

# The Royal Borough of Kingston upon Thames

## Physical Activity Assessment 2023



THE ROYAL BOROUGH OF  
**KINGSTON**  
UPON THAMES

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## **FOREWORD**

Welcome to the Kingston Physical Activity Assessment, a collective effort dedicated to fostering a healthier, more vibrant community. As we embark on this journey, we recognise the critical role physical activity plays in enhancing the wellbeing of our residents.

In an increasingly sedentary world, it is imperative to prioritise and promote an active lifestyle. Regular physical activity not only improves physical health but also enhances mental wellbeing, boosts creativity, and strengthens the social fabric of our Borough.

We want Kingston to be a place where individuals can effortlessly integrate physical activity into their daily lives, whether it's a leisurely walk in the park, a team sport, or a community event that brings neighbours together. We aspire to create a culture that cherishes and celebrates movement, where physical activity becomes a natural part of our daily routines.

Let this assessment be a beacon of inspiration for every individual, community group, and organisation to come together in our collective pursuit for Kingston to be Greener, Fairer, Safer, Together.

Together, we can make a profound difference, one step, one stride, and one shared experience at a time.



**Councillor Alison Holt**

Deputy Leader, Portfolio Holder for Economic Development & Leisure

## NOTE - COVID-19

Coronavirus (Covid-19) had a profound effect on the world, with social distancing and restrictions on movement resulting in a complete overhaul of the way many people get active.

With the implementation of guidance in England limiting people to one outdoor activity a day and only with members of their own household, the majority of sports and exercise activities became impossible overnight.

While the pandemic posed significant challenges to physical activity participation, it also highlighted the importance of promoting home-based and outdoor activities, encouraging active lifestyles, and leveraging technology to provide accessible fitness options. As communities recover from the pandemic, efforts to support and incentivise physical activity will be crucial to rebuilding healthier and more resilient communities.

**CORONAVIRUS**  
**PROTECT YOURSELF & OTHERS**

## NOTICE: Playground CLOSED

Please do not use the playground. The wider park is open but please observe national 'social distancing' advice and keep 2 metres away from anyone else in the park. Please make sure that you wash your hands with soap and water for a minimum of 20 seconds when arriving home.


Everyone must stay at home to help stop the spread of coronavirus.

You should only leave the house for very limited purposes:

- shopping for basic necessities, for example food and medicine, which must be as infrequent as possible
- one form of exercise a day, for example a run, walk, or cycle – alone or with members of your household
- any medical need, including to donate blood, avoid or escape risk of injury or harm, or to provide care or to help a vulnerable person
- travelling for work purposes, but only where you cannot work from home

For the latest advice and guidance on COVID-19 (Coronavirus), please visit [www.nhs.uk/coronavirus](http://www.nhs.uk/coronavirus)

For the latest local information and suggestions on how to keep fit and active please visit [www.kingston.gov.uk/coronavirus](http://www.kingston.gov.uk/coronavirus)

  
THE ROYAL BOROUGH OF  
KINGSTON  
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## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Kingston Physical Activity Assessment is a comprehensive roadmap designed to promote and enhance physical activity participation throughout our community. This strategy aims to create a healthier, more active, and vibrant Borough for all residents to work and live. This assessment sets out the ambition to increase levels of physical activity in Kingston upon Thames by:

- promoting physical activity opportunities for all residents,
- engaging with communities by working closely with local organisations and groups to design and implement programmes that resonate with the diverse needs and interests of our residents
- addressing inequalities through targeted initiatives and outreach efforts, to ensure equitable access to physical activity opportunities for everyone

- enabling residents to foster an active lifestyle from a young age, by making sure that Kingston residents start life well as children, live well as adults and age well for longer as set out in the <sup>1</sup>Kingston Health and Care Plan
- promoting active travel by contributing to decision making to improving infrastructure and encouraging residents to choose active commuting methods
- support local sports clubs and organisations to ensure Kingston has a range of diverse opportunities for residents to participate in.
- leveraging technology, recognising the potential of technology in enhancing physical activity participation. We will explore innovative solutions, to engage residents in new and convenient ways

The Kingston Physical Activity Assessment reflects our collective commitment to a healthier and more active community. By fostering a culture that values physical activity and creating an environment that supports active living, we aim to improve the overall well-being and quality of life for our residents.

This assessment is not just a document; it is a call to action. Together, we can create a lasting legacy of physical activity, vitality, and resilience for Kingston.

## 1. MAKING THE CASE FOR PHYSICAL ACTIVITY


Physical activity and sport play a pivotal role in shaping the physical, mental, and social well-being of individuals and communities. Here's a compelling case for the importance of embracing an active lifestyle and engaging in sports:

### Improved Physical Health

Regular physical activity is linked to a myriad of health benefits. It helps maintain a healthy weight, reduces the risk of chronic diseases such as heart disease, diabetes, and certain cancers, and enhances cardiovascular and muscular fitness. Physical activity also strengthens bones and improves flexibility, contributing to better overall physical health.

### Enhanced Mental Health

Engaging in physical activity and sports has a profound impact on mental well-being. It reduces stress, anxiety, and depression while boosting mood and self-esteem. The release of endorphins during exercise creates a sense of happiness and relaxation, promoting better mental resilience and cognitive function.



**"If physical activity were a drug, we would refer to it as a miracle cure, due to the great many illnesses it can prevent and help treat." UK Chief Medical Officers, 2019.**

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<sup>1</sup> <https://www.kingston.gov.uk/downloads/file/1814/summary-kingston-health-and-care-plan>

### **Cognitive Development**

Physical activity has been shown to positively affect brain function and cognitive abilities. Regular exercise improves memory, attention, and problem-solving skills, enhancing learning outcomes and academic performance in children and adults alike.

### **Social Connection**

Participating in sports and physical activities fosters social interaction and community engagement. It brings people together, creating opportunities for teamwork, camaraderie, and friendships. Sports also teach important values such as discipline, respect, and sportsmanship, nurturing a sense of belonging and unity.

### **Healthy Habits for Life**

Encouraging physical activity from a young age instills healthy habits that can last a lifetime. Children who are exposed to sports and physical activities are more likely to carry these habits into adulthood, reducing the risk of sedentary lifestyles and associated health issues.

### **Inclusivity and Diversity**

Physical activity and sports have the power to transcend cultural, social, and economic barriers, promoting inclusivity and diversity. Regardless of age, gender, or ability, there are various sports and activities suitable for everyone, creating opportunities for empowerment and personal growth.

### **Economic Impact**

Embracing physical activity and promoting sports can have a positive economic impact on communities. It drives the growth of the sports industry, generates employment opportunities, and enhances tourism through hosting events and tournaments.

### **Stress Reduction**

Physical activity serves as a natural stress reliever. Engaging in sports and exercise allows individuals to escape from the pressures of daily life, providing a healthy outlet for emotional release and mental rejuvenation.

### **Longevity and Quality of Life**

Studies consistently show that individuals who lead an active lifestyle tend to live longer and enjoy a higher quality of life in their later years. Physical activity helps maintain independence and functional ability, allowing individuals to continue enjoying life to the fullest.

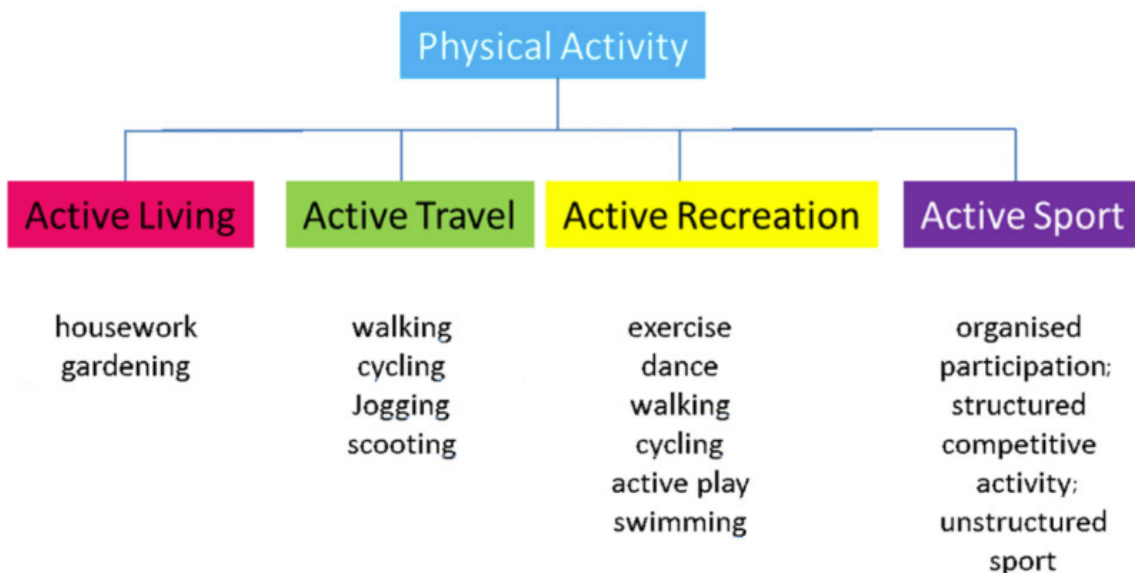
In conclusion, physical activity and sports are not just recreational pursuits; they are powerful tools that contribute to a healthier, happier, and more resilient society. By embracing an active lifestyle and supporting opportunities for sports & recreation participation, we can create a thriving community that reaps the numerous benefits of physical activity for generations to come.

## What do we mean by physical activity and sport?

Physical Activity is 'any body movement produced by skeletal muscles that require energy expenditure' (WHO) such as running, walking, cycling, gardening and sporting/fitness activity.

Sport is defined as 'all forms of physical activity which, through casual or organised participation, aim at expressing or improving physical fitness and mental well-being, forming social relationships or obtaining results in competition at all levels' (Council of Europe).

In order for us to effectively plan and deliver this Framework we are using the following diagram to explain the different components of the physical activity continuum.



## 2. OUR VISION

*'Increasing participation in physical activity and sport to improve the health and well-being for all'*

In Kingston we want to create a thriving and active community where individuals of all ages and abilities embrace a healthy and active lifestyle. Through collaborative efforts, accessible facilities, and inclusive programming, we aim to empower every resident to enjoy the benefits of regular physical activity, fostering physical, mental and social well-being for a vibrant and resilient Borough.

### 3. HEADLINE INSIGHT FINDINGS - NATIONAL AND LOCAL

Sport England's strategy outlines their vision for the future of sport and physical activity in England for the 10 years to 2031. Titled 'Uniting the Movement' the strategy identifies five big issues where they see the greatest potential for preventing and tackling inequalities in sport and physical activity. They are:

1. **Recover and reinvent** - Recovering from the biggest crisis in a generation and reinventing as a vibrant, relevant and sustainable network of organisations providing sport and physical activity opportunities that meet the needs of different people.
2. **Connecting communities** - Focusing on sport and physical activity's ability to make better places to live and bring people together.
3. **Positive experiences for children and young people** - Unrelenting focus on positive experiences for all children and young people as the foundations for a long and healthy life
4. **Connecting with health and wellbeing** - Strengthening the connections between sport, physical activity, health and wellbeing, so more people can feel the benefits of, and advocate for, an active life
5. **Active environments** - Creating and protecting the places and spaces that make it easier for people to be active. They believe sport and physical activity has a big role to play in improving the physical and mental health of the nation, supporting the economy, reconnecting communities and rebuilding a stronger society for all.

The strategy recognises that for too long, people with the most to gain from being active have been the least able to take part. As a result of the huge disruption 2020 has caused, and the inequalities it's reinforced or even exacerbated – such as those around socio-economic status and ethnicity – their drive to do things differently and confront these inequalities head on is stronger than ever.

The strategy is different not just because it's a vision for the next 10 years. It sets how change is needed within the sport and physical activity sector and an ecosystem, so that people have the opportunities they need now and in the future. More than anything, Uniting the Movement seeks to tackle the inequalities we've long seen in sport and physical activity. Providing opportunities to people and communities that have traditionally been left behind, and helping to remove the barriers to activity.



## **National participation picture - Headline information facts and figures**

### **Active Lives**

In order to measure the nation's activity levels, Sport England runs two surveys: Active Lives Adult, which is published twice a year and replaced the Active People Survey, and the world-leading Active Lives Children and Young People, which is published annually.

Both give a unique and comprehensive view of how people are getting active. The latest report is the first full year of data since November 2018-19 that had no interruptions due to Covid-19, and it shows a very welcome return to pre-pandemic activity levels for adults, as well as an overall increase of 1.5m active adults since the survey began in 2015.

### **Adult Participation**

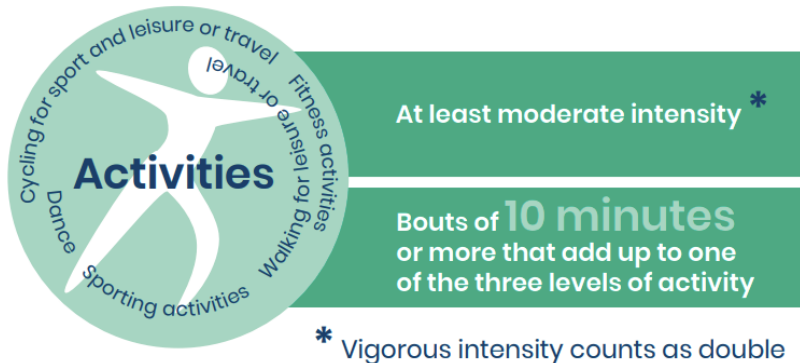
The latest <sup>2</sup>report covers the period from mid-November 2021 to mid-November 2022, this report provides an update on the sport and physical activity behaviours of adults (aged 16+) in England.

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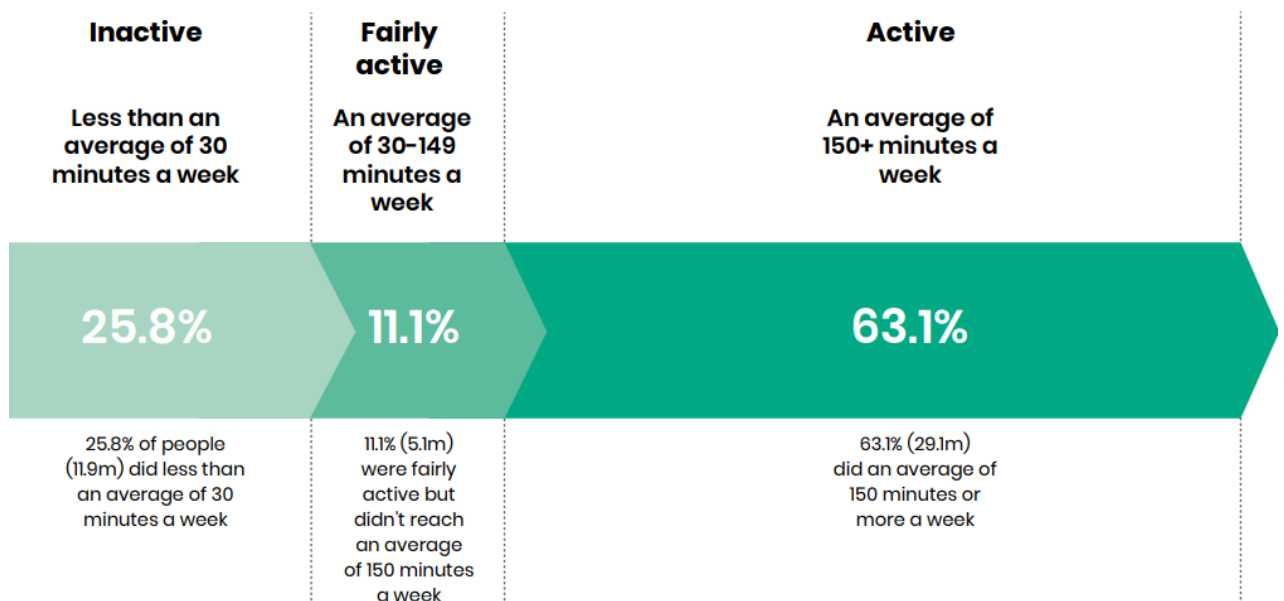
<https://sportengland-production-files.s3.eu-west-2.amazonaws.com/s3fs-public/2023-04/Active%20Lives%20Adult%20Survey%20November%202021-22%20Report.pdf?VersionId=ln4PN2X02DZ1LF18btqaj5KFHx0Mio9o>

## What do we mean by physical activity?



Note: we count most sport and physical activity, but exclude gardening. However, the Office for Health Improvement and Disparities (OHID) does include gardening in its local level physical activity data.

The data shows that just over six in 10 adults (29.1 million) achieved 150+ minutes of activity a week.



Overall, activity levels have recovered following a period of falls resulting from the restrictions applied to everyday life during the coronavirus (Covid-19) pandemic.

The proportion of active adults is back in line with levels seen pre-pandemic (Nov 18-19) and above those seen six years ago. The proportion of inactive adults remains slightly up on pre-pandemic levels, with fewer adults being 'fairly active'.

Compared to six years ago (Nov 15-16) we see:

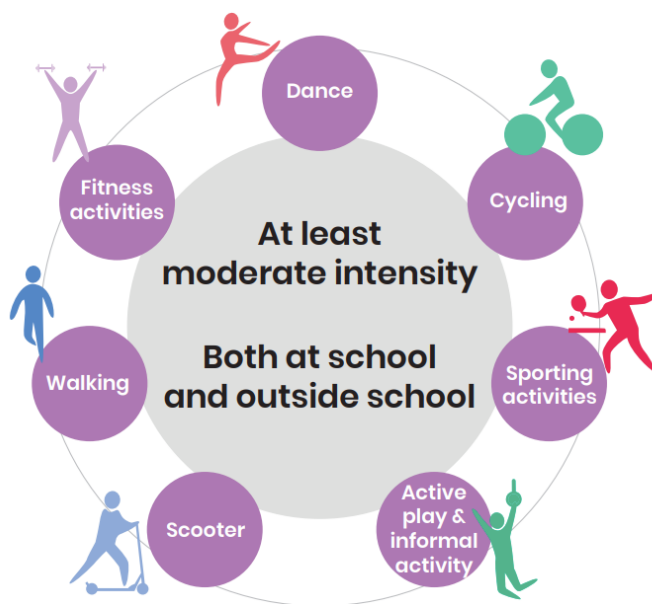
- 1.5m (+1.0%) more active adults
- no change in inactive adults.

## Children and Young People

The latest <sup>3</sup>report summarises the sport and physical activity behaviours of children and young people in school years 1-11 (ages 5-16) in England over the 2021-22 academic year (September 2021-July 2022). The report contains a full year's data following the removal of most legal restrictions related to the coronavirus (Covid-19) pandemic, however it does contain the period where the Omicron variant was of concern.

This period represents relative normality following the coronavirus (Covid-19) pandemic, however, individual- and class-level disruption through self-isolation and sickness absence was still present.

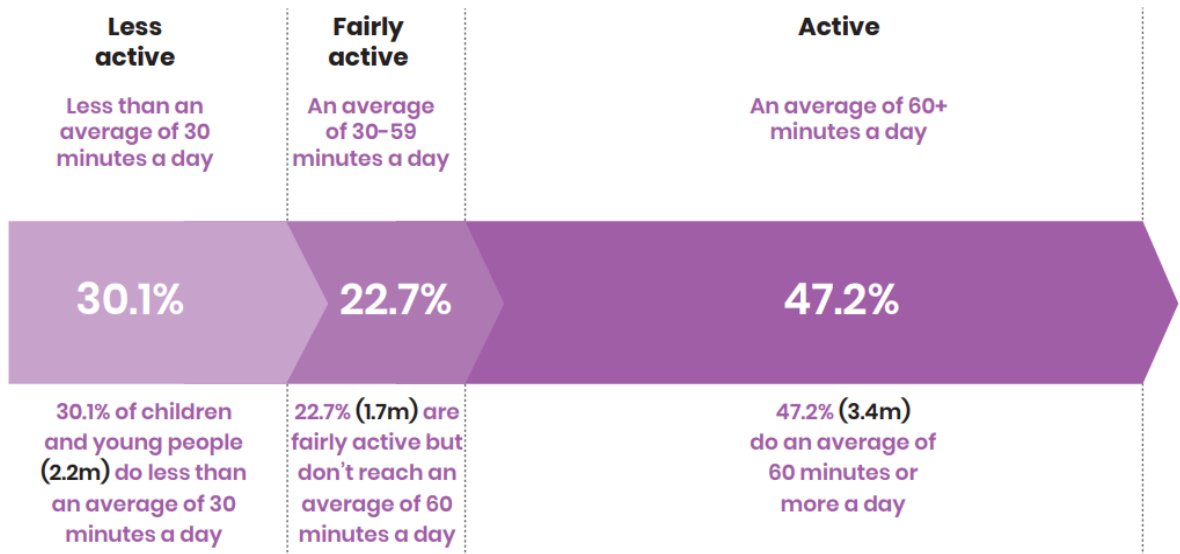
### What do we mean by physical activity?



The data shows that 47.2% of children and young people (3.4 million) are meeting the Chief Medical Officers' guidelines of taking part in sport and physical activity for an average of 60 minutes or more every day. Meanwhile, 30.1% (2.2m) do less than an average of 30 minutes a day.

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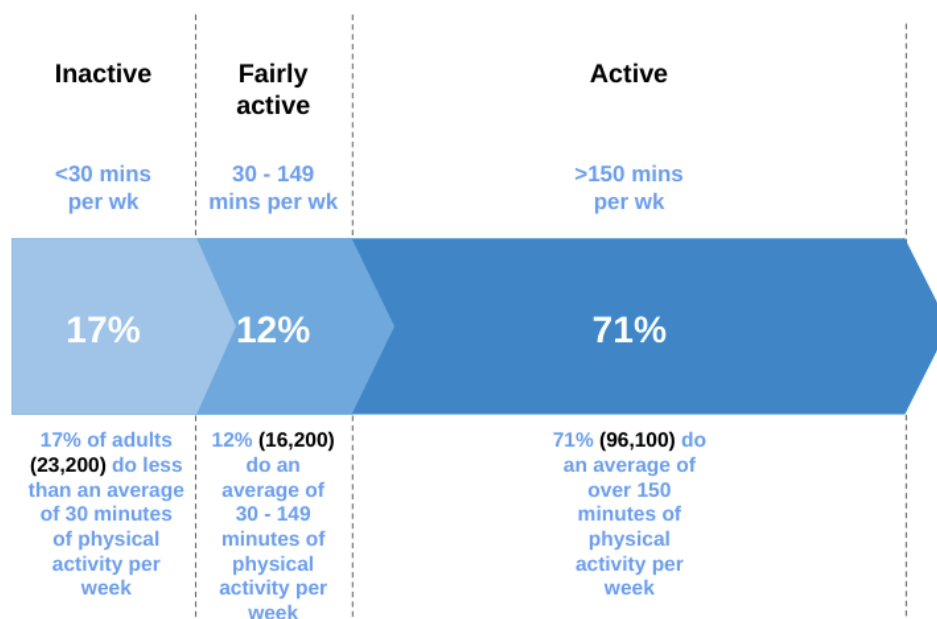
[https://sportengland-production-files.s3.eu-west-2.amazonaws.com/s3fs-public/2022-12/Active%20Lives%20Children%20and%20Young%20People%20Survey%20Academic%20Year%202021-22%20Report.pdf?VersionId=R5\\_hmJHw5M4yKFsewm2vGDMRGHWW7q3E](https://sportengland-production-files.s3.eu-west-2.amazonaws.com/s3fs-public/2022-12/Active%20Lives%20Children%20and%20Young%20People%20Survey%20Academic%20Year%202021-22%20Report.pdf?VersionId=R5_hmJHw5M4yKFsewm2vGDMRGHWW7q3E)



## Kingston participation picture - Headline information facts and figure

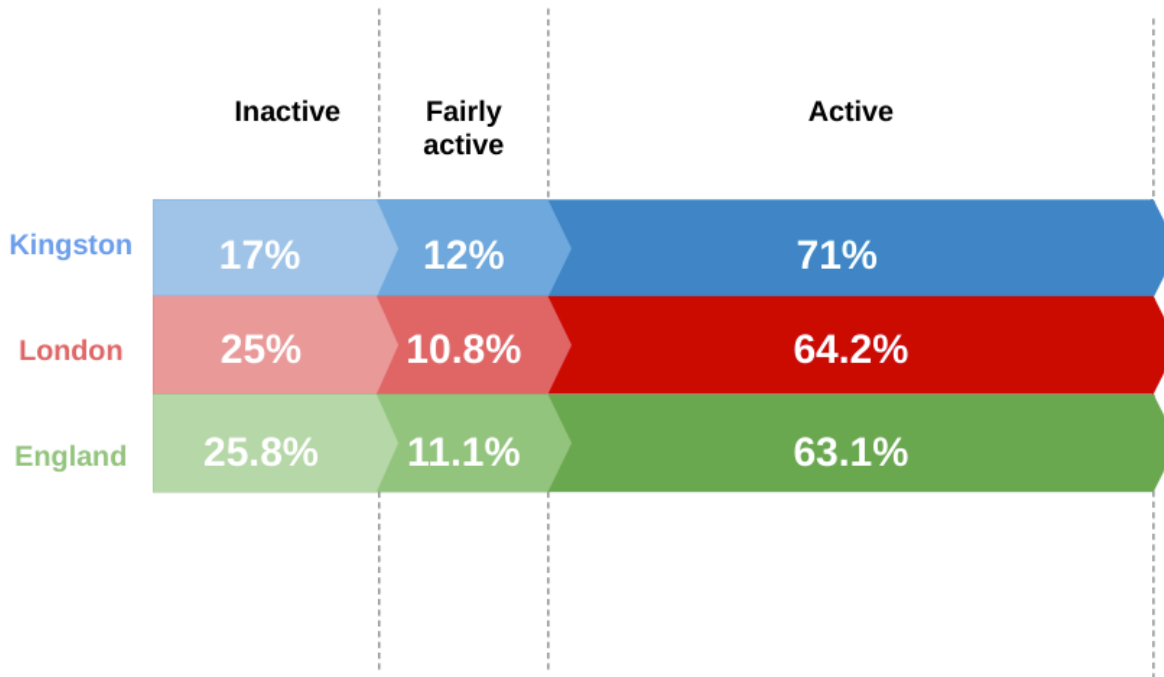
The <sup>4</sup>Active Lives survey results for Kingston upon Thames are summarised below. All data was collected from November 2021 to November 2022.

### Kingston Adult Physical Activity Data



<sup>4</sup> <https://activelives.sportengland.org/>

**Kingston comparison versus London and England**



In Kingston, men (74%)<sup>5</sup> are more likely to achieve at least 150 minutes of physical activity per week compared to women (68%). It has been found that levels of inactivity are higher in women (21%) compared to men (13%).



Adults with disability or long term illness are over half as likely to achieve the CMO recommendations (52.4%) compared to those without a disability or long term illness (77.3%).

<sup>5</sup> <https://activelives.sportengland.org/>



The dataset for Kingston Upon Thames' residents across the whole life course is limited, data from Sport England's Active Lives database show that an outstanding 61% of adults aged 65 and over achieve the CMO guidelines of at least 150 minutes of exercise per week; with only 26.3% being classified as inactive.



Those living in areas of higher deprivation are more likely to be inactive (26.2%) compared to those in lower areas (19.2%)<sup>6</sup>. These areas are depicted by the IMD, 2019.

## Obesity

<sup>7</sup>Obesity has become one of the biggest challenges facing the world today and is on the rise in both low and high income countries. There are a variety of factors e.g. social and economic deprivation, age, ethnicity and gender, which influence whether someone is overweight or obese. People who are overweight or obese have an increased risk of developing type diabetes, cardiovascular disease and some cancers. Excess weight can also affect self-esteem and mental health.

## Adults

The 2021/22 data shows that in Kingston roughly 4 in 7 adults<sup>8</sup> (57.2%) were classified as overweight or living with obesity.

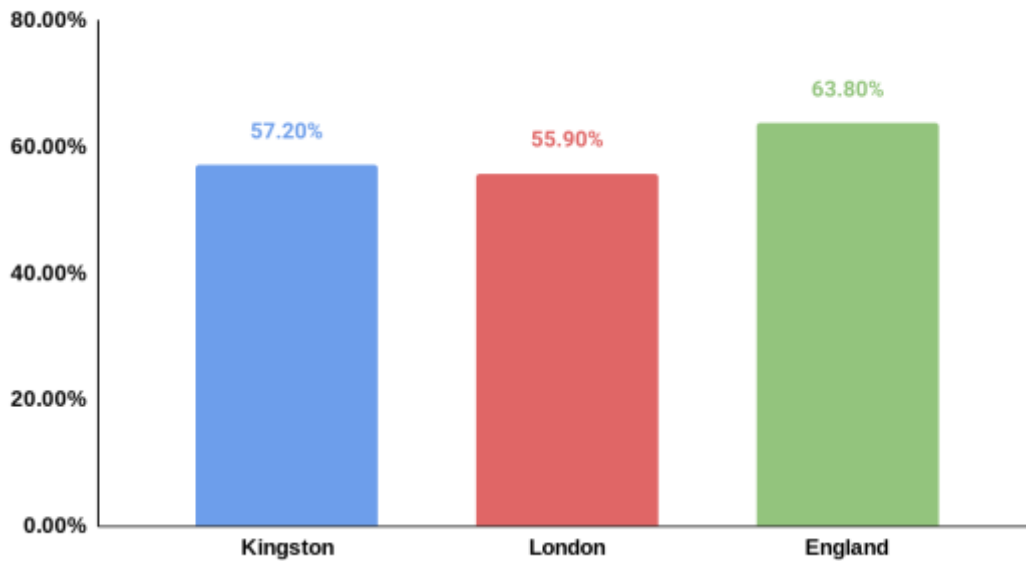
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<sup>6</sup> <https://activelives.sportengland.org/>

<sup>7</sup> [https://data.kingston.gov.uk/jsna/jsna\\_page\\_obesity/](https://data.kingston.gov.uk/jsna/jsna_page_obesity/)

<sup>8</sup> <https://activelives.sportengland.org/>

### Kingston's overweight or obese adult population

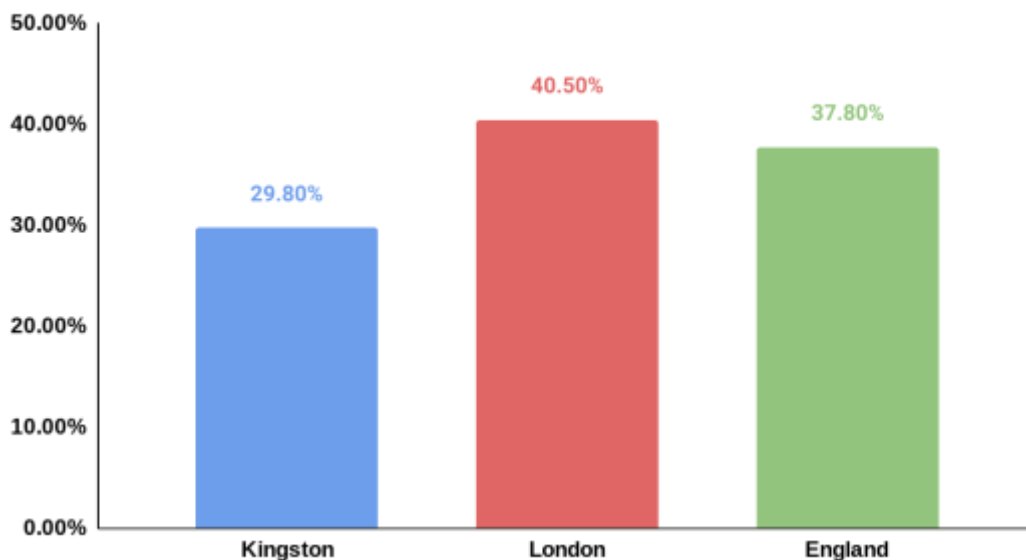


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### Children

The 2021/22 data shows that in Kingston, almost 1 in 3 children (29.8%) in Year 6 (aged 10-11 years) were overweight or living with obesity.

### Kingstons overweight or obese Year 6 population



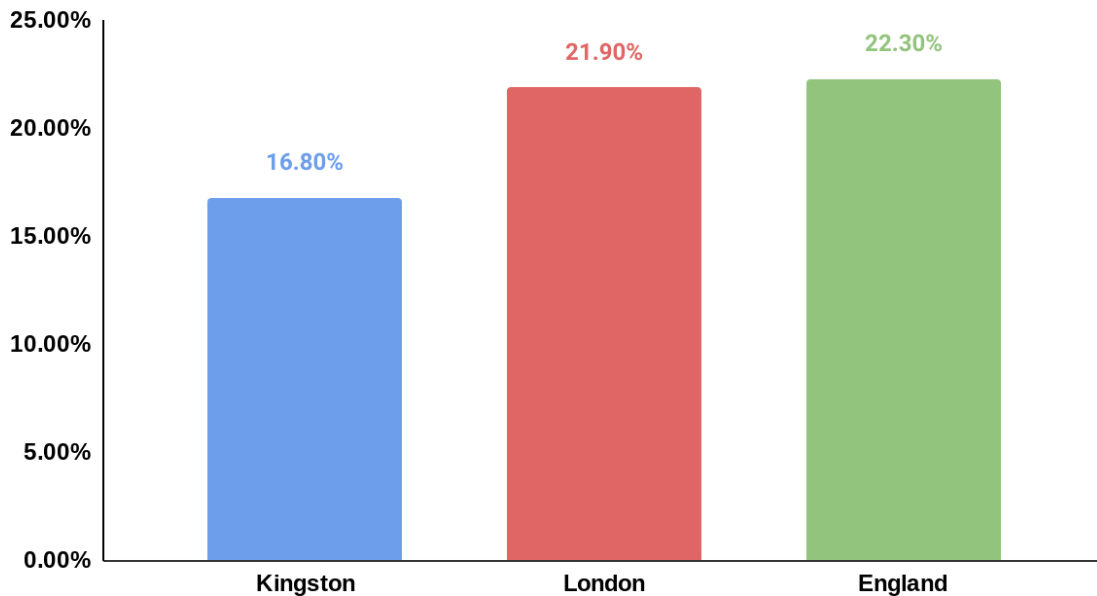
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In Kingston almost 1 in 5 children (16.8%) in the Reception Year (aged 4-5 years) were overweight or living with obesity

<sup>9</sup> <https://fingertips.phe.org.uk/profile/physical-activity>

<sup>10</sup> <https://fingertips.phe.org.uk/profile/physical-activity>

## Kingston's overweight or obese reception population



11

Kingston's children remain amongst the slimmest in London, having the third lowest (Reception) and second lowest (Year 6) levels of excess weight in the capital in 2021-22. However, levels of excess weight are almost double in Year 6 what they are in Reception.

Kingston commissioned the <sup>12</sup>HENRY 5-12 programme delivered by the <sup>13</sup>School Health team, places for these groups are offered to those identified as overweight or obese through the <sup>14</sup>National Child Measurement Programme (NCMP). Support for families that are experiencing food insecurity is also being addressed with the help of the Voluntary and Community Sector, where food banks and food pantries are lifelines to provide nutritional food.

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<sup>11</sup> <https://fingertips.phe.org.uk/profile/physical-activity>

<sup>12</sup> <https://www.henry.org.uk/>

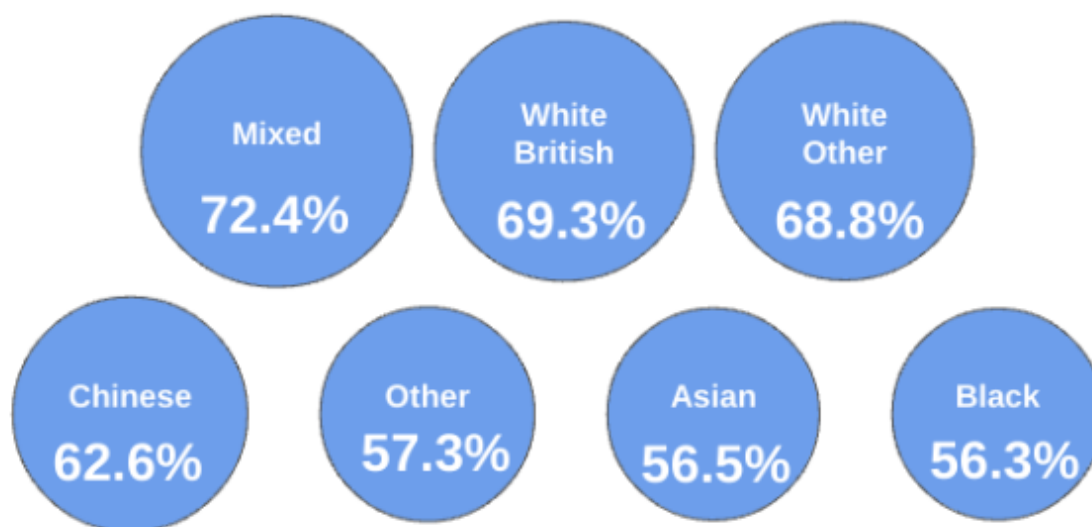
<sup>13</sup> <https://yourhealthcare.org/services/school-health/>

<sup>14</sup>

<https://digital.nhs.uk/data-and-information/publications/statistical/national-child-measurement-programme/2021-22-school-year>



## **Physical Activity by Ethnicity (Active percentages)**



### **4. OUR PRIORITIES**

The priorities for the Physical Activity Strategy are divided into three principles:

1. An integrated physical activity pathway
2. Sports participation pathway
3. Foundation/infrastructure for successful implementation

#### **An integrated physical activity pathway**

- Engage with participants who are least likely to be active, to increase physical activity levels by helping to overcome barriers through targeted recruitment.
- Promote the use of <sup>15</sup>Connected Kingston, a website dedicated to helping Kingston residents find local activities and navigate local services
- Provision of appropriate entry level physical activity and engagement with those wishing to start the road to participation
- Development and delivery of targeted interventions according to health need including:
  - GP referral clients
  - Health Check clients who need to be more physically active
  - Weight management priority groups (Adult and Children & Young People)
  - Long Term Conditions

<sup>15</sup> <https://connectedkingston.uk/>

- Development and delivery of programmes for priority needs groups:
  - The inactive
  - Young and older people
  - Disabled people of all ages
  - Women and girls
  - Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic (BAME)
  - Families
  - Low Socio-Economic households
  - Businesses/Workplace Activity
- Increasing physical activity through 'Active Travel'
- Community workforce development, Volunteers, Health Champions

### **Sports participation pathway**

- Improvement and maintenance of indoor and outdoor facilities across the Borough
- Club development and support; training, finances, governance for sustainability and growth
- Inclusive sport for disability groups
- Community use agreements across providers where possible
- Maximising the impact of the Borough's sporting events

### **Foundation/infrastructure for successful implementation**

- Governance and oversight – re-establish Kingston Community Sport Physical Activity Network
- Partnership engagement through a physical activity strategy action plan
- Partnership funding bids
- Performance management, monitoring evaluation and impact assessment
- Marketing and communications including digital access

## **5. WHAT SUCCESS WILL LOOK LIKE**

- **Increased participation**
  - There would be a notable rise in the number of individual engaging in regular physical activity and sports across different age groups and demographics, indicating a successful shift towards a more active community
- **Improved health and wellbeing**
  - The strategy's impact on health outcomes would be evident through reduced rates of chronic diseases, improved mental health, and enhanced overall well-being amongst Kingston residents.
- **Governance is in place**

- The Active Kingston Network (AKN) is established and operational. It takes ownership of the strategy to deliver the priorities, bring relevant service providers together and secure funding locally, regionally and nationally