gyms, play and open spaces through development of infrastructure and effective pathways (e.g. Social Prescribing)*
- *Identifying a consistent set of target groups and priority geographical areas across all partner agencies*
- *Supporting key target groups to reduce the barriers to participation, identifying referral routes and access to specialist support and discount schemes*
- *Coordinated promotion and marketing of key programmes with the ability to deliver the increase in participation appropriately targeted to key market segments*
- *Ensuring planning approaches create a positive environment for physical activity, including building design, locality planning, accessibility and neighbourhood provision*

¹ *At least five a week: Evidence on the impact of physical activity and its relationship to health*. Chief Medical Officer's Report, Department of Health, 2004.

² *Sport England (2015) Active People Survey*

- *Creating a borough wide network of safe cycle-ways and footpaths between major destination points i.e. town centres, schools, leisure centres, premier parks, community centres and play areas.*