

Briefing: Sporting Future: First Annual Report and Sport England's investment programmes for tackling inactivity.

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Issues Covered

- Funding
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Categories

[Culture and sport](#), [Health, public health, adult social care](#), [Voluntary Sector and Community Engagement](#)

Related briefings

LGIU (2016) [Briefing: Sporting Future: A New Strategy for an Active Nation](#)

LGIU (2016) [Briefing: Sport England: Towards an Active Nation Strategy 2016-21](#)

Summary

Earlier this year the Government published its [First Annual Report](#) on its sports strategy *Sporting Future* as the first results of the new Active Lives survey were released showing that 25 per cent of adults are inactive, providing the baseline for Sport England's delivery framework and investment programmes for tackling inactivity. Sport England has announced details of the second round of its inactivity fund [Tackling Inactivity and Economic Disadvantage](#) which will support people on low incomes to become more active. It follows earlier announced [investment opportunities](#) for sports providers and organisations, as well as local authorities, to apply for to deliver the outcomes and objectives of *Sporting Future*. This briefing provides a policy update on sport and physical activity. This briefing will be of interest to councils and their local partners, and particularly to officers and members with responsibilities for sport and physical activity.

Briefing in full

Policy update

Earlier this year the Government published [Sporting Future: First Annual Report](#) which reviewed progress against its sports strategy [Sporting Future: A new Strategy for an Active Nation](#) launched in December 2015 (see LgiU's [related briefings](#)). The report renews the Government's commitment to supporting the most inactive people in society to access sport, leisure and exercise, raising overall levels of activity and aligning funding to a new outcomes framework – physical and mental wellbeing, individual development, social and community development, and economic development – through Sport England's [delivery framework](#) and investment programmes.

The report reiterates the Government's long-term approach towards harnessing sport for social good and realising the wider benefits of sport and physical activity for individuals and society, rather than focussing on raw participation figures alone. There is a particular re-emphasis from the Government and Sport England on behaviour change, understanding the complex nature of inactivity (an individual's activity level does not stay at the same level throughout their life), and shifting the focus of activity in the sports sector from those that already play sport towards those who are inactive or engage infrequently; the 25 per cent of people in England who do not achieve 30 minutes of activity a week for whom the health benefits of sport are greatest, and specific groups more likely to be inactive, including disabled people, women and girls, people from lower socio-economic groups, those with or at risk of long-term health conditions, people from particular ethnic groups, and older people.

See Sport England's insight work on inactivity and the use of behaviour change theory and approaches to get more people active [here](#). Local authority data on inactivity, including the first year's results of the new Active Lives Survey can be accessed at Sport England's local sport profile tool [here](#).

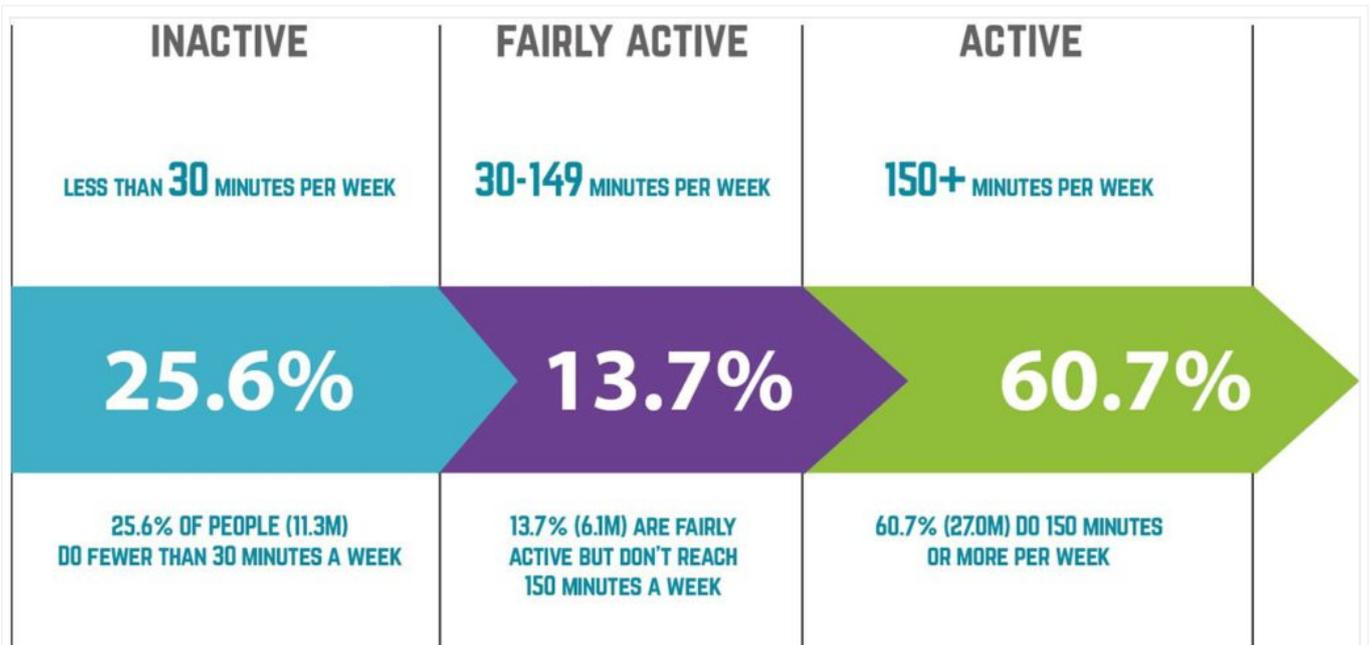


Figure 1: Levels of Inactivity. Sport England (2017) Active Lives Survey 2015-16 Year 1 Report

Both the Minister for Sport and the review itself acknowledged the role that local authorities play in the delivery of sport and physical activity as both a commissioner and local facilitator. The review acknowledges that: "Local government continues to have a crucial part to play in the delivery of sport and physical activity in England, bringing schools, voluntary sport clubs, national governing bodies of sport, health and the private sector together to forge partnerships, unblock barriers to participation and improve the local sport delivery system." In her Forward the Minister for Sport calls on local authorities to "put sport and physical activity at the heart of what they do, to reap the benefits it has across all the areas that they are responsible for."

Sport England's investment lines to local delivery will see up to £130 million allocated over the next four years to develop and implement local strategies for physical activity and sport focused on inactivity and under-represented groups in ten pilot urban and rural places in England. Expressions of interest opened at the end of last year and initial awards will be made this Summer and onwards. Local authorities can find out about their regional Sport England hubs and relationship managers [here](#).

Sport England has also announced details of the second round of its inactivity fund, a £3 million [tackling inactivity and economic disadvantage](#) fund which will support people on low incomes who are less likely to take part in sport and physical activity. This fund was delayed due to the general election purdah. Sport England will publish full details and a prospectus in mid-June. Expressions of interest for Sport England's [Families Fund](#), which will see up to £40 million invested in projects that offer new opportunities for families with children to do sport and physical activity together, opened in May with awards from Autumn 2017. Sport England will also continue to support local delivery through their [Strategic Facilities Fund](#), which directs capital investment into a number of key local area projects, and the popular [Community Asset Fund](#), which invests in improving existing and new local sports facilities. See Sport England's funding key dates guide [here](#).

Other notable (re)commitments in *Sporting Future: First Annual report* relevant to community sport include:

- Creation of an Inter-Ministerial Group to ensure coordination across departments and to promote sport and physical activity;
- Public Health: Integrated approach with public health through the implementation of [Everybody Active, Every Day](#); the creation of a new Clinical Leadership Group to promote the integration of sport and physical activity into care pathways; a focus on swimming for school children with the Amateur Swimming Association leading a working group to ensure children who leave school reach a minimum standard; and implementation of the Government's action plan on childhood obesity, [Childhood obesity: a plan for action](#).
- Primary PE and Sport Premium: confirmation of the commitment to the premium until 2020 using revenue from the soft drinks industry levy to double annual funding for the premium from £160m to £320m from September 2017. In February, the Department for Education [announced](#) a £415 million investment from the Soft Drink Industry Levy to improve school facilities to help pupils benefit from healthier and more active lifestyles. The Government confirmed that the new healthy pupils capital programme funding will be available in 2018 to 2019 and further information on the allocation formula will be announced later in the year.
- Confirmation of a forthcoming commercial framework to support providers and organisations become less reliant on public funding and generate alternative sources of income;
- Building on Sport England's [volunteering strategy](#) and investment with a professional workforce strategy for the sports sector later in 2017, with work led by UK Sport England in partnership with expert organisations on diversity and leadership, addressing homophobia in sport, and LGB&T insight and capacity building.

Levels of Inactivity in England: Active Lives Survey 2015-16 Year 1

The year one progress review of *Sporting Future* came as the first-year results of the new Active Lives survey 2015-16 were released at the start of the year, providing the baseline position against which the outcomes and objectives of the strategy will be measured. The new survey is delivered by IPSOS-MORI and comprehensive in scale; 200,000 people completed the first round of the survey between November 2015 and November 2016.

Measuring inactivity

Taking part in sport and physical activity is now measured as: "the equivalent of 30 minutes' activity at least twice in the last 28 days. Each session must last at least 10 minutes and be of at least moderate intensity. An individual can reach the minimum threshold by a combination of two 30 minute sessions across the last 28 days or by six 10 minute sessions, for example."

The Chief Medical Officer (CMO) recommends that adults should be physically active which can be done through a range of activities from walking to creative dance, sport, cycling and fitness. The activities:

- Should ideally spread over several days (adults should aim to be active daily)

- Should be achieved in bouts of 10 minutes or more.
- Should be of at least moderate intensity

Moderate activity is defined as activity where individuals raise their heart rate and feel a little out of breath.

Vigorous activity is where individuals are breathing hard and fast and their heart rate has increased significantly (they won't be able to say more than a few words without pausing for breath).

Active Lives identifies three levels of activity:

- Inactive (less than 30 minutes a week of activity)
- Fairly Active (30-149 minutes a week)
- Active (at least 150 minutes a week)

The headline figures from Active Lives show that 25.6 per cent of adults (11.3 million) are currently inactive, 13.6 per cent of adults are fairly active (6.1 million) and 60.7 per cent (27 million) are active.

The 25.6 per cent of people inactive, is down from the 29 per cent in the previous datasets, showing a positive trend towards raising overall levels of activity, but with more to do to support those inactive and fairly active.

In its year 2 progress update on the national physical activity framework 'Everybody Active, Every Day', Public Health England reports on this trend:

After two years one would expect negligible changes in statistics at a national scale. This is due to data collection cycles, as well as the timescale for impact from intervention to population shift (especially for built environment interventions). However, this should not be misinterpreted, as international evidence demonstrates that mobilising the nation takes years to achieve significant and sustained changes in the statistical data at a population level.

However, it is positive that between 2013 and 2015 there has been a statistically significant 1 per cent increase in the proportion of the population across local areas achieving the recommended 150 minutes of moderate intensity physical activity each week. This represents over half a million more people whose health and wellbeing is benefiting from being active every day. Increases have been seen in all nine regions of England and at local authority level around 60 per cent of authorities have seen improvement

And the Sport and Recreation Alliance commented in relation to the most recent Active Lives figures:

At the broadest level, the report reveals that 60 per cent of the nation are reaching or going above the Chief Medical Officer's activity guidelines. This is clearly an encouraging start, but as a sector we need to treat this figure as the benchmark from which to build on. There is also a need to interrogate and understand the detail behind the data, since levels of participation vary significantly when looked at through different demographic lenses.

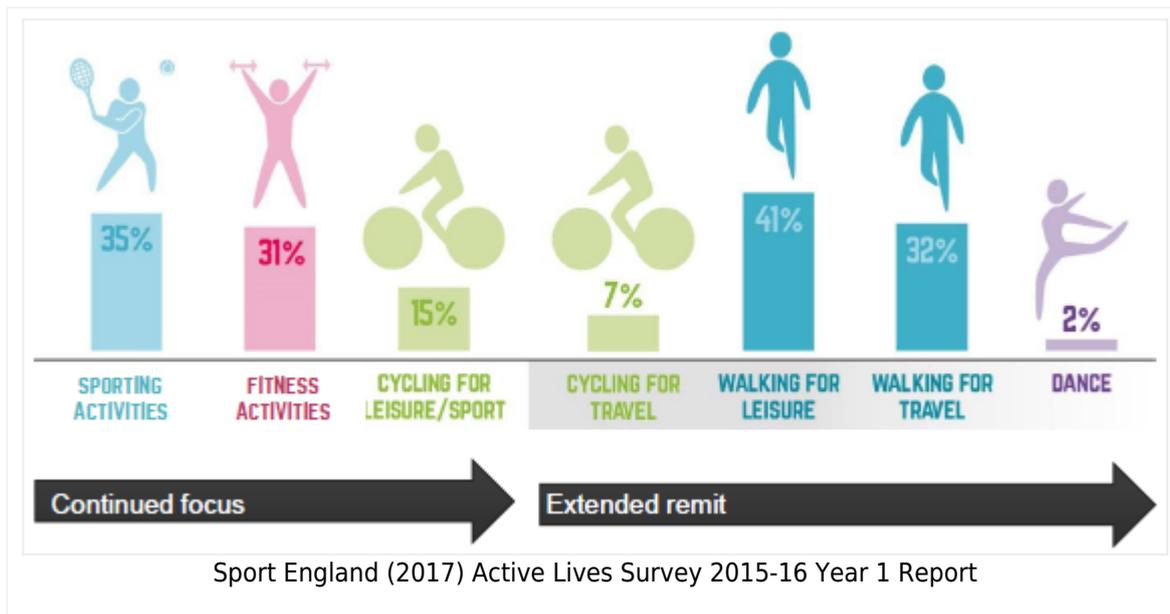
Looking ahead, our focus needs to be on getting the 25 per cent of our population who are "inactive" involved in sport and recreation, and encourage those who are currently classed as "fairly active" to increase their weekly activity. ~ Emma Boggis, Chief Executive of the Sport and Recreation Alliance.

Focussing on inactivity, Active Lives provides the following insight and baselines:

- **Socioeconomic** groups: People who are long term unemployed or have never worked are the most likely to be inactive (37 per cent) while those in managerial, administrative and professional occupations are the least likely to be inactive (17 per cent).
- **Gender**: There is a difference in inactivity levels between men and women, with females (27 per cent or 6.1 million) more likely to be inactive than males (24 per cent or 5.3 million).
- **Age**: Inactivity levels increase with age. Those aged 16-24 are least likely to be inactive (15 per cent or 0.9 million) whilst those aged 75+ are most likely to be inactive (54 per cent or 2.4 million).
- **Disability**: In terms of inactivity, there are differences between those with or without a disability; 51 per cent of those with three or more impairments are inactive compared with 21 per cent of those without a disability.

The inclusion of a broader range of activities in addition to sporting activities shows the impact that walking,

fitness activities and playing sport has on people’s lives. The survey found that many people do several things to add up to an active lifestyle. The graph below shows the proportion of adults taking part at least twice (at moderate intensity for the equivalent of 30 minutes) in the last 28 days in the broad groupings of activity that make up sport and physical activity.



Local authorities are encouraged to access their [local level data on activity and inactivity](#). Nine regions, 44 County Sports Partnerships, and 353 local authorities are available for the following measures: Physical Activity (including gardening) and taking part at least twice in the last 28 days. The heatmap below shows inactivity levels across England.

INACTIVITY ACROSS ENGLAND

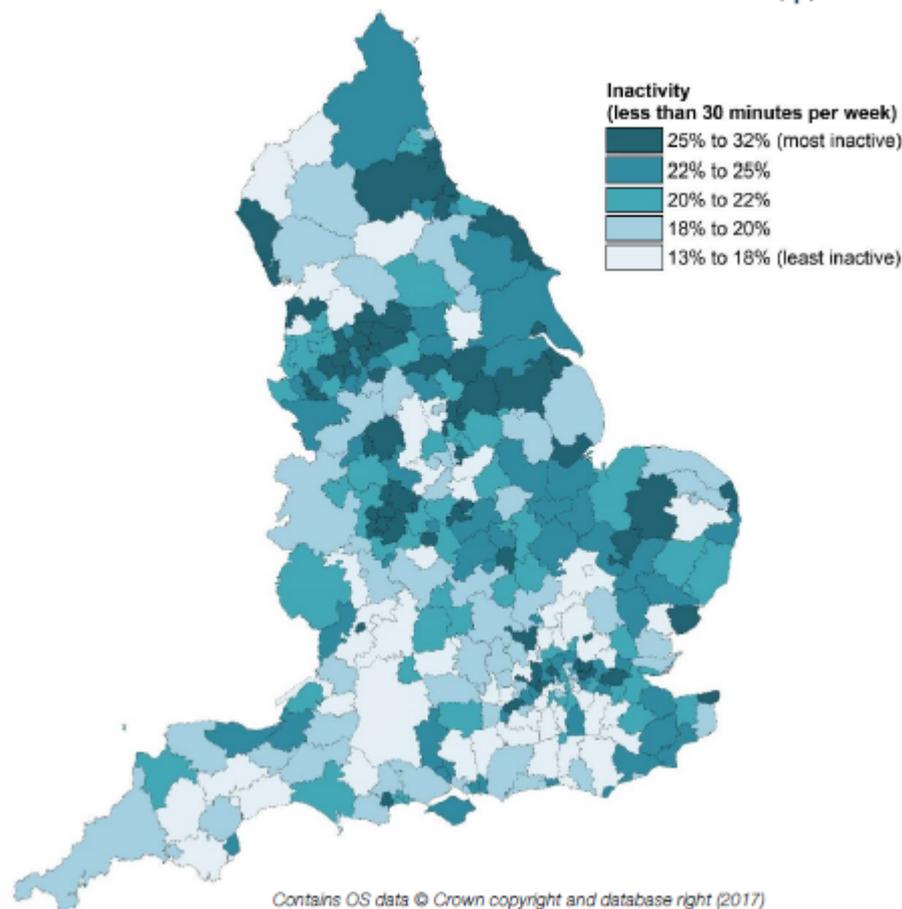


Figure 3: Inactivity across England. Sport England (2017) Active Lives Survey 2015-16 Year 1 Report

Tackling inactivity investment opportunities

Over the last few months Sport England has announced a number of key investment opportunities for sports providers and organisations, as well as local authorities, to apply for as part of their delivery of grassroots programmes and projects that fulfil the outcomes and objectives of Sporting Future. These are [listed](#) in full on Sport England's website along with funding prospectuses, guidance and timeframes.

The first round of funding to tackle inactivity has consisted of:

- [Active Ageing](#): a £10 million investment in projects to support inactive older people aged 55 and over to achieve at least 30 minutes of moderate intensity of physical activity per week.
- [Tackling Inactivity in Colleges](#): a £5 million investment into projects that support students aged 14-19, particularly those in lower-socio-economic groups, to become more active. There are more unrepresented groups in college than any other educational setting and students studying at college are less likely to be active compared to those at schools or universities.

The second round of inactivity funding, [tackling inactivity and economic disadvantage](#), which will support people on low incomes who are less likely to take part in sport and physical activity.

The £3 million National Lottery fund will be split into two parts with £2 million allocated to support larger sports projects for people who have little disposable income who find it hard to build activity into their lives, and £1 million for projects between £10,000 and £100,000 for people who are significantly less likely to have a steady

income, or any income at all with additional needs and challenges such as substance misuse or mental health issues.

This fund was delayed due to the general election purdah. Sport England will publish full details and a prospectus in mid-June.

Case studies and resources

Sport England has produced an [‘essential insight’ resource](#) to share the learning and practice from its *Make Your Move* programme and to help sports organisations develop effective approaches to tackling inactivity. The resource includes design principles to help organisations design projects and services that target inactive people, and a checklist to help organisations embed these principles into service delivery. The guidance highlights the importance of understanding the complex nature of inactivity, using behaviour change approaches and audience insight to develop effective and targeted approaches, building quality partnerships, measuring impact and supporting the scaling up of activities.

Sport England’s report *Tackling Inactivity. What we know: Key insights from our Get Healthy Active pilots* identifies the following case studies of good practice in tackling inactivity.

- **Kingston upon Hull City Council’s ‘Us Mums and Us Mums To Be’.** The project supports women at key life stages to improve the health and wellbeing of their loved ones, as well as themselves.
- **Leicester-shire and Rutland Sport.** A combined approach of one-to-one mentoring and group-led delivery of sports in target wards is helping inactive people become more active. Mentoring is helping participants chose the physical activity that is right for them
- **CSP Network Workplace Challenge.** Evaluation in June 2015 found that participants frequently said activity levels decreased once the national eight-week challenge had ended. This evaluation is helping the steering group identify how to maintain activity levels after an initial spike.
- **ukactive’s Let’s Get Moving programme** implements brief interventions and motivational interviewing support for inactive people in primary care settings, to support them in taking up activity. Working with the practice managers at surgeries, ukactive developed an approach that saw Community Exercise Professional (CEP) embedded in the surgeries as part of a wider multi-disciplinary health team that patients could access.
- **County Durham Sport’s Move into Sport project** helps local providers deliver sport sessions that are tailored and targeted at people who are inactive at risk of cardiovascular disease and Type 2 Diabetes.
- **Macmillan Cancer Support - Get Healthy Get into Sport programme** helping people diagnosed with cancer to get active.
- **Leeds City Council’s Let’s Get Active** programme consisting of gym, swim, and free exercise sessions at certain times in the city’s leisure facilities. Increased targeting of activity offers in deprived areas. 80 per cent of participants identified as inactive at baseline were no longer classified as inactive at follow-up.
- **Active Norfolk’s Fun and Fit Norfolk** providing a ten-week programme of varied sports activities through a phased approach, allowing people to choose different ten week sessions depending on their needs and interests.

Comment

With the unfolding of Sport England’s delivery framework and investment programme to fulfil the aspirations in Sporting Future spanning the wider political events of 2016 and the arrival of a new Prime Minister and Secretary State for Culture, Media and Sport, the Government’s progress review Sporting Future: First Annual Report provided a welcome and timely re-commitment to investment and delivery against the wider outcomes and benefits for individuals and society at the heart of the sports strategy.

The acknowledgement of the strategic role that local authorities play in commissioning and co-ordinating community sport and physical activity locally in partnership with sports bodies, schools, the voluntary sector, health and the private sector is particularly welcome. As is the focus on closer integration with public health.

However, local authorities continue to reprioritise and target resources in response to reductions in public health expenditure, wider budget reductions, and demands in social care services, which puts pressure on physical activity initiatives locally. As Cllr Ian Stephens, Chairman of the LGA's Culture, Tourism and Sport Board explained earlier in the year:

“Councils play an important role in helping people get out and about and become more physically active. However, with a quarter of the population still classed as inactive, government reductions to public health funding and significant ongoing pressures on council budgets mean local authority efforts to get more people active are being undermined. Getting more people active is a major long-term cost saving for the country as it prevents the need for treatment further down the line that puts significant extra pressure on the NHS and social care.”

A clear baseline on the levels of activity and inactivity has been established in the form the first set of results of Active Lives which provides a welcome focus on activity more broadly; for example recognising the health and wellbeing benefits of activities such as walking for travel purposes and in some datasets gardening. A key challenge for the sports and physical activity sector will be responding and tailoring their offers to supporting the behaviours of those who are inactive, while continuing to deliver positive outcomes for their customers and service users in their core markets.

For more information about this, or any other LGiU member briefing, please contact Janet Sillett, Head of Briefings, on janet.sillett@lgiu.org.uk