



Thursday, 15 May 2025

Report of Councillor Paul Stokes
Deputy Leader of the Council, Cabinet
Member for Culture and Leisure

Sport and Physical Activity Strategy (2021 - 2026) – May 2025 Update

Report Author

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Purpose of Report

To provide an update on the progress and delivery of the Sport and Physical Activity Strategy (2021 - 2026) and the accompanying Action Plan.

Recommendations

The Committee is recommended to:

1. Note the progress and delivery of the Sport and Physical Activity Strategy for South Kesteven.
2. Consider the results of the latest Active Lives data available for South Kesteven.
3. Suggest enhancements to the extent and clarity of the information produced for the next six-monthly report.

Decision Information

Does the report contain any exempt or confidential information not for publication? No

What are the relevant corporate priorities? Connecting communities

Which wards are impacted? All Wards

1. Implications

Taking into consideration implications relating to finance and procurement, legal and governance, risk and mitigation, health and safety, diversity and inclusion, safeguarding, staffing, community safety, mental health and wellbeing and the impact on the Council's declaration of a climate change emergency, the following implications have been identified:

Finance and Procurement

- 1.1 There are no financial implications for the Council in relation to this report. The work completed to date has been undertaken within identified budgets and using grants awarded to the Council. If any initiatives are identified which require budget or investment, then an appropriate business case will be developed which identifies the cost and the associated benefit to the community.

Completed by: **David Scott, Assistant Director of Finance and Deputy s151 Officer**

Legal and Governance

- 1.2 There are no legal and governance implications arising from this report.

Completed by: **James Welbourn, Democratic Services Manager and Deputy Monitoring Officer**

2. Background to the Report

- 2.1 The Council's Corporate Plan (2024-27) identifies Connecting Communities as a key priority. To underpin this priority, the Council is delivering the Sport and Physical Activity Strategy (the Strategy) which was adopted in 2021 and refreshed in 2024. The Council's Leisure Team is responsible for implementing the actions identified in the Strategy, targeting key areas, and working with partners to provide opportunities for residents and visitors to live healthy, active lifestyles.
- 2.2 The Council's Culture and Leisure Overview and Scrutiny Committee has previously agreed to receive a six-monthly on progress on the Action Plan contained within the Strategy, the most recent update being provided at a meeting of the Committee on 3 September 2024 (**see Background Papers**).
- 2.3 The remainder of this report provides a further update and is broken into two key areas with subsets as follows:
 - A. An overview of the work undertaken to support the Sport and Physical Activity Strategy.

- Physical Activity Initiatives for Council Employees
- Partnership and Collaborative Working
- Leisure Facilities
- Action Plan

B. The Active Lives Survey

Overview of the work undertaken to support the Sport and Physical Activity Strategy.

Physical Activity Initiatives for Council Employees

- 2.4. The Council's Leisure Team have had considerable input in creating the South Kesteven Employee Wellbeing Plan 2024-2027. This plan has been formed following the results from the annual employee engagement survey and other methods of feedback, and aims to deliver the needs of Council employees, which in turn helps to attract talent. A copy of the Employee Wellbeing Plan 2024-2027 can be accessed online here: [#TeamSK Wellbeing Plan](#) .
- 2.5. Encouraging Officers to be more active yields numerous benefits, including improved physical and mental health, increased work productivity, reduced absenteeism, and better team morale.
- 2.6. In August 2024, Council Officers took part in a gardening session in Wyndham Park, helping with weeding, grass seeding and cleaning, whilst enjoying the great outdoors and increasing their heart rate. Gardening has many proven benefits linking back to overall health and wellbeing.
- 2.7. In September 2024, the Council's Physical Activity and Wellbeing Lead hosted an Indoor Cycling session for Officers to take part in, which celebrated and promoted National Fitness Day. Subsequent to this, Council Officers have taken out new fitness memberships to kickstart their own fitness journeys.
- 2.8. In October 2024, Pure Gym delivered Health Checks in The Picture House for Officers, checking their blood pressure, weight, height, peak flow and providing information to help them understand their general health.
- 2.9. In December 2024, the annual five-a-side football tournament took place which saw over 20 players register from different Council departments. A total of £483.42 was raised for White Ribbon UK, a charity engaging men and boys to end violence against women and girls.
- 2.10. In January 2025, 22 teams made up of a total of 123 Council Officers competed in #TeamSK 'Step into 2025' steps challenge. A total of 25,115km was logged by Officers, equivalent to over 36 million steps.

- 2.11. In February 2025, The Council entered a team of five into the Swimarathon and completed a total of 164 lengths within the 50 minutes. A total of £245.00 was raised for the Rotary Club of Grantham, supporting local charities and deserving projects in and around Grantham.
- 2.12. In March 2025, Council Officers had the opportunity to take part in Movement Hour. Fitness Coach, Joe Wicks, called on employers across the UK to pledge to give an hour off work in March for employees to move their bodies and feel the benefits of daily exercise. On 5th March, Council Officers took part in a lunchtime movement walk, as well as having the opportunity to join Joe Wicks' live workout at 3pm or complete some exercises from our own Move More Workout cards.

Partnership and Collaborative Working

- 2.13. The Council alone cannot achieve its corporate ambition of Connecting Communities, accordingly Officers have continued to collaborate with partner organisations, stakeholders, and communities. Since the previous update provided to this Committee, new relationships have been developed and activities attended, these include:
 - Monthly attendance at UK Active Webinars and attendance at the UK Active Face to Face Member Network in February.
 - Attendance at 'We are Undefeatable' webinars and promoting the new 'We Are Undefeatable' App on the South Kesteven District Council website.
 - Attendance at the Why Sports – Get Active for a Healthier Britain Conference
 - Attendance at the Association for Public Service Excellence (APSE) Sports and Leisure Management Networks and the annual APSE Sports and Leisure Seminar
 - Attendance at the 'Supporting Midlands Integrated Care Systems to maximise impact on local social and economic outcomes.'
 - Attendance at the Grantham Partnership Board where local initiatives relating to physical activity are discussed and promoted.
 - Attendance at Active Travel England Webinars.
 - Attendance at the South Lincolnshire Alliance for Mental Health meetings where provision that supports mental health for residents is discussed and ideas are shared.
 - Attendance at the Lincolnshire District Wide Health and Wellbeing Working Group, which enables knowledge sharing and communication across the District Councils.
 - Attendance at the Lincolnshire District Wide Health Weight Partnership Board.
 - Attendance at the Sport England Place Peer Learning Exchange.
 - Attendance at workshops and roundtable seminars hosted by the Chief Cultural and Leisure Officers Association (CLOA).

- 2.14. Council Officers are continuing to work with The Chartered Institute for the Management of Sport and Physical Activity (CIMSPA) by feeding into the Lincolnshire Local Skills Accountability Board. This brings employers and education providers together to identify the sector challenges, skills gaps and concerns within Lincolnshire. A sport and physical activity sector local skills plan is in the process of being created which will have themes, recommendations, actions and objectives within it.
- 2.15. Relationships continue to grow with neighbouring Districts within Lincolnshire where a spirit of collaborative working has been formed. Learnings and ideas are shared through the Health and Wellbeing Working Group on a variety of different topics so best practice can be implemented across the county.
- 2.16. The Council's Leisure and Parks Team have been working collaboratively on improving play areas within the District, based on the Council's Play Area Strategy 2024 Action Plan. This identifies the valuable role of play in supporting the physical health and mental wellbeing of children and young people. A total of 17 play areas have received improvements over the past 12 months.
- 2.17. Cross council working has taken place to upskill volunteers who are based at Wyndham Park Visitor Centre, to become qualified instructors to deliver 'Our Parks' sessions. 'Our Parks' sessions will bring free, group exercise classes, led by qualified and insured instructors to the park. The 'Our Parks' assessment for instructors is scheduled for May, which will enable the classes to commence from June 2025.
- 2.18. The sessions will be targeted at beginners who are over 60 years old with a separate session being delivered to the Young Adults Social Group.
- 2.19. The Council were awarded £10,500 from the UK Shared Prosperity Fund to supply and install five table tennis tables across the district as well as providing bats and balls to the local parish and town councils. The tables will enable free outdoor opportunities for residents to be active and improve their fitness levels. The tables have been installed at the below locations:
 - Dysart Park, Grantham (owned by SKDC)
 - Stamford Recreation Ground, Stamford (transferred ownership to Stamford Town Council)
 - Dyke Sports Field, Dyke (transferred ownership to Bourne Town Council)
 - Churchfield Close, Deeping St James (transferred ownership to Deeping St James)
 - Woody Heights, Linchfield Road, Deeping St James (owned by SKDC)
- 2.20. Conversations are continuing with Lincolnshire County Council to promote Active Travel, with Officers working to identify any routes or schemes that could be developed within South Kesteven to be considered for future funding.

- 2.21. The Council were awarded £2282.50 from the UK Shared Prosperity Fund to purchase 635 Bike Marking Kits. These kits reduce the chances of residents within South Kesteven becoming a victim of cycle theft by allowing individuals to register their bikes on a National Police approved database for free, whilst marking and protecting the bike with a security marking kit.
- 2.22. Registering a bike using one of these kits will provide a lifetime registration onto the Bike Register database, providing the owner with a registration logbook to prove ownership which increases the chances of the bike being reunited with its owner if stolen.
- 2.23. The Council's Leisure Team have had involvement over the last 18 months with the development of the South Kesteven Design Code by the Planning Team. This is currently in draft format and undergoing review, Leisure Officers focused on three of the design requirements; Movement, Public Spaces and Built Form.
- 2.24. A Design Code is a set of design requirements for the physical development of new housing estates with over 150 properties or more, which developers are required to follow. These are categorised into 'must', 'should' and 'could' for developers to consider.
- 2.25. Two examples of one of the new 'must' is that 'streets should prioritise walking and cycling and some streets and lanes can be for pedestrian and cycle access only', and 'walking and cycling routes must be embedded as part of primary routes in new developments.' This will encourage Active Travel within the district in the longer term.
- 2.26. The Council's Leisure Team and Cabinet Member for Culture and Leisure have been working closely with the Football Foundation, Lincolnshire FA and Continuum Leisure to refresh the South Kesteven Local Football Facility Plan (LFFP). The LFFP is a detailed report that maps out the football facilities needed across South Kesteven and considers the predicted growth of the population and sports clubs.
- 2.27. The Council continue to work with Positive Futures to identify locations within the district, primarily utilising Wyndham Park as a place to offer free of charge community sports programmes for individuals to attend.
- 2.28. A new session delivering BoxFit in the park by Positive Futures will be delivered between April and July at Harrowby Lane Playing Fields on Tuesday evenings, with the aim of reducing levels of anti-social behaviour.
- 2.29. The Council continues to work closely with Active Lincolnshire with Officers promoting the online Activity Finder, enabling residents to source activities in their local area, this can be found online at: <https://www.activelincolnshire.com/get-involved/lets-move-lincolnshire/club-and-activity-finder>, or accessed through the

Council's website, making it even easier for residents to find activities:
<https://www.southkesteven.gov.uk/arts-leisure-and-culture/sports-and-leisure/activity-finder>.

Leisure Facilities

2.30. Officers within the Leisure Team continue to work with the Council's leisure provider LeisureSK Limited to deliver the Sport and Physical Activity Strategy. The list below details activity currently being undertaken:

- Wellbeing walks continue to take place from Bourne Leisure Centre on a Wednesday and Friday morning, Stamford Leisure Pool on a Tuesday afternoon, and Grantham Meres Leisure Centre on a Thursday.
- Good Boost, which is an app based therapeutic water exercise programme for people with musculoskeletal conditions, continues to be delivered at Grantham Meres Leisure Centre.
- Half term swim crash courses continue to be delivered across all three centres.
- Exercise on Prescription continues to be delivered across Bourne Leisure Centre (169 starters since September 2024 and 84 completed so far) and Grantham Meres Leisure Centre.
- Special Educational Needs and Disability (SEND) swimming lessons and dedicated family swim sessions continue to run at Bourne Leisure Centre and Grantham Meres Leisure Centre. These sessions have now also launched at Stamford Leisure Pool.
- Fighting Fit Cancer Rehabilitation classes continue to run at Bourne Leisure Centre in partnership with the Lincoln City Football Foundation.
- Specialist classes are being held at Bourne Leisure Centre which provide targeted interventions and enhanced health and wellbeing outcomes. These include classes for those suffering from Chronic Obstructive Pulmonary Disease (COPD), Cardiac Rehabilitation, Disability Circuits, Mindfulness Meditation, and classes to aid balance and coordination.

2.31. In addition, the Council are continuing to invest in its leisure centres using funding initiatives such as the Council's Climate Reserve, the UK Shared Prosperity Fund, the Sport England Swimming Pool Support Fund and the Public Sector Decarbonisation Scheme Phase3c, as well as undertaking ongoing maintenance works which form part of the planned preventative maintenance schedule.

2.32. The information provided in **Appendix One** highlights planned future activity in the coming months.

The Active Lives Survey

2.33. The most recent Active Lives Adult Survey Data was published in April 2025 and is available online at <https://activelives.sportengland.org/>.

2.34. **Table Two** below presents the latest survey results across South Kesteven for the period November 2022-November 2023.

2.35. New data is due to be released for the period November 2023-November 2024, in April 2025.

Table Two: Active Lives Adult Survey Data for South Kesteven			
Physical Activity Levels	Previous Data (2021-2022)	Current Data (2022-2023)	% (+/-)
Adults considered 'Active' achieving recommended 150 minutes per week	63.3%	65.1%	+1.8%
Adults considered 'Fairly Active' achieving 30-149 minutes per week	9%	11.9%	+2.8%
Adults considered 'Inactive' achieving less than 30 minutes per week	27.6%	23%	-4.6%

2.36. **Table Three** below presents the latest survey results across South Kesteven for Children and Young People (CYP) in the Academic Year 2023-2024.

Table Three: Active Lives Children and Young People (CYP) Survey Data for South Kesteven			
Physical Activity Levels	Previous Data (2022-2023)	Current Data (2023-2024)	% (+/-)
CYP considered 'Active' achieving an average of 60+ minutes a day	46.4%	50.5%	+4.1%
CYP considered 'Fairly Active' achieving 30-59 minutes a day	28.9%	26.1%	-2.8%
CYP considered 'Inactive' achieving less than an average of 30 minutes a day	25%	23%	-2%

3. Key Considerations

- 3.1. The Council's Leisure Team continue to work on the delivery of the Sport and Physical Activity Strategy, collaborating with the Council's leisure provider LeisureSK Limited and a range of partners across South Kesteven.

4. Other Options Considered

- 4.1. The Culture and Leisure Overview and Scrutiny Committee have previously agreed to receive six-monthly updates on the delivery of the Council's Sport and Physical Activity Strategy. Therefore, the 'do nothing' option has been discounted.

5. Reasons for the Recommendations

- 5.1. The Sport and Physical Activity Strategy provides a basis for the Council to deliver on its ambition to increase health and wellbeing outcomes across South Kesteven. Members are encouraged to suggest enhancements to the extent and clarity of the information produced for the next six-monthly update report.

6. Consultation

- 6.1. During November and December 2024, the Council commissioned the Moving Communities Community Survey.
- 6.2. The survey is designed to engage with residents about their attitudes towards physical activity, active leisure and available opportunities including what is important to them.
- 6.3. 311 responses were received, however the sample was underrepresented by the younger age groups and the male population. The data has however been weighted accordingly.
- 6.4. The questions in the standardised survey covers the following key areas;
 - Current levels of physical activity
 - Physical activity aspirations
 - Indoor and outdoor physical activity
 - Active travel
 - Children and families

6.5. The key findings of the survey were:

- The top three reasons for participating in a sport of physical activity were to improve or manage physical health (86%) and mental health (73%), as well as for fun (53%).
- 68% of survey respondents would like to be more active. 84% of these respondents would like to do more indoor leisure activities, followed by 56% for outdoor leisure activities.
- The most cited factors that would encourage the residents to become more active include offering specific sessions for beginners (60%), older people (40%) and women and girls (38%).
- Strategic planning of activities and locations, considering factors such as availability (63%) and timing (54%) of activities, as well as easier or quicker travel to facilities (40%), would also play a crucial role.

6.6. Council Officers will use these findings when refreshing the Sport and Physical Activity Strategy in 2026, along with working closely with LeisureSK Limited and partners to ensure the demands of residents are met.

6.7. A full copy of the report findings can be found in **Appendix Two**.

7. **Background Papers**

7.1. *Sport and Physical Activity Strategy – September 2024 Update* – Report to Culture and Leisure Overview and Scrutiny Committee, published 23 August 2024, available online at: [Sport and Physical Activity 2021-2026 Update Report.pdf](#)

8. **Appendices**

8.1. **Appendix One** – Delivery of the Sport and Physical Activity Action Plan

8.2. **Appendix Two** - Moving Communities Community Survey – Report