



East  
Northamptonshire  
Council

# Healthy and Active Lifestyles Strategy



October 2017

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## Consultees

<b>Internal</b>	<b>External</b>
e.g. Individual(s) / Group / Section	e.g. Stakeholders / Partners / Organisation(s)
CMT	Public / Residents
Middle Managers	
Leisure Working Party	

## Distribution List

<b>Internal</b>	<b>External</b>
e.g. Individual(s) / Group / Section	e.g. Stakeholders / Partners / Organisation(s)
	Public / Residents

## Links to other documents

<b>Document</b>	<b>Link</b>

## Additional Comments to note

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## 1.0 Introduction

East Northamptonshire is a district that has diverse opportunities for a healthy and active lifestyle; from swimming to a walk in one of our parks or along the Greenway to a wide range of sporting and leisure activities, there is something for everyone, whatever your age or ability. Maintaining these opportunities for the community is essential to ensure that East Northamptonshire continues to be a great place to live, work and visit.

Sport and leisure play a positive role across a number of broader agendas; improving health and community safety, increasing skills, employment and economic growth and instilling a sporting identity and local pride.

Our aspiration for East Northamptonshire is to build a healthier and more active community through increased participation in sport, physical activity and active recreation.

Through this strategy, working in partnership with Freedom Leisure and other organisations, we want to inspire people to make active choices, increase engagement with sport, encourage people to use their local facilities and grow local talent.

This Strategy sets out strategic aims and key actions to support and encourage people in the district to live healthier and more active lives. By having a clear path to follow, the Council will be able to apply resources effectively, ensuring that local people enjoy high quality leisure and recreation opportunities that suit their lifestyle and improve the quality of their lives.



**Steven North**  
Leader of  
East Northamptonshire Council



**David Oliver**  
Chief Executive of  
East Northamptonshire Council

## 2.0 Outcomes

2.1 The corporate outcomes to be delivered by this strategy are:

- Good quality of life - Healthy and Safe
- High quality service delivery
- Good Value for Money - Effective management
- Effective partnership working
- Knowledge of our customers and communities

2.2 Our priorities are:-

- Ensuring that more people are more active, more often
- Tackling obesity in children and adults
- Building community capacity and introducing outreach opportunities for sport and leisure
- Supporting and growing the local recreation offer
- Providing cost effective and sustainable services
- Working with the Police and other partners to deliver diversionary activities for young people at risk of involvement in crime and anti-social behaviour
- Improve water safety in the District

2.3 The key outcomes we hope to achieve through this strategy are:-

- More people, more active, more often in East Northamptonshire
- Improved leisure facilities and sustainable plans developed for leisure provision
- An increase in the proportion of adults and children with a healthy weight
- Successful sport outreach work with local clubs, teams and classes to ensure greater access to activity across the district
- Strong partnerships with a range of Sport & Physical Activity providers, agencies and stakeholders including Public Health Organisations, First For Wellbeing, Northamptonshire Sport, Schools and Clubs
  - Improved opportunities for Sport and Physical Activity providers to access funding

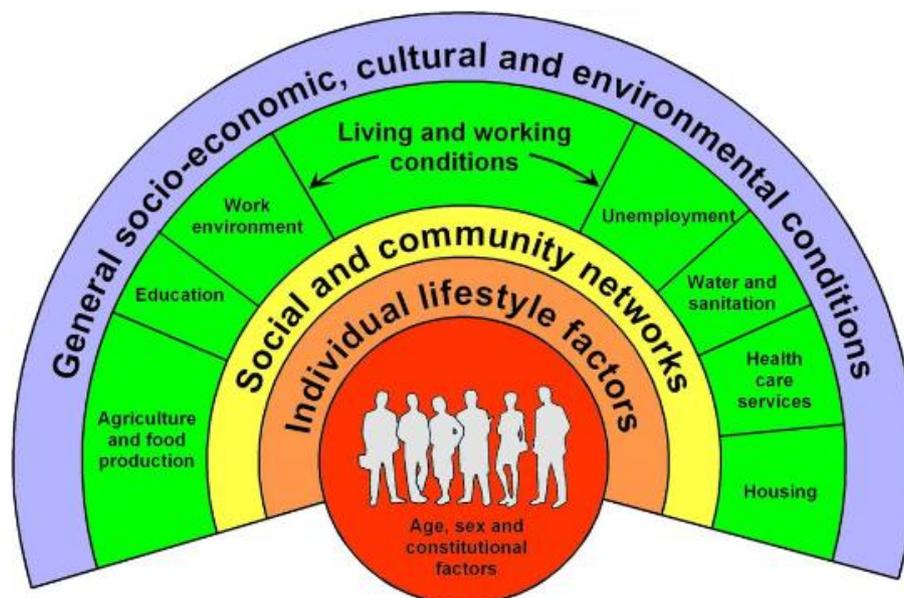
2.4 These outcomes will be supported by:-

- A wide range of high quality programmes and activities with a particular emphasis on targeting those not currently engaged in sport and physical activity
- Designing and delivering Sport and Physical Activity outreach services accessible throughout the District
- The appointment of a dedicated Healthy and Active Lifestyles Officer to promote our Strategy and to act as a single point of contact to assist stakeholders to access funding
- Within the next 5 years, to look at the feasibility of a new leisure centre to meet the demands of our growing population
- Development of a 10 year asset management plan for all leisure centres

## 3.0 Our Healthy and Active Lifestyles Strategy

### 3.1 East Northamptonshire and Healthy and Active Lifestyles

- 3.1.1 There are many benefits of engaging in sport and other physical activity. Numerous positive developmental indicators have been associated with sport participation, including improved self-esteem, emotional regulation, problem-solving, goal attainment, social skills, and academic performance. This might involve cycling, attending a fitness class or playing a sport. But engagement can equally mean volunteering at a local sports club or attending a live event. There are positive outcomes for both the individual and society from all of these different forms of engagement and we want to encourage them in our District.
- 3.1.2 The biggest gains and best value for investment and resource is addressing those that are least active to encourage and support their participation. However, there is a balance to ensure those that are already active are equally catered for.
- 3.1.3 Being outdoors is important, and we are fortunate to have such a green and pleasant District. We are keen to promote the use of our green spaces and want to see the outdoor activity sector thrive and grow as an important way that people can engage in sport, physical activity and active recreation, away from traditional leisure centres that they may not be able to access.
- 3.1.4 Each primary school receives a Physical Education and School Sport premium. Through local School Sports Partnerships we want to ensure its sustainable and effective use, identifying best practice and learning opportunities. Schools will be encouraged to provide the community access to their facilities, which can in turn support their revenue generation capabilities.
- 3.1.5 Volunteering in sport and physical activities enriches lives, both of the volunteers and those who engage in sport. It helps build social inclusion and community cohesion, particularly for isolated individuals. Volunteering helps people develop skills which can help them find work and improve their career prospects so we will encourage volunteering schemes across the District.
- 3.1.6 Active lifestyles play an important part in determining health outcomes, and local authorities have an important part to play in the health and wellbeing agenda. Instilling enthusiasm for regular physical activity in children from a young age and maintaining that into adulthood is an effective way to reduce or avoid future health issues. This is emphasised in the social determinants of health diagram overleaf :



Source: Dahlgren and Whitehead, 1991

### 3.2 Where are we now?

A recently published report from Public Health England revealed that 69% of over 18's are overweight or obese in East Northamptonshire compared to the national average of 64%. There is a whole range of factors to explain this high number, but encouraging participation in sport, healthy and active lifestyles and improving the access to facilities are important elements in helping to address this issue.

	East Northants Value %	England Worst %	England best %	England Average %
Obese Children (Year 6)	18.9	27.1	9.4	19.1
Percentage of Physically Active Adults	56.2	43.5	69.7	56.0
Obese Adults	23.9	35.2	11.2	23.0
Excess weight in adults	69.0	75.9	45.9	63.8

- 3.2.1 Our population continues to grow in East Northamptonshire, with nearly 400 new houses being built every year.
- 3.2.2 The Northamptonshire Health and Wellbeing Strategy has identified a number of key issues relating to healthy lifestyles; inequalities in health, obesity levels, smoking, binge drinking and only 1 in 10 adults undertaking the recommended levels of physical activity.
- 3.2.3 Our older population is growing and over the next 10 years is expected to increase significantly. There is, for example, a much higher rate of hip fractures than the national average, and the rural nature of the district creates its own unique challenges and opportunities.
- 3.2.4 The active people survey undertaken every year up to 2015/16 by Sport England reveals the following about people living in East Northamptonshire:

	2011/12	2012/13	2013/14	2014/15	2015/16
	%	%	%	%	%
<b>Sports participation</b>					
- At least once a week	35.7	32.3	35.1	33.3	30.2
- Three (or more) times a week	16.8	13.3	18.0	14.3	13.8
- Some, but less than three times a week	28.0	25.6	26.7	26.8	24.9
- Any sport	49.3	42.0	50.6	45.2	41.4
- No sport	50.7	58.0	49.4	54.8	58.6
<b>Sport and active recreation (NI8)</b>					
- Three (or more) times a week	21.4	23.7	25.3	21.6	19.7
<b>Participation in organised sport</b>					
- Any organised sport	33.0	31.6	30.5	32.1	39.5
- Club membership	22.8	18.0	16.6	23.1	21.7
- Coaching or tuition	19.1	13.6	12.7	14.0	22.1
- Competition	13.8	11.7	17.0	10.4	15.8

3.2.5 Through a series of demand assessment tools, we know that there are some concerns about the provision of sport and recreation over the next few years. A Playing Pitch Strategy has recently been developed which will help inform our needs and priorities. The assessment undertaken to inform the strategy indicates that:

- Our current sports hall provision is below the regional and national average and we need a further 17 courts by 2021
- The area surrounding Oundle is entirely reliant on the facilities at Oundle School, which creates a risk to the provision in this area and an issue around accessibility and times they are available to the public
- There is a shortfall of swimming pool provision forecast for 2026
- A further 148 health and fitness stations will be required by 2021 based on population growth and demand; this will be particularly apparent in Rushden

3.2.6 There are around 500,000 customer visits to the Council's leisure centres every year. This equates to everyone in the East Northamptonshire District visiting one of our centres around 6 times per year.

3.2.7 We currently have 4,100 members who use our facilities. We offer 240 swimming lessons per week teaching 1,600+ children to swim. There were 130,000 swimming visits during 2014/15. This is despite Splash Leisure Pool being closed during the summer of 2015 for refurbishment.

3.2.8 We have two of the best attended and most valued disabled people's clubs in the country, with attendances at the MAC and YIP clubs averaging around 65 per week. 32 local groups/clubs use our facilities participating in a variety of activities including gymnastics, martial arts, football, netball, badminton, swimming and dance.

### 3.3 Recent achievements

3.3.1 We have recently invested over £3 million in our three leisure centres, which has resulted in increased participation in health and fitness activity.

3.3.2 We have recently appointed a new operator for our Healthy and Active Lifestyles service, Freedom Leisure, which commenced on 1 April 2017. Our new contract will provide many opportunities for improving our services and by working in partnership we aim to achieve great things for sport and activity rates. This includes the introduction of an improved outreach service so that we can deliver services throughout the District to increase the opportunities for sport and physical activity.

3.3.3 There are some fantastic events that encourage active lifestyles within East Northamptonshire, which we support and will continue to encourage. These include the Women's Tour, a national cycling event that has raced through the district, the Nene Valley Festival celebrating the Nene Valley, Oundle International Festivals of Literature Music and Drama, Sport Relief and Comic Relief events, running and triathlon events at Stanwick Lakes and national youth sailing events in Thrapston.

3.3.4 We aim to provide active role models within our communities, celebrate success and grow local talent. Within the district, there have been some amazing achievements within the last couple of years, including:

- The RYA National Youth Champion sailor is from Middle Nene Sailing Club in Thrapston
- A GB Team member and Gold Medallist in the World Kettlebell Championships trains at the Pemberton Centre, Rushden
- A National Champion Kickboxer trains at the Pemberton Centre, Rushden
- A young Archer from Raunds represented the UK in the Youth Olympic Games
- The winner of the National Tennis Youth Tournament trains at Oundle Tennis Club
- A Local Cricketer representing Northants/Regional level at Disability Cricket plays at Rushden Cricket Club
- A team from Oundle Rowing Club achieved Gold in the British Masters rowing event

3.3.5 Through our Community Facilities Fund we have invested £836,336 over the last three years in facilities that support healthy and active lifestyles such as improving changing rooms at Jubilee Park in Rushden, refurbishing Higham Ferrer's Sports Pavilion, providing 3 tennis courts and 1 basketball court in Kings Cliffe and improving facilities for Oundle Rowing Club.

3.3.6 Through our Members' Empowerment Fund our Councillors have invested £31,000 over the past three years on projects that encourage and support active lifestyles including providing football kits for players in Stanwick, providing safety mats for a gymnastics club in Irthlingborough and supporting a BMX/skateboarding event in Thrapston.

3.3.7 We support community groups and clubs to access grants through our external funding advice function which has resulted in £1,641,127 worth of funding being awarded to our communities in the last three years.

### **3.4 What do we need to do to achieve our outcomes?**

#### 3.4.1 Our priorities are:-

- Ensuring that more people are more active, more often
- Tackling obesity in children and adults
- Building community capacity and outreach opportunities for sport and leisure
- Supporting and growing the local recreation offer
- Providing cost effective and sustainable services
- Introducing sport and physical activity outreach services
- Working with the Police and other partners to deliver diversionary activities for young people at risk of involvement in crime and anti-social behaviour
- Improving water safety in the District

#### **More People More Active More Often**

3.4.2 There are several demographic groups in the district whose engagement in sport and active recreation is well below the national average. We will target our efforts and resources on those who are least represented, such as girls, women and disabled people, in addition to those in lower socio-economic groups and older people. This will be achieved through working with Freedom Leisure and tailoring programmes aimed at these groups. We also recognise the importance of ensuring that children enjoy sport and active recreation and it is vital that young people are kept engaged to promote active lives.

3.4.3 The East Northamptonshire Greenway makes attractive and safe walking and cycling routes available in the heart of the Nene Valley. The Greenway is being developed in phases and will help connect East Northamptonshire's communities to a central route that will run from Wellingborough Railway Station in the south and to Peterborough Railway Station in the north and vice versa. This route allows local people being able to commute to work by bicycle. It also encourages green tourism along the Nene Valley and covers a significant part of the Sustrans network and will also help connect to other cycling routes throughout Northamptonshire and beyond. We will continue to invest in the Greenway and other green spaces and routes as venues for active recreation, sport and healthy activities.

3.4.4 We will work in partnership with Freedom Leisure to encourage sporting activities and will use our website and social media sites to promote the benefits of our services and use them as a portal to access leisure provision.

3.4.5 Technology is really important as it encourages physical activity through quantifying activity and enabling access to websites and social media platforms which provide details of our services and facilities. Apps and devices will continue to transform sport and encourage increased activity; and we will encourage their use and embrace the opportunities they provide, including assisting in the management and development of our leisure centres and the general sport and recreation offer within the district.

3.4.6 We will support national campaigns aimed at target groups such as 'This Girl Can', which is aimed at overcoming barriers preventing women from getting active.

- 3.4.7 Swimming is a vital skill; we want every Key Stage 2 child in East Northamptonshire to be able to swim at least 25 metres before they leave Primary School directly improving water safety in the District.
- 3.4.8 Cycling is another core skill and a favourite activity of our community that, if learnt at an early age, can act as a strong incentive for children to remain engaged in sport as they grow up. Every child in East Northamptonshire should be given the opportunity to ride a bike, through the Government's Bikeability scheme. Working with Northamptonshire Sport we will encourage schools and community groups to deliver this scheme and support its development.
- 3.4.9 We will encourage our staff and Councillors to engage in physical activity through corporate membership of our leisure facilities and use our intranet to publicise healthy and active lifestyles. We are supporting the Healthy Workplace Charter, are a member of the Northamptonshire Workplace Challenge initiative and will aim to offer the Cycle to Work scheme. We will promote the Eat Out, Eat Well campaign within our District and will also encourage and support business within our area to do the same thing in order to increase the provision of opportunities in the district.
- 3.4.10 In partnership with Freedom Leisure we will offer competitive pricing and membership rates and a range of concessionary schemes to various people/groups.
- 3.4.11 In Partnership with Freedom Leisure we will consult and communicate more effectively with our customers about being active to ensure we are providing the services and activities they want to engage in, at times that suit, in a way they want to access them. For example, we will ensure that online booking is available and will support new sporting opportunities.

### **Building Community Capacity**

- 3.4.12 We aim to improve our partnership working, especially with schools and community groups so that we can utilise their facilities and expertise to benefit the wider community.
- 3.4.13 We have an important role to play in bringing schools, voluntary sports clubs, the health service and the private sector together to forge partnerships, unlocking barriers to participation and improving how local sport is delivered.
- 3.4.14 Our planning policies will be designed to ensure adequate leisure provision is provided to those in our district. It is essential that we negotiate with developers at the planning stage to ensure that they consider leisure facilities and make a contribution to their provision to assist in making their development attractive to new residents. We need to ensure that the growth of our population is supported by growth in the leisure provision that is accessible to them. We will also encourage co-location of sporting activities and encourage the development of multi sport facilities.

### **Supporting Local Recreation Offer**

- 3.4.15 Our County Sports Partnership, Northamptonshire Sport, part of the First For Wellbeing Group, plays an important role in promoting sport and physical activity and we will work closely with them to focus on our priority areas.

- 3.4.16 We will focus not only on traditional sporting activities, but will utilise our countryside and outdoor space to encourage a wide variety of activities. Outdoor activities are also a vital part of our tourist economy, from canoeing or paddle boarding on the River Nene, sailing or fishing on our lakes or walking along the Greenway. In partnership with Freedom Leisure, we will use our technology to promote these activities to ensure people can easily find out about these activities and book them online.
- 3.4.17 We will provide funding advice and support for initiatives that encourage active lifestyles and seek to obtain funding from a variety of sources to ensure they are sustainable and effective.
- 3.4.18 Our Community Facilities Fund will continue to support facilities providing activities within our communities. Two of the key elements in determining grant applications will be the active lifestyle opportunities created by the application and its sustainability.
- 3.4.19 We will continue to support our Country Parks and similar facilities run by our partners, such as Stanwick Lakes, Twywell Hills and Dales and Fermyn, Fineshade and Wakerley Woods, as important open spaces within our district that encourage active lifestyles and community cohesion.
- 3.4.20 We will celebrate the sporting successes of individuals and teams within our District, considering a District wide community awards event to link into the County level events working alongside Northamptonshire Sport to achieve this. We will maximise the impact of local and national sporting events and encourage engagement and involvement through a variety of channels. Events such as the Women's Tour cycling event had a ripple effect and cycling in the district is going from strength to strength and we will continue to utilise such events to encourage active lifestyles.

### **Cost Effective and Sustainable Services**

- 3.4.21 We have invested in our existing facilities and over the next five years we will evaluate the need for a new leisure centre in Rushden. The Rushden East development will create significant new demand and we need to provide facilities that the community needs and deserves.
- 3.4.22 We will develop a baseline of information on the physical activity preferences and interests of the people within our district. At the moment we do not know enough about their likes, dislikes and engagement in sport and leisure activities, whether their needs are met within our district or whether they have to visit other areas to take part in their chosen sport or activity. Once this has been developed, we will use it to target and monitor our effectiveness, recognising that it will not be possible to provide access to every single sport or activity. Where an area is lacking and there is evidence of significant unmet demand, we will support provision in that area.
- 3.4.23 We will work with National and local agencies such as Sport England, The Youth Sports Trust and Northamptonshire Sport to learn lessons which can be applied to all areas of healthy and active lifestyles.
- 3.4.24 We have surveyed our leisure-related assets and produced a comprehensive asset management plan to ensure they are well maintained and fit for purpose.

3.4.25 Through our new healthy and active lifestyles contract we will ensure we have a positive impact on our communities and monitor how effectively we are encouraging healthier and more active lifestyles. We have invested in a new team member to manage the contract and advocate healthy and active lifestyles within our organisation and community

#### **4 Action Plan**

Our Performance Indicators set out in Appendix One will be used to measure our success and a detailed action plan is set out in Appendix Two clearly setting out actions, responsibility and timelines. This will be published on our website with our progress.

**Appendix One - The following performance indicators will be used to measure our success:**

<p>ENC Corporate Priority: Good Quality of Life – Healthy</p>	<p>Proposed Performance Indicators</p>
<p>High levels of participation in sport and physical activity for the population as a whole.</p>	<p>Number of East Northamptonshire residents participating in physical activity on average 30 minutes, 3 times per week (or 1.5 hours per week) in leisure centres and outreach programmes as a percentage of the total District population broken down by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Adults aged 18 – 64</li> <li>• Children and young people aged 5 – 17</li> <li>• Older people aged 65 and over</li> <li>• People with a registered disability</li> <li>• Residents in specified priority Wards/Parishes</li> </ul> <p>Residents taking out the concessionary pricing scheme as a percentage of those eligible in the District</p>
<p>ENC Corporate Priority: High Quality Service Delivery</p>	<p>Proposed Performance Indicators</p>
<p>To ensure the leisure centres and physical activity outreach services offer a high quality service.</p>	<p>Customer and partner satisfaction indicators captured through an on-going monthly rolling programme based on Net Promoter Score (NPS):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• the overall service</li> <li>• staff/coaches</li> <li>• access and parking</li> <li>• facilities</li> <li>• catering</li> <li>• cleanliness</li> <li>• changing rooms</li> <li>• Value for money.</li> <li>• Quest™ Plus scores for Leisure Facilities and Sports Development</li> <li>• Membership retention</li> <li>• Customer services PIs</li> </ul>
<p>ENC Corporate Priority: Good Value for Money</p>	<p>Proposed Performance Indicators</p>
<p>Delivering inward investment into sport and physical activity.</p>	<p>External funding attracted and enabled for community and outreach physical activity programmes.</p>
<p>ENC Corporate Priority: Effective Partnership Working</p>	<p>Proposed Performance Indicators</p>

Ensuring that Freedom Leisure is positively engaging with the Council's key partners.	Satisfaction with Freedom Leisure as a partner amongst parishes, health partners, the police and voluntary sector.
<b>ENC Corporate Priority: Safe</b>	<b>Proposed Performance Indicators</b>
Working with the police and other partners to deliver diversionary activities for young people at risk of involvement in crime and anti-social behaviour.	Increasing participation in physical activity of young people in targeted areas in the District identified as crime and anti-social behaviour hot spots.
Improve water safety in the District.	Ensuring all Key Stage 2 pupils in the District can swim at least 25 metres.

## Appendix Two - Healthy and Active Lifestyles Strategy Action Plan

Action	Who	By When
Monitor the Healthy And Active Lifestyles contract effectively	Healthy and Active Lifestyles Officer	On going
Ensure our website can be utilised as a portal to access Freedom Leisure's services and other physical activity opportunities	Healthy and Active Lifestyles Officer	Apr-17
Ensure a process is in place to provide comments and engage with planning policies and applications to encourage development of multi sport facilities	Healthy and Active Lifestyles Officer	Apr-17
Compose an asset management plan of our leisure related assets	Healthy and Active Lifestyles Officer/Freedom Leisure	May-17
Identification of target groups for our outreach services through consultation with partners and stakeholders	Healthy and Active Lifestyles Officer/Freedom Leisure	May-17
Introduce competitive pricing and concessionary schemes at our Leisure Centre's	Healthy and Active Lifestyles Officer/Freedom Leisure	May-17
Ensure the development and design of outreach service programmes aimed at our target groups in partnership with Freedom Leisure	Healthy and Active Lifestyles Officer/Freedom Leisure	Jun/July-17
Corporate membership for staff and Councillors negotiated with Freedom Leisure	Head of Customer and Community Services	Sep-17
Promote the Healthy and Active Lifestyles Strategy during the Nene Valley Festival 2017	Healthy and Active Lifestyles Officer/Tourism Officer	Sep-17
Introduce and deliver our outreach service programmes	Healthy and Active Lifestyles Officer/Freedom Leisure	Nov/Dec-17
Promote the eat out eat well campaign within our District	Health Protection Manager	Jan-18

Advocate the Healthier Workplace Charter and other initiatives to businesses in our district	Health Protection Manager and Healthy and Active Lifestyles Officer	Jan-18
Sign up to the Healthier Workplace Charter and/or other relevant workplace initiatives	Healthy and Active Lifestyles Officer/Head of Environmental Services	Jan-18
Introduce the cycle to work scheme	Healthy and Active Lifestyles Officer/HR Manager	Apr-18
Devise a programme to ensure each child in East Northamptonshire can swim at least 25m before they leave primary school, in partnership with N-Sport	Healthy and Active Lifestyles Officer/Freedom Leisure	Apr-18
Promote and encourage participation in the Bikeability scheme for children through schools and communities, in partnership with N-Sport	Healthy and Active Lifestyles Officer	Apr-18
Investigate the opportunities for hosting District wide community awards events to link into County level, N-Sport events	Healthy and Active Lifestyles Officer	Apr-18
Develop a baseline of information on physical activity preferences in our district and utilise the information to design services	Healthy and Active Lifestyles Officer/Freedom Leisure	Apr-18
Publicise and market the Greenway and other District wide locations to increase physical activity and active recreation	Healthy an Active Lifestyles Officer/Community Partnerships	On going
Support National Campaigns and encourage similar local participation events, e.g. Sport Relief	Healthy and Active Lifestyles Officer	On going
Establish opportunities for partnership working to improve participation	Healthy and Active Lifestyles Officer	On going