

# Leisure and Cultural Activity Strategy 2013 - 2023





Ladies cycling session at Three Sisters Recreation Area, Bryn.

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## Forward by Councillor Chris Ready, Portfolio holder Housing and Leisure Client/Communications



We are fortunate to have a large range of leisure and cultural facilities across the borough, but we need to keep a relentless focus how we operate our facilities and services to be sure that our residents are able to do the things that they want to do and at times that suit them. This strategy aims to build on the solid foundations of an excellent facilities infrastructure to ensure that we continue to provide a high quality, cost effective and targeted leisure and cultural offer over the next ten years, taking into account external factors which will come to bear during this period. We will need to continue to work hard with and alongside our partners and, most importantly, our community groups to provide the best services and facilities possible.

residents is poor and life expectancy is lower than the national average. We therefore need to focus on increasing participation in regular physical activity as we know that it will improve health and wellbeing.

Leisure and cultural services are a key component of the Council's corporate strategy, especially achieving the aims around health and wellbeing. This strategy outlines the need to prioritise services which impact on health especially amongst groups of the population who are currently inactive.

The council is facing enormous budget pressures and it is unavoidable that the leisure and cultural offer will change significantly over the next 5 -10 years. This strategy will ensure that the resources available to the Council for leisure and cultural services are spent in the best way possible to make the biggest impact on the health and wellbeing of our residents.



# 1 : The Vision

Our vision is that all local people are given the opportunities to be able to maintain their own health and wellbeing and to lead healthy lifestyles by participating in activities which have health and wellbeing benefits.

During the timeframe of this strategy we aim to significantly increase the number of Wigan people participating in regular physical activity. We will target our focus on our population whose health will benefit the most from increasing their participation and leading active lives.

We will ensure that suitable and accessible facilities and services are provided across the borough by a range providers (including public, private and third sector organisations) and work to encourage people to use these in order to benefit their health and wellbeing.



## 2 : A Leisure and Cultural Activity Strategy for Wigan

This Leisure and Cultural Activity Strategy is a summary of a wider study undertaken by V4 Services Limited in partnership with Strategic Leisure and Neil Allen Associates which sets out the key findings from a research and consultation exercise with key stakeholders. The work has been undertaken to understand the current leisure and cultural offer in the Borough and to provide analysis of the future requirements taking into account the health issues of the borough's residents and set against a background of declining public sector resources.

It is important to understand how the work that is undertaken by the council and its partners in the area of leisure and culture continues to fit into the current strategic context. In particular, we must ensure that leisure and cultural services compliment other council services in ensuring the health and wellbeing of our residents, both in terms of physical and mental health. The new Health and Wellbeing Board is preparing a Health and Wellbeing Strategy and it is vital that the leisure and cultural strategy contributes to this important area of work. Hence this Leisure and Cultural Activity Strategy makes many references to wellbeing and must be seen as a significant element of the council's wider Health and Wellbeing agenda.

### 2.1 : Purpose of the Strategy

Evidence, which is set out later in this strategy, shows that the health of our residents is below national average for some key life shortening diseases and life expectancy is lower than the national average.

Leisure and cultural services can play an important role in keeping people fit and healthy and getting inactive people to participate, with the aim of reducing future NHS treatment costs. These services and facilities are offered by a wide range of providers, including commercial, third sector and voluntary groups as well as the council and other public sector organisations. Leisure and cultural services will remain a key component of the Council's corporate strategy especially in relation to achieving the aims around health and wellbeing. For this reason this strategy identifies and outlines the intention to focus our resources on activities and facilities which will have greatest impact on health and wellbeing outcomes with the aim of increasing participation in regular physical activity. The

strategy has a focus on council activities, but ensures that these are assessed in the context of all leisure and cultural activity across the borough regardless of who provides it. This will give the opportunity to consider the most appropriate way for council services to be provided in the future.

Given the current budget pressures facing the Council it is inevitable that the leisure and cultural offer will change significantly over the period of time covered by this strategy. Some of the facilities and services will operate different hours or in a different way, some will transfer to local community groups to operate, and Council funding to support some facilities and services will no longer be provided. The strategy will help to provide the framework and understanding so that in future we will be able ensure that the resources available to the Council for leisure and cultural services are spent efficiently and are targeted towards services which make the biggest impact on the health and wellbeing of the population.

This strategy aims to provide an essential background to future decisions by the authority in relation to a number of service areas including; indoor and outdoor sport and leisure facilities, sport and leisure activities, libraries and heritage facilities and parks and open spaces. In particular we need to ensure that we engage with people, both individually and through local community groups, in a way that encourages them to use all the leisure and cultural services and facilities across the borough to become more active.

The council makes a significant financial investment in leisure and cultural services in the borough. The services that the council's investment provides generates income, such as gym membership fees and external grounds maintenance contracts. Currently the council's contribution is doubled from income received. Importantly both the council's contribution and the income is invested in services that benefit the residents of Wigan. If we change the focus of our investment we need to also consider how this will impact on income that is generated.

The strategy is intended to set out, along with other strategies, the council's priority to improve the health and wellbeing of our residents. It will clearly define how the leisure and cultural services will move forward over the next ten years. It provides a starting point from which the authority can develop its leisure and cultural offer to the community and put in context the continued development of the service within a framework of the authority's wider aims and aspirations.

This strategy is all about making Wigan Borough a place where people of all ages can live active and healthy lifestyles. The strategy is an important component of a longer term plan to make well informed commissioning decisions about how facilities and services are to be managed, maintained and developed in the future. It will be delivered through action plans, with our commissioning process based on setting out the outcomes we intend to achieve.



“It is important to understand how the work that is undertaken by the council and its partners in the area of leisure and culture continues to fit into the current strategic context.”

### 3 : Links Between the Strategy and Other Corporate Plans and Strategies

The council has a series of corporate documents that set out the strategies for the services that we provide. The overarching document is the Corporate Strategy 2011-2016. This Leisure and Cultural Activity Strategy fits clearly as a key element of the Corporate Strategy, and in particular links need to be made with leisure and cultural services to the key corporate strategic objectives of:

- Helping people to stay healthy longer
- Improving life opportunities and independence eg through volunteering in leisure
- An attractive, accessible and lively borough eg through people walking and cycling throughout the borough
- Re-focussed reduced resources towards early intervention and prevention to achieve more for less eg through engaging with people to take up exercise to improve their health or prevent health issues.

The following table shows the “golden thread” between key strategies and plans.

Strategic document	Most relevant links to the Leisure and Cultural Activity Strategy
<p><b>Corporate Strategy 2011 – 2016</b></p> <p>This is the key strategic document and sets out the Councils broad strategic aims – Confident Places, Confident People, and a Confident Council.</p> <p>Relevant key delivery programmes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Development of an Activity and Leisure Strategy;</li> <li>• Progression of the Urban Green Agenda;</li> <li>• Integrating Health and Well Being including the Health and Wellbeing Board;</li> <li>• Building self reliance;</li> <li>• The Greenheart Countryside Park</li> </ul>	<p><b>Confident Places</b></p> <p>Maximise the potential of green open spaces. Establish a leisure and cultural offer that delivers a range of quality facilities and positive activities that are accessible to all</p> <p><b>Confident People</b></p> <p>People want to have access to facilities and information that enable them to have a healthy and active lifestyle.</p> <p>People take ownership of their health and so there are fewer early deaths and people stay healthy longer.</p> <p><b>Confident Council</b></p> <p>Increased levels of customer satisfaction</p> <p>Demonstrating value for money</p>

<p><b>Health and Wellbeing Strategy 2013 – 2014</b></p> <p>This sets out the joint council and NHS strategy for health and well being in Wigan Borough. It sets out two overarching transformation themes: transforming population health and well being and transforming our health and care system.</p>	<p>Relevant key themes are:</p> <p><b>Start Well, Live Well, Age Well</b></p> <p>This strategy has key links between how health and wellbeing relates to leisure and cultural services, eg specific outcomes will benefit by ensuring linkages are made such as, long term conditions, alcohol, children’s health, falls prevention.</p>
<p><b>Getting Wigan Active : Sport Health and Physical Education (SHAPE) Policy</b></p> <p>This contains four themes:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Transforming perception and culture</li> <li>2. Reducing inequalities and working within a range of targeted settings</li> <li>3. Providing a dynamic infrastructure – facilities, services and programmes that are evenly distributed across the borough</li> <li>4. Developing the scope for personal development and self-care - enabling people to develop their potential through personalised support and targeted programmes</li> </ol>	<p>SHAPE is not just a sports policy, but a policy for health, education, culture, social care, stronger and safer communities, and economic development. All of these key areas need to have an opportunity to contribute and have a voice if a coherent ‘joined-up’ strategic approach is to be achieved.</p>
<p><b>Local Development Framework</b></p> <p>This is a document that sets out the planning strategy for the borough.</p>	<p>Contains policies to ensure that cycling and walking is promoted both within existing land uses and in proposed development.</p>
<p><b>Transport Strategy (including draft Cycling Strategy)</b></p> <p>This strategy addresses transportation matters and long term transport issues to ensure that the transport networks will support the significant economic development forecast to 2026. This, in turn, will support the delivery of the Local Development Framework and the Greater Manchester Local Transport Plan.</p>	<p>Promotes “active travel” – walking and bikes</p> <p>The strategy covers the full range of transport issues, including congestion, parking, cycling, walking, and public transport.</p>

## 4 : Summary of the Evidence Base

In order to develop a targeted, intelligence-led strategy to shape the future of leisure and cultural services in Wigan a comprehensive evidence base has been established. This sits alongside wider intelligence from the

Joint Strategic Needs Assessment (JSNA). The evidence base is available as a separate document with a summary of the key findings and recommendations included below.

### 4.1 : Wigan Population and Projections

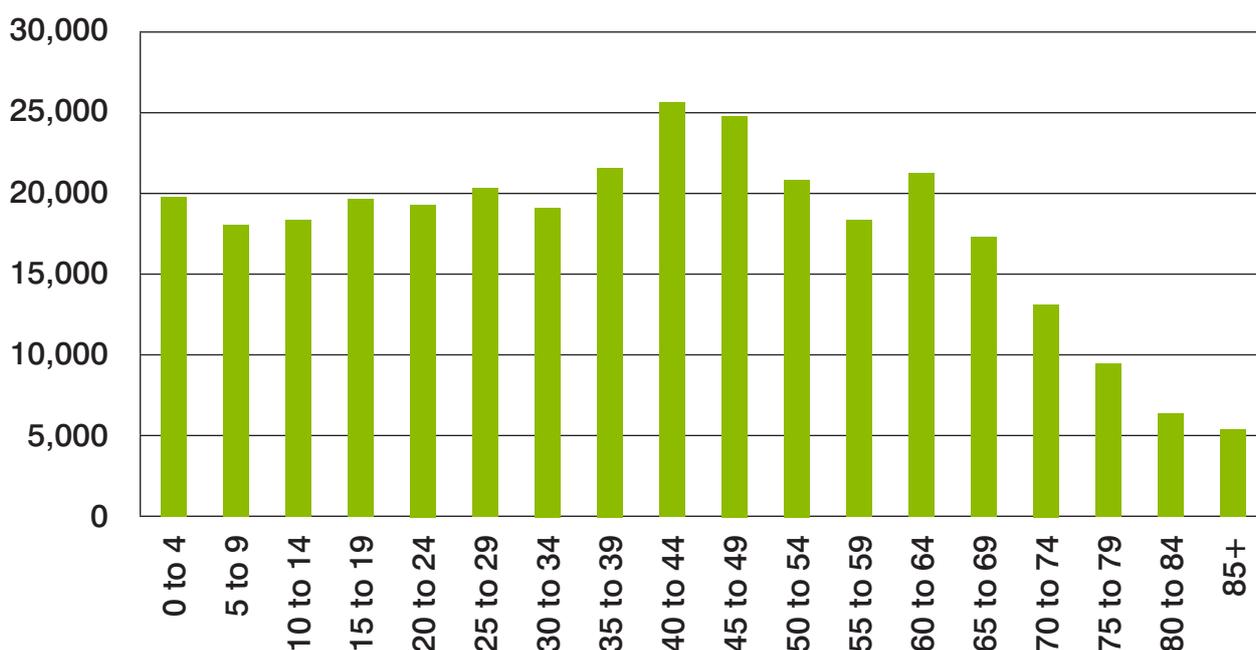
The Wigan population is aging, with 1 in 6 now of pensionable age; demands for appropriate leisure and cultural activities relevant to this cohort is likely to increase. In order to help reduce the demand for health dependency services which will result from the ageing of the population, investment needs to be redirected into prevention (of ill health) for older people. We need to keep people actively engaged as they get older, to prevent deterioration and dependence.

We need to ensure that commissioned services for leisure and culture target middle-aged to older people to keep them active and engaged for as long as possible. This needs to cover a wide range of service that are appropriate for an aging populations for example, walking, classes such as tai chi and library activities that will help to maintain mental function.

The table below shows that the largest population cohort in Wigan is the 40-49's category, which accounts for over 50,000 of all residents in the borough (15.7%).

The population of Wigan is forecasted to age faster than in the last 10 years with the number of over 75's increasing by 39%.

**Population of Wigan by 5 year age band**



Source: Office of National Statistics (ONS) Census 2011

Older adults are the least active section of the population and there is currently a large shortfall between current and ideal levels of activity. Nationally only 17% of men and 13% of women between the ages of 65 - 74 meet the Chief Medical Officer's recommendations for levels of activity (at two and a half hours a week of moderate to vigorous activity).

This drops to 8% and 3% respectively for people over the age of 75. Latest data for Wigan show that less than 30% of people aged 65 - 74 and 15% of over 75's do any sport or exercise of moderate intensity for at least 10 minutes .

## Key messages:

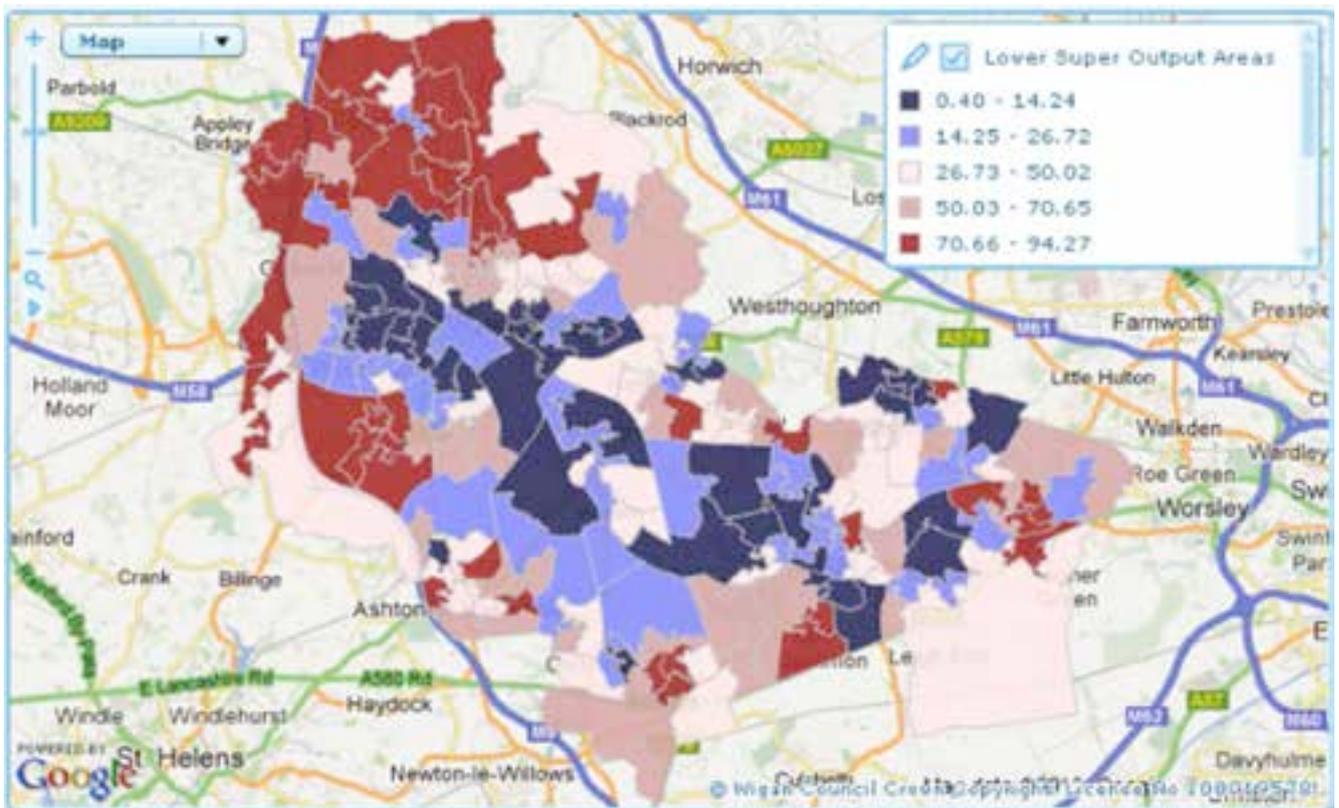
1. The population of Wigan now stands at 317,800. This represented a growth in population of 5.4% (16,378) over the last 10 years
2. The largest population cohort within Wigan is the 40-49's category accounting for over 50,000 all residents in the borough (15.7%). In addition there remains a significant number of 50-59 year olds (39,100) and 30-39 year olds (40,500) within the borough
3. The population of Wigan is forecasted to age faster than in the last 10 years with the number of over 75's increasing by 39%. The demands for appropriate leisure and cultural activities relevant to this cohort is likely to increase.
4. Older adults are the least active section of the population and there is currently a large shortfall between current and recommended levels of activity.
5. Evidence suggests that our current older population groups are not engaged fully with our services or using our facilities from a physical activity perspective. Future services must tackle this deficit as the need to engage will increase.

## 4.2 : Health Profile of the Current Population and Forecasts

The link between economic deprivation and poor health outcomes is well established. Deprivation in Wigan is higher than the national average, with 29.6% of the population living within the 20% most deprived areas in England. Within these areas lie more acutely deprived communities, 10 of which rank within the top 3% most deprived in the country.

In terms of general life expectancy males and females in the borough do not live as long as the national average (2 years less). Male residents living in the most deprived areas of Wigan live 11 years less than those in the least deprived areas. Females live 8 years less in the most deprived areas than those in the least deprived areas. This indicates the inequalities in health between the deprived and relatively affluent communities within the Borough.

The map below shows the geographical spread of deprivation across the borough. The blue, and particularly darker blue areas signify the most deprived communities in Wigan, which can be seen to run through the centre of the borough, with the least deprived communities predominantly at its outer edges.



Circulatory disease accounts for the highest cause of death in our female population. Circulatory disease and cancer are the highest cause of death for males. Early death rates from heart disease and stroke have fallen, but they are still worse than the England average. Physical activity keeps adults healthier by preventing or delaying over 20 conditions, including heart disease, stroke and type 2 diabetes, which are the biggest contributors to lower life expectancy in Wigan.

Obesity levels for both adults and children are slightly above the England average. 25.8% of adults are estimated to be obese and within children 19.2% aged 10-11yrs and 10.4% aged 4-5yrs are obese. Deprived central areas of the borough have the highest estimated levels of obesity. By 2015, the number of obese adults is expected to increase 18% on 2010 figures to just over 83,00 people. Inactivity is a major contributor to the increase in excess weight.

There are estimated to be about 80,000 people with long term chronic health conditions in the borough, which represents 22% of all residents (compared to 18% of England residents). In Wigan most over 65s have two or more conditions and most over 75s have three or more chronic health.

Falls are a major cause of disability, and the leading cause of mortality due to injury in older people aged over 75 in the UK. Wigan has a higher rate of emergency hospital admissions for a fractured neck or femur in people over 65 than the national average at 538 (per 100,000 of the population) compared to 479 nationally.

The cost of health inequalities can be measured in human terms; including years of life lost and years of active life lost; and in economic terms, by the cost to the economy of additional illness. It is estimated that nationally inequality in illness accounts for productivity losses of £31- 33 billion per year, lost taxes and higher welfare payments in the range of £20-32 billion per year and additional NHS healthcare costs associated well in excess of £5.5 billion per year. In Wigan the health costs of inactivity for 2006/7 was at least £5.9 million.

## Key messages:

6. Physical inactivity is a significant, independent risk factor for a range of long-term health conditions that affect the population of Wigan today. There is a compelling case for the promotion of physical activity to secure the future health of our population.
7. We have poor health outcomes across a range of conditions. If this is not addressed, our projected aging population will compound these issues. This will have negative impacts on both the quality of life of those affected and in having to respond to poor health will place further financial and demand led strain on local public services.

## 4.3 : The Case for Promoting Active Lifestyles to Improve Health Outcomes

Inactive lifestyles in England are twice as prevalent as smoking, hypertension or high cholesterol. Evidence shows that the health impact of inactivity in terms of coronary heart disease, for example, is comparable to that of smoking, and almost as great as that of high cholesterol levels.

On average, an inactive person spends 38% more days in hospital than an active person, and has 5.5% more GP visits, 13% more specialist services and 12 % more nurse visits than an active individual.

We know that there is a strong case for an active lifestyle to improve health outcomes that can:

- have a substantial impact on the risk of major non-communicable disease, including heart disease, hypertension, type 2 diabetes, kidney disease and some cancers;
- reduce the risk of stroke, and be used to treat peripheral vascular disease and to modify cardiovascular disease risk factors;
- protect against cancers of the colon, breast (post-menopause) and endometrium;
- reduce the risk of and helps manage musculoskeletal health conditions, including osteoporosis, back pain and osteoarthritis;
- reduce the risk of depression and promotes many other positive mental health benefits, including improving physical self-perceptions and self-esteem; and can help reduce physiological reactions to stress;
- be just as effective in the treatment of mental ill health as anti-depressant drugs and psychotherapy; and

- support weight management – physical activity by itself can result in modest weight loss of around 0.5–1kg per month.

We also know that physical activity improves health outcomes whatever age you are, and therefore there are significant health gains to be achieved if people in Wigan can be supported to be more active. The people who will benefit most from small increases in physical activity are inactive people who begin to take part in regular, moderate-intensity activity.

Physical activity is part of the solution to supporting the promotion of independent living in older adults. By the age of 70, 25% of women and 7 % of men do not have sufficient leg strength to get out of a chair without using their arms. In addition, physical activity protects against cognitive decline in later life and against the onset of depressive symptoms and anxiety.

### Key messages:

8. There is a wider economic impact of poor health. Improvements to physical activity and lifestyle amongst targeted groups will benefit our population and our local economy.
9. Our activity and wellbeing strategy must focus on interventions and provision which produces maximum return on investment for the health and wellbeing of our residents, for example, by getting people who don't currently exercise to introduce some activity into their lifestyle and encouraging others to increase their amount of exercise

## 4.4 : Insights and Behaviour

If we are to develop an effective and targeted strategy we need to understand the behaviours of our population. This will allow us to target our investment in a way that changes behaviour and positively shifts outcomes.

Evidence, from a survey relating to the period 2009 - 11, shows that in Wigan only 21.8% of people undertook 3 x 30 minutes sessions or more of moderate intensity activity per week. This was generally similar to the regional and national average. However, male activity levels in Wigan were significantly higher than female (28.3% to 15.5%) and female levels were below the national average of 18.9%.

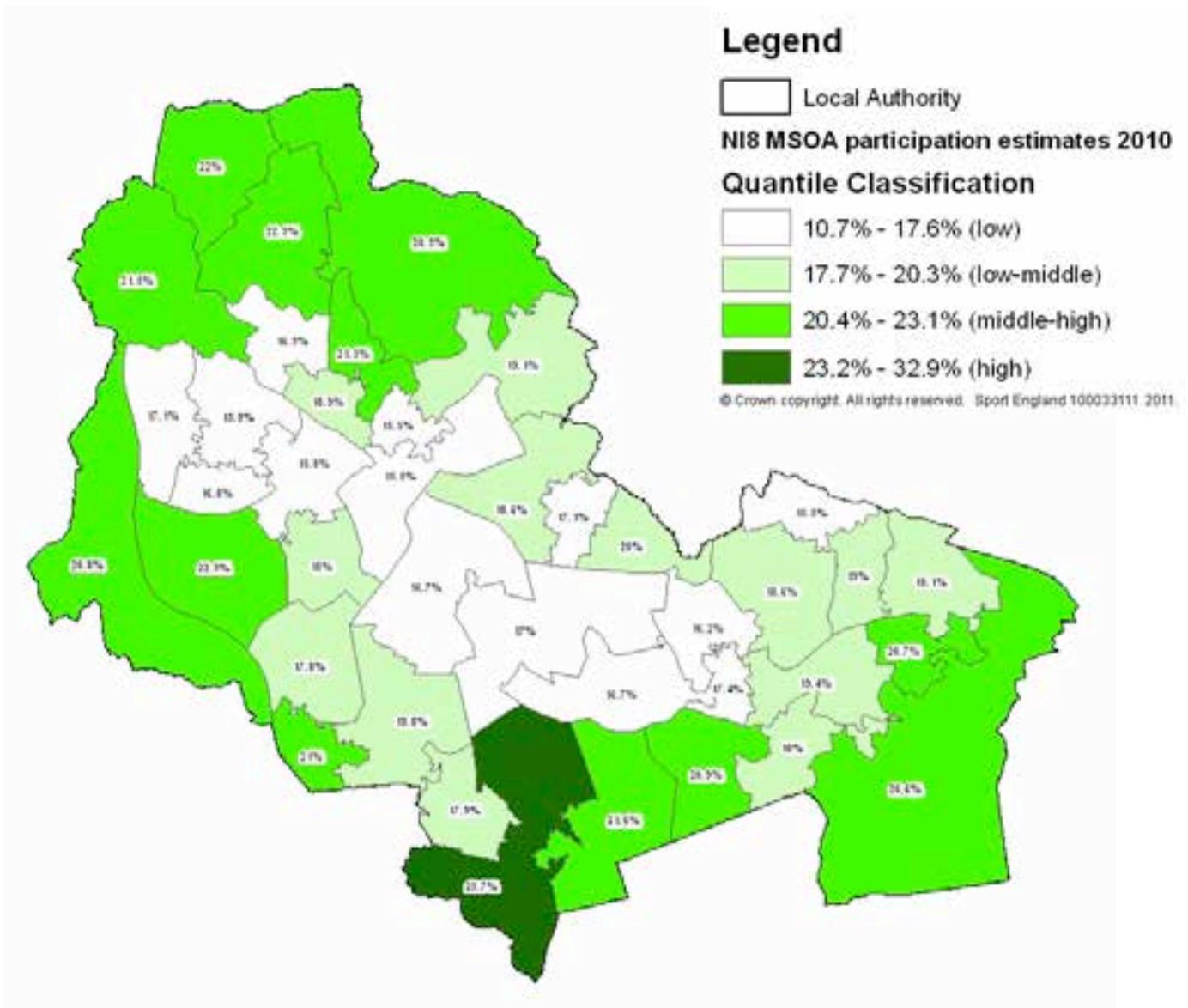
Initial findings from the same survey for the period 2010-12 shows that Wigan residents have become more active with 25.6% doing 3 x 30 minute sessions per week. The difference between male and female activity levels has reduced to 29.7% for males and 21.6% for females, but it is still a significant variation. Although there has been a recent improvement in activity levels there is still a long way to go. The 5 top sports that people participate in across the borough are; exercising at the gym, swimming, cycling, football and athletics.

The council's Citizens Panel Survey in 2011 showed that the leisure and cultural services most used by our residents are our parks and country parks (used by 81%), libraries (59%) and recreational cycleways and footpaths (52%).

There are variations in the level of activity dependent on where people live. The higher levels of participation are shown in the darker tones in the map below, and are located on the fringes of the borough. The lowest levels of activity run through the middle of the borough. There is a close correlation between areas of deprivation, low participation in sport and active recreation and high incidents of poor health.

The map below shows the levels of activity across the borough from information relating to 2010. More recent analysis for 2010-2012 shows some increase in the levels of activity, but even our best areas of activity are still at under 26% of the population taking regular exercise three times a week. It is clear that the areas of lowest activity reflect the areas of highest deprivation within the borough.





In terms of behaviour it is extremely significant that 51% of the borough's adult population stated in 2011 to Sport England that they wanted to do more sport.

Sport England have produced information to try to help understand the nation's attitude to sport and the motivations for doing it (or not), and as a part of this they categorised the population into 19 different sectors. The picture portraits below explain the most dominant sectors of residents in Wigan, which accounts for 47% of the population. They have been given names of; Kevin, Tim, Jackie, Brenda, Elsie, Arnold and Philip. These 6 pen portraits are of the people who make up the most dominant sectors.

**A brief description of these sectors of the population are:**

- Philip** – comfortable mid-life males
- Elsie and Arnold** – Retirement home singles
- Tim** – settling down males
- Kevin** – pub league team mates
- Brenda** – older working women
- Jackie** – middle aged mums

This type of information can be used to better understand the preferences and habits of residents, leading to more targeted and effective service delivery and communications planning. For example, Brenda is less active than an average person but is open to advice and could be encouraged to take up the activities she enjoys most, such as keep fit, going to the gym, swimming and cycling.

Philip is a comfortable mid-life professional aged between 46 and 55 with older children and more time for themselves. Philip enjoys cycling (15%) keep fit/gym (15%), swimming (12%), football (9%), golf (8%) and athletics/running (7%). His participation in most of his top sports is above the national average.



**9.9%**  
of the Wigan population are Philips.

**How to reach Philip?**

**Most responsive to:** Internet/email  
**Preferred information channel:** Internet  
**Preferred service channel:** Internet  
**Decision style:** Inquiring - he will make decisions that are based on research from either first or second hand sources.

Elsie and Arnold are characterised as retired singles or widowers, predominantly female and living in sheltered accomodation. Aged 66+, they are likely to be doing less sports than 12 months ago, mainly due to health or injury. The top sports that Elsie and Arnold participate in are keep fit/gym (10%).



**8.9%**  
of the Wigan population are Elsie and Arnold.

**How to reach Elsie and Arnold?**

**Most responsive to:** Post  
**Preferred information channel:** Local papers  
**Preferred service channel:** Face to face  
**Decision style:** Elsie and Arnold will take things at face value and are open to the advice and opinions of other people.

Tim is a sporty professional aged between 26 and 45. He takes part in sport on a regular basis, 21% of this segment take part in cycling compared to 9% of all adults; 20% of this segment take part in keep fit/gym compared to 17% of all adults. Swimming, football and athletics or running are also popular sport for Tim.



**6.7%**  
of the Wigan population are Tims.

**How to reach Tim?**

**Most responsive to:** Internet/email  
**Preferred information channel:** Internet  
**Preferred service channel:** Internet  
**Decision style:** Inquiring - he will make decisions that are based on research from either first or second hand sources.

Typically aged between 36 and 45, Kevin enjoys pub league games and watching live sport. With average level of sport participation he is most likely to take part in keep fit/gym (14%), football (12%), cycling (11%) and swimming (10%). When work allows he often takes in social activities that don't require physical activity.



**7.6%**  
of the Wigan population are Kevins.

**How to reach Kevin?**

**Most responsive to:** Television  
**Preferred information channel:** SMS Text  
**Preferred service channel:** Telephone/Internet  
**Decision style:** 'Experiential' - Kevin is open to new ideas and offers if they are presented in an original and entertaining way.

Brenda is typically aged 46-65, married and works part time. She is generally less active than the average population. Of those sports she is likely to participate in keep fit/gym is the most popular with 15% of the segment doing this, swimming (14%), cycling (4%) and running making up the majority of other sports



**7.5%**  
of the Wigan population are Brendas.

**How to reach Brenda?**

**Most responsive to:** Televisions ads  
**Preferred information channel:** Local papers  
**Preferred service channel:** Face to face  
**Decision style:** Accepting - she will take things at face value and is open to advice and opinions from other people.

Jackie is aged between 36 and is either a stay at home mum or a part-time skilled worker. She has above average participation in sport, although is less active than those in her age group. The top sports that Jackie participates in are keep fit/gym (22% compared to 17% of all adults) and swimming (20% compared to 14% of all adults.)



**7.6%**  
of the Wigan population are Jackies.

**How to reach Jackie?**

**Most responsive to:** Television  
**Preferred information channel:** Telephone  
**Preferred service channel:** Mobile  
**Decision style:** 'Intuitive' - Jackie prefers simple and straightforward messages, and doesn't like to be overwhelmed by facts and figures.

This information about our population relates to sport. Other leisure and cultural activities will have an impact on health as well. For example, mental health and well being is also positively affected by participation in cultural activities, such as visiting libraries and museums. Sport and other physical activity will also have positive impact on mental health. There is less evidence available about how our current services provide these benefits and the level of positive impact achieved within the borough. However, a government survey in 2009 showed that of the adult population across the NW:

- 74% participated in arts and cultural activities (eg reading, dancing, acting, drawing)
- 75% passively engaged with the arts (attend, watch or listen to artistic, theatrical or musical events)
- 46% visited a museum or gallery
- 42% visited a library
- 4% visited an archive
- 69% visited a heritage site (eg city or town with historic character, historic park or garden)

**“In terms of behaviour it is extremely significant that 51% of the borough’s adult population stated in 2011 to Sport England that they wanted to do more sport.”**

## Key messages:

10. Participation levels in sport and active recreation in Wigan vary across the borough, with low levels aligned with our more deprived communities and those with poorer health outcomes.
11. We have a good understanding of the activity levels and the health of our residents and their lifestyle choices. It is imperative that this evidence is used to shape future commissioning decisions to achieve optimum take up of services and facilities.
12. Details of the impact of leisure and cultural activity on the mental health of our residents are not available, but must be recognized in future commissioning decisions.
13. The consequences of inactivity throughout peoples lives reinforces the critical connection between this strategy and the Health and Wellbeing Strategy. It is recommended that the Health and Wellbeing Board is a key stakeholder to this strategy.

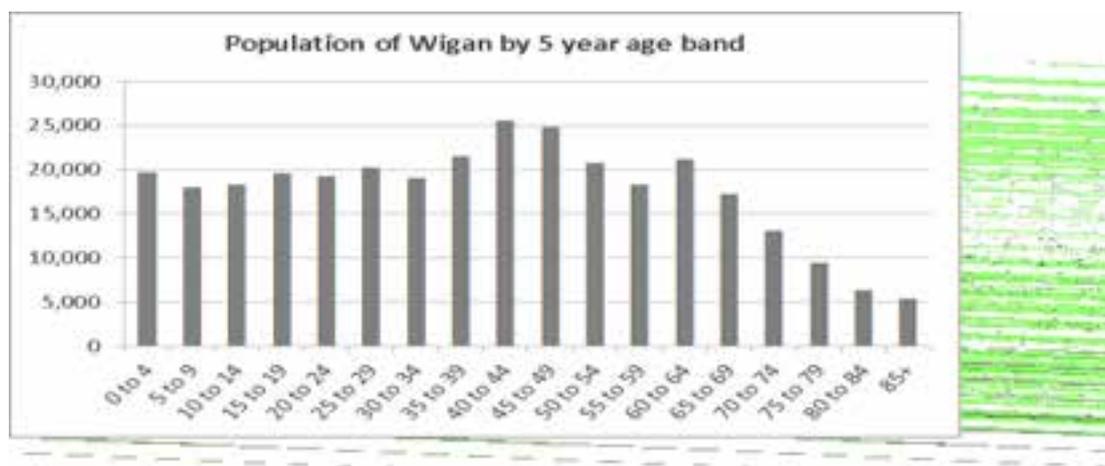
A photograph of a woman with short brown hair, wearing a red sports top, smiling and clapping her hands. She is in a group of people, likely at an exercise session. The background is blurred, showing other people in a dimly lit room.

“Lose Weight Feel Great”  
exercise session in Leigh.

## 5 : Current Provision

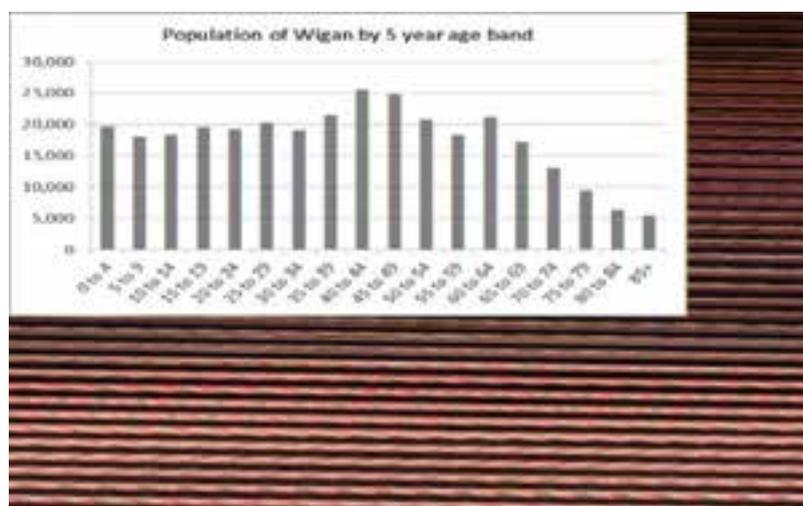
### 5.1 : Wigan's Leisure and Cultural Physical Assets

Wigan is well provided for across the borough with leisure and cultural facilities. There is no evidence that areas of deprivation lack facilities. The map below shows an example of the facility provision within the inner core of the borough. The maps show a good supply of built facilities.



Wigan also has a very significant amount of open spaces. 70% of the borough is open space and a significant amount of this is accessible by the public and therefore there is a very rich resource of areas where people can undertake physical activity and it is vital that this is used to its full potential. Joining up the urban green agenda through the “Greenheart Countryside Park” initiative is identified as an important programme in the Corporate Strategy. The map below shows the green infrastructure of the borough. The

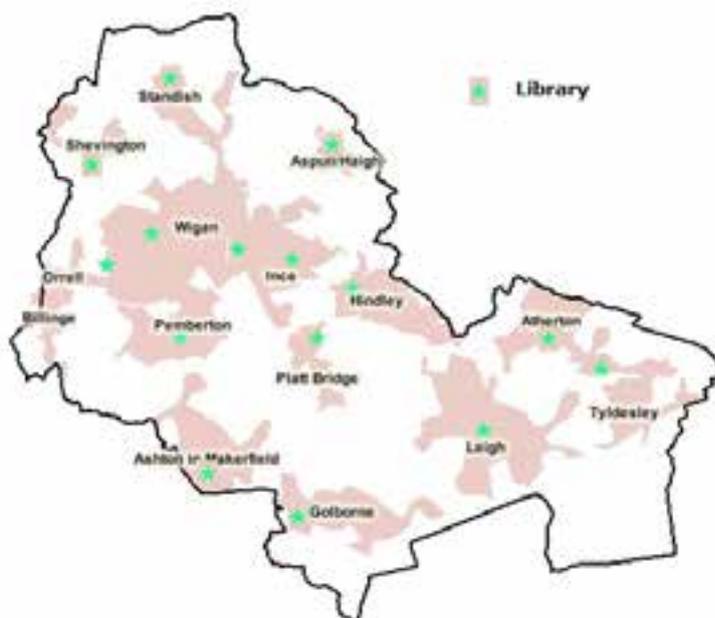
challenge we face is how to get people to use our facilities and resources to become more active. Evidence shows that the most effective ways to get people to start undertaking some exercise is through walking and cycling. An important aim should therefore be to ensure that there is an extensive range of paths available that can be used for walking and cycling for both recreational purposes and as an alternative form of transport to other vehicles.



“Wigan is well provided for across the borough with leisure and cultural facilities. There is no evidence that areas of deprivation lack facilities.”

Wigan has 15 libraries which operate within a 3 tiered structure. This includes libraries that are run, or assisted by volunteers. The map below shows the location of libraries across the borough. In addition to this we have a number of other cultural facilities, such as Trencherfield Steam Engine, Haigh Hall and The Turnpike Centre.

Various surveys are carried out to record the views of the people who use facilities such as parks, sports centres and libraries. The satisfaction levels of Wigan's residents with our existing facilities is generally high.



## Key messages:

14. There appears to be no correlation between reduced sport and active recreation and a facility provision, furthermore, Wigan has an abundance of green space accessible to residents. As we have adequate facilities the issue about low usage appears to be down to motivating people to be active. Work is required to understand any barriers to access, and ensure sport and recreational provision is tailored to the needs and wishes of residents.
15. Satisfaction levels with those currently accessing provision are high, however, additional research is required to understand future needs of an emerging client base and therefore maximise satisfaction.

## 5.2 : The role of the Council as a facility provider and commissioner of activities

As referred to above the Wigan area is well served for all types of facilities and, providing that these facilities are well maintained and remain fit for purpose, they are sufficient to meet the community needs over the next ten years. However, the Council will need to commit to a capital investment programme to maintain its facilities adequately and will need to work with partners and the third sector to capitalise on investment opportunities. In particular, our parks and open spaces will need infrastructure investment in the coming years.

Despite the critical importance of the leisure and cultural services and facilities provided by the Council to the health of local people, the statutory obligations generally only relate to the provision of a library service, archives service, cemeteries and crematoria and allotments. However, the new Public Services (Social Value) Act 2012 will place new obligations on the Council to consider how what is to be procured may improve social, economic, & environmental wellbeing of the area.

The council and our partners recognise that we can have a strong influence on the activity levels, and therefore the health and wellbeing, of our residents in a number of ways. The NHS North West states “There will be no lasting reduction in inequalities unless we create the conditions across local communities that support wellbeing and enable people to live well”. So, the council has a wider role than just the direct commissioning of facilities and services. In particular, within the next few years, the Council will have a changing role within the health economy in Wigan. The

Wigan Borough Health and Wellbeing Board will promote the wellbeing agenda; providing strategic leadership, directing officers and delegating representatives to build wellbeing considerations into everything that the Council and all major stakeholders are delivering.

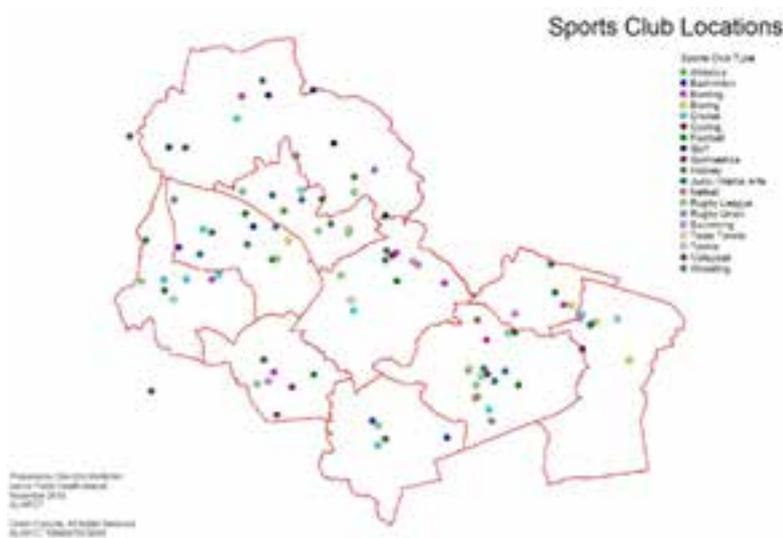
In addition, as the planning authority, Wigan Council has an extremely important leadership role to play in ensuring that planning policy is conducive to the development of infrastructure which encourages greater levels of activity. There is strong evidence to support the introduction of cycle friendly facilities and routes around the area, and for excellent pedestrian access to be maintained for all areas including workplaces and public facilities. The Council can also require developers to make contributions towards the maintenance of community infrastructure. Any new sports or leisure developments should be located where they are accessible to the least active people

Furthermore, the Council will have an important role to play in making sure that people have access to excellent information about lifestyle choices, coupled with access to a wide range of opportunities to be active as individuals. This extends beyond the provision of sports and leisure facilities and parks to include access to informal places for people to walk, cycle and enjoy the natural environment. It also means maximising opportunities to reach the widest possible audience by working with and alongside third sector organisations and groups.

### 5.3 : The Council's place in the mixed economy of service providers

The Council provide a wide range of universal leisure and cultural services and facilities (available to everyone). However, the facilities and services provided by the club and voluntary sector are extremely important. In addition, the school and educational sector have a large resource of existing facilities.

Wigan has a strong sports heritage and therefore there is a strong presence throughout the borough of clubs, societies and community organisations offering activities. There is a good coverage across the borough with a range of amateur and professional sports clubs. Football and Rugby League clubs are the most prevalent, closely followed by martial arts and cricket. The map below shows local sport club coverage.



Increasing levels of activity will not be easy to achieve and will mean that work has to be done to ensure residents are engaged through every possible means, such as by council programmes and activities, those of our partners, the commercial markets and the third sector organisations and groups.

There are a multitude of factors which influence people's lifestyle choices and a multi-agency solution will be necessary. The Council will not be successful alone, and only highly effective partnership working will deliver real lasting changes. Over the term of this strategy there will be various bodies established to deliver the shared aims, but the Council will always have a leadership role to play.

In the past, the Council had more funding available to support the provision of leisure and cultural facilities and services. In 2013, the level of funding is very much lower than in 2000. The financial pressures on the Council to deliver more services for less funding will increase, and so it will be necessary for the Council to target increasingly limited resources far more effectively. A number of local organisations are dependent on funding or facilities from the Council to deliver sports and leisure activities. The Council will strive to build resilience into the community networks in Wigan ; supporting local clubs, groups and partner organisations to become less dependent on Council funding and more resilient generally.



## Key messages:

16. Current commissioned activity relating to physical activity and community weight management programmes appear to be focusing in the right areas, with strong levels of take up within the deprived communities and areas with high rates of obesity. As the borough profile changes, it is critical that future commissioned activity continues to focus in those areas where need is greatest.
17. The wide-ranging distribution of sports clubs across the borough highlights a fantastic opportunity to work with this sector to promote physical activity, health and wellbeing and opens up potential new delivery models for leisure and activity provision.

## 6 : Wider Community Benefits from Participation in Sport, Recreation, Leisure and Cultural Activities

Individuals and the wider community benefit socially and economically from investment in the leisure and cultural services. In a time when there is intense competition for limited resources it is vital that these wider benefits are recognised. The business case for investment in the services is very compelling, not only from a health perspective but also from a financial and economic perspective.

Across Greater Manchester sport is identified as a key economic sector and it is estimated that 21,000 people are employed within this sector. A local measure of economic output shows the sector generates an annual Gross Value Added (GVA) of £0.5 billion.

Sport, recreation, leisure and cultural activities can have a significant impact on social cohesion from

- significant events, such as the Olympics and Rugby League World Cup, bringing communities together to celebrate, to
- local community sports clubs, and
- programmes with young people in hot spot areas who are at particular risk of offending/anti-social behaviour.

Increasing the participation in sports, recreation, leisure and cultural services can make major contributions towards many of the wider council outcomes and aims.

### 6.1 : Cost to the Local Health Services of Inactivity

For NHS Ashton, Leigh and Wigan the whole cost to the PCT of physical inactivity is estimated to be £5,907,880 and the total cost per 100,000 of the population £1,955,772. This ranks as 5th of the 10 Greater Manchester NHS PCTs.

### 6.2 : Benefits for Local Employers and Commerce

Healthier and more active people are less likely to be absent from work or education.

During 2007, 172 million working days were lost to the British economy, at a cost of £20 billion to business and the public sector and up to an estimated £100 billion to the wider economy.

A growing body of research from around the world indicates that people who are active in their daily lives are more productive employees and have better attendance records. It is therefore in the direct interest of employers to help their staff be more active

In general terms healthier employees benefit their employer and the local economy through:

- reduced absenteeism
- lower turnover rates
- improved productivity and employee morale
- lower health care costs

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## 6.4 : Jobs and work related training

Investment in cultural and leisure services can create and sustain training opportunities and jobs in Wigan. In 2011 the Office for National Statistics (IDBR) reported that there are 65 businesses in Wigan related to sport activities and sport manufacturing. This 3% of the total sports businesses in the NW. Between 2008 and 2011 the number of new sports businesses in Wigan increased at a greater rate than the NW and England averages (1.15% compared to 0.84% and 0.77%). WLCT alone currently employs over 500 staff in Wigan.

Evidence shows that providing opportunities for people to volunteer their time and energy towards improving their local area can improve their employment prospects. Leisure and cultural services can provide a very wide range of opportunities for volunteering, and the number of volunteering opportunities in the voluntary and club sector can be developed with leadership from Wigan Council (networking, register/ bureaux, training and marketing support etc.).



## 6.5 : Social and Economic Regeneration in Wigan

Sport, recreation, leisure and cultural activities have a positive impact on social and economic regeneration in Wigan. The recognised indicators of regeneration include;

- reduced levels of crime
- increased health and well-being
- increased educational attainment
- reduced unemployment
- greater community cohesion
- greater environmental quality
- quality of life (or liveability)

How we provide our leisure and cultural services will have an impact on all of these.

Evidence (DCMS) suggests that the sports, leisure and cultural services can deliver major regeneration benefits in three ways;

1. Environmental (physical) – property and land values increase when there are good parks and green spaces , and when people wish to live and work in the area
2. Economic – the creation of jobs, increasing income/expenditure and the availability of activities such as parks, museums, and libraries. Companies will consider various factors when deciding whether to invest in an area such as Wigan. There is a need to promote the cultural heritage of an area as well as the range of facilities and services available.
3. Social – there is a strong body of evidence to show that the provision of high quality and accessible sports, leisure and cultural activities and facilities can promote social cohesion, inclusion, capacity, health and well-being, and a sense of personal and community identity.



“History of Rugby League” play at The Museum of Wigan Life.

## 7 : The Leisure and Cultural Activity Strategy for the Next 10 Years

With less public money to spend on our leisure and cultural service we need to ensure that the resources that are available are spent in a way that has greatest impact. We need to

consider the services that are available from all providers including the private sector, the public sector and local community groups.

### 7.1 Statutory Facilities and Services

There are some services that the council has to provide, such as a statutory library service, cemeteries and crematorium and the maintenance of our leisure land and there are some that we can choose to provide, such

as leisure centres and running programmes to encourage people to participate (eg to get people walking, cycling, and to encourage weight loss).

### 7.2 : Top Priority – Achieving Health and Well Being Impacts

The council intends to focus our resources on areas that will increase the health and well-being of our residents. Therefore those areas of sport and culture that have greatest impact on health will be prioritised. In 2011 residents on our Citizens Panel advised that they favoured the proportion of spend on libraries, museums and the arts being reduced

and the proportion of funding for sports based services rising.

We will ensure that our work with our partner public sector organisations is focussed on improving the health and wellbeing of residents, both through joint schemes and where we can influence outcomes of schemes run by others.

### 7.3 : Engagement to Increase Activity Levels

A key approach that is to be taken is to ensure that we engage with residents in the most appropriate way to get them to become active and keep up levels of activity. We will ensure that the facilities that we have and the way that we provide them are focussed on encouraging people to use them and we will work in a way

to reach into our communities to engage with them. To improve the health of our population we will work to introduce participation in activity of people who are currently inactive and then work to increase their levels of participation.

### 7.4 : Review of our Facilities

We will review the facilities that we provide so that they relate to our priority to have the greatest possible impact on health and wellbeing. As a part of this we acknowledge private and community facilities may fulfil the demand of some elements of the traditional leisure and cultural offer. We will determine if it is necessary for the council to provide the same facilities and where appropriate work in

association with the private sector to ensure facilities are provided.

For the leisure and cultural buildings and land that we do provide we will ensure that they are operated in a way to have the greatest impact on our priority of improving health and wellbeing. We will continue to provide our statutory services and ensure that the other facilities that we do provide meet the needs of our population in the best possible way.

## 7.5 : Working with Local Clubs, Groups and the Third Sector

We recognise the very significant impact that our existing local clubs and community groups make. Local clubs and groups can often engage with our residents in ways that public services can not and we must work with clubs and groups to encourage people to take up or continue with a whole range of sporting and cultural activities. We will continue to

work with our communities to ensure that the activity that is provided is that which the local population wants and to make sure that the services provided this way are supported by the council.

Overall, we will operate the services we do provide in the most efficient way and reduce spending in areas that are no longer a priority.

## 7.6 : The Aims of the Strategy

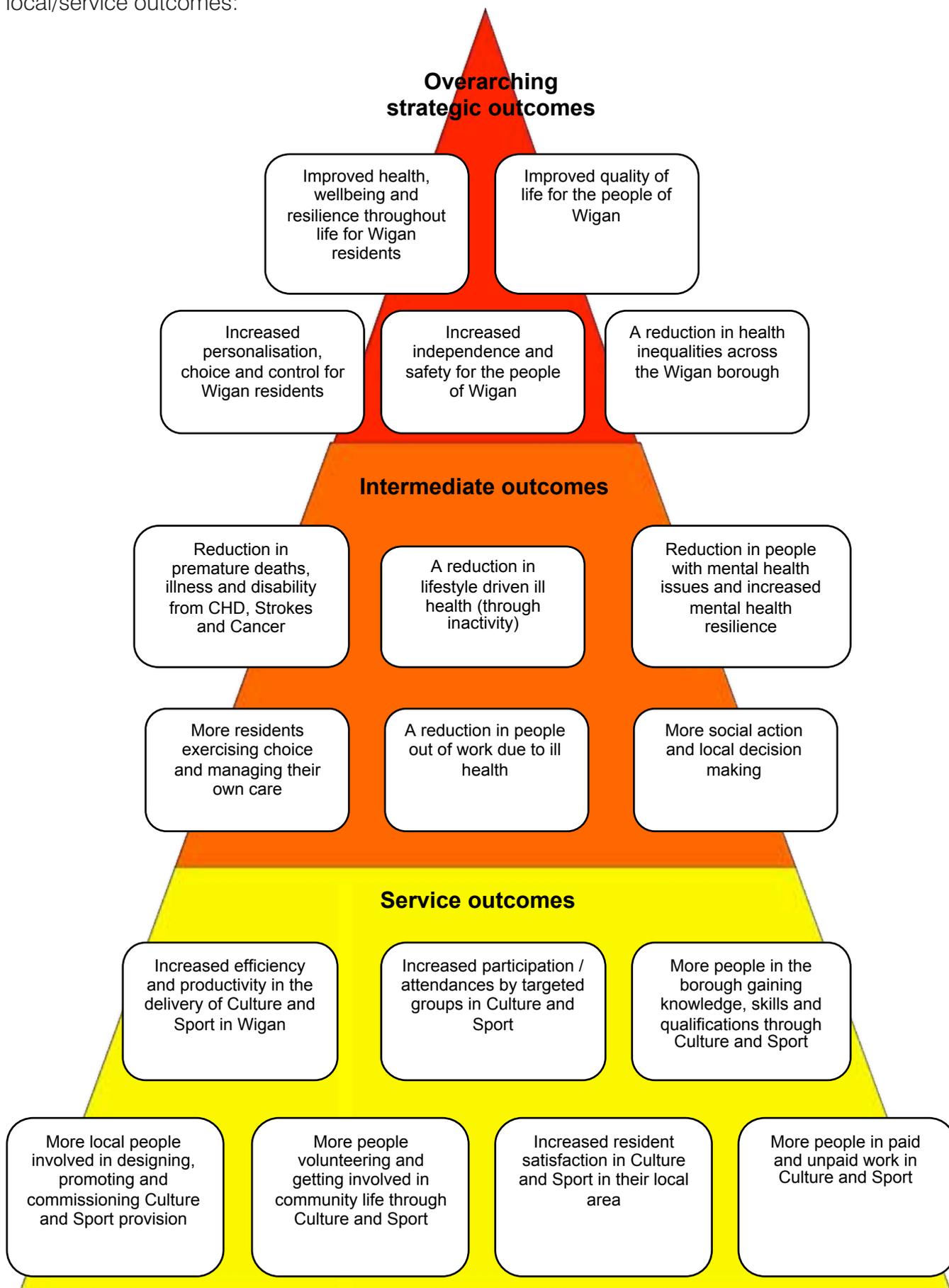
The key aims of this strategy are to:

- Shift the balance of investment in leisure and cultural and services to ensure a focus on the wellbeing and health of our residents - meeting the needs of our current and future population.
  - Re-focus our reduced resources towards early intervention and prevention of health issues
  - The main criteria for service provision will be the impact on physical and mental health and well being, which we will apply equally to decisions about the provision of all council physical activity and cultural services
  - Increase participation and activity levels for everyone across their whole life course.
  - Target interventions to introduce activity with a noticeable impact on the health of our residents.
  - Improve the quality of our active places, remove barriers to participation and improve access so that everybody in Wigan can access a full range of facilities, information and advice that enables them to have a healthy and active lifestyle.
- Ensure that the people of Wigan are taking more control over their own health and wellbeing and are less dependent on public sector services.
  - Ensure that all stakeholders (public, private and voluntary groups) are aware of the councils leisure and cultural activity and well-being aims and are signed up to working alongside the council to achieve the defined outcomes.
  - Ensure a network of facilities continue to be provided by the private sector, public sector and voluntary sector.
  - Empower people to use all the facilities and services that are available across the borough.



Throughout the 10 years of the strategy we will adopt best practice ensuring that we continually refresh the way we do things and reviewing our aims and targets.

When we implement this strategy we will have specific outcomes that we want to achieve. The diagram over the page sets out the outcomes which range from those at a strategic level to very local/service outcomes:



## 8 : The Likely Changes Resulting from the Strategy on our Current Leisure and Cultural Services

In order to decide which services we do provide we need to ensure that we gather information that assists us in making our decisions and that we analyse the data that is available to make informed decisions. Throughout the period of the strategy will need to keep our priorities under review.

Our initial priorities for the services that we commission will be to:

- Gather better information, so we can make well informed decisions about services in the future.
- Reduce overall maintenance costs for our facilities and target investment to provide better opportunities and facilities for people to be active – including better access for walking and cycling, more fitness trails, open air gyms and new facilities for children to take part in physical activities. Going forward we need to find out why so many people don't use our parks and greenspace, and then use what we learn to encourage greater usage in focussed areas of the borough where it is the highest priority to increase activity levels.
- Our library service will meet the statutory minimum level of service and will be supplemented with volunteer support. We will reduce the cost of running our libraries, museums and heritage facilities.
- Ensure that our leisure centres and swimming pools are operated to target increasing activity in key groups, such as adults and children who are inactive/overweight. In the longer term we will review whether we need to provide these facilities or if demand could be satisfied through provision by the private and third sectors.

- Work with local groups, clubs and volunteers to see if more facilities and services can be provided by the voluntary sector rather than by the council or “big” operators
- Work better with partners to secure more funding to deliver better activity programmes that help people be more active

Available resources will be re-profiled to ensure that the available money is spent to achieve health and well-being outcomes.

These services could be provided as one contract or a number of contracts. There are various providers who could provide the services including:

- Council in-house operation
- Specialist operator (commercial)
- Specialist operators offering “Hybrid Trust” arrangements
- Not for Profit company/Trust
- Special Purpose Vehicle - Local authority company or Joint Venture Company
- Mixture of the above

**“ Available resources will be re-profiled to ensure that the available money is spent to achieve health and well-being outcomes. ”**

## 9 : The Outcomes of the New Service Provision

The council will translate the strategy aims into a commissioning framework. This will ensure that the outcomes are achieved and will define them in more detail.

The strategic objectives lead us to new commissioning priorities. It is important that all services that are commissioned can be measured to ensure that they are successful. If monitoring of a service identifies that it is not achieving the strategic objectives it will need to be reviewed and amended.

The table below shows how the leisure strategy will be implemented in a way that links to the Council's Corporate Strategy and the "golden thread" between the strategies. It sets out indicative measures, in the form of performance indicators for inputs, outputs and outcomes for services that will be commissioned.

Overarching Strategic Long Term Outcomes	Intermediate Service Outcome	Service Output Measures
<p><b>Confident Places</b></p> <p>Maximise the potential of green open spaces.</p> <p>Establish a leisure and culture offer that delivers a range of quality facilities and positive activities that are accessible to all</p>	<p>Green open space provided and maintained to provide facilities that residents want to use, such as cycle routes</p> <p>Increased participation / active recreation by targeted groups (vulnerable, children etc.)</p> <p>Reduced levels of obesity in children and adults</p> <p>Reduction in disability from CHD, Cancer and Strokes and to premature death.</p> <p>Mortality rate from CHD, stroke and related diseases</p>	<p>Sport Activity throughputs (number of visits per 1,000 population to parks and open spaces)</p> <p>Number of residents meeting the recommended guidelines on physical activity (5 x 30 week)</p> <p>Number of residents meeting the recommended guidelines on physical activity (1 x 30 week)</p> <p>Number of adults who participate in sport and active recreation (of at least moderate intensity) (NI008)</p> <p>Obesity rate amongst Adults and Year 6 children reduced (former National Indicator 055a and 056a)</p> <p>Mortality rate (all age, all-cause) improved - measured by infant mortality and life expectancy at birth by ward</p> <p>Number of U 17's, over 60's, disability groups and gender ratio to sports centres</p>



## 10 : Next Steps

There are a number of steps that are necessary to be taken to implement this strategy throughout the 10 year period.

An important initial step is for the council to re-commission all our leisure and cultural services, which will be undertaken within the financially constrained budget envelope, and will ensure the strategy is implemented over the next 10 years.

The council will refresh the strategy each year with an annual action plan, which will set out the key delivery programmes and projects that are to be implemented each year.

### 10.1 : Actions for 2013/14

There are a number of practical actions that need to be delivered straight away in order to successfully implement this strategy.

For 2013/14, the key actions are outlined below. An important initial step is for the council to re-commission all our leisure and cultural services. Therefore a commissioning strategy will be developed to allow us to re-commission services in a way that implements this overarching Leisure and Cultural Activity Strategy.

The commissioning strategy will in itself include some significant pieces of work, and we will follow a route map of:

- Compiling a commissioning framework that details how the council run leisure and cultural activity facilities and services will be delivered in alignment with this strategy
- Letting a contract, or contracts with defined outcomes and performance targets
- A monitoring framework to allow us to check the outcomes of the contract(s), so that we are monitoring that services are reaching the performance targets
- A review process so that the services can be amended if necessary they are not achieving the desired outcomes, or if new outcomes are identified.



The table below show some of the immediate actions to be implemented in 2013/14:

Action	Responsible Officer	Start Date	End Date
Develop Community Investment Fund to align community and voluntary sector spend to priorities	P.McKevitt / J. Winterbottom	Jan 2013	March 2013
Produce commissioning framework and specification for future leisure and culture services	P. McGinty	Feb 2013	August 2013
Tender and let contract(s)	P. McGinty	Sept 2013	Dec 2013
Develop monitoring framework for contract(s) and establish review and evaluation process	P. McGinty	Jan 2014	March 2014



Fit4Fun Academy session at Abraham Guest High School

We can make this information available  
in other formats on request.

Leisure, Cultural and Property Services.  
Wigan Council.  
01942 827062