

Active Westminster Strategy: A Summary

Move for Life!

2024 - 2028

July 2024

Coreen Brown – Head of Sport, Leisure and Active Communities



Introduction

- The ActiveWestminster Strategy 2024 – 2028 – ‘Move for Life!’, through its three themes of Active Lives, Active Neighbourhoods and Active City sets out how the city council intends to reduce barriers and increase access opportunities to physical activity,
- Physical activity is **crucial to all aspects of overall wellbeing** (mental and physical) **for all people**.
- **There’s no part of our lives that our level of physical activity can’t affect.** Activity links to life expectancy (and by extension our #2035 target), mental health and stress, long and short-term physical health conditions, child development, economic wellbeing, and civic participation. There can even be connections to reducing crime, increasing pride in the local area, and encouraging engagement with the council and its services. It can drive social inclusion, tackle inequalities, and reduce isolation while increasing independence among the most vulnerable.
- We know that inactivity is leading to health problems in Westminster. **More than 1 in 5 adults are classed as ‘inactive’**, doing less than 30 mins physical activity per week, and by the end of primary school, over **30% of Westminster’s children are classified as obese** - higher than the London and national average.
- We also know that **the barriers and opportunities relating to physical activity are not experienced equally** across all parts of the community. Significant disparities exist, for example we know that people with disabilities tend to be less active and less likely to use the facilities available locally. Increasing physical activity – and making it more inclusive – is therefore **a critical part of delivering a fairer Westminster**.
- **The ActiveWestminster Strategy sets out how the city council intends to do this.** It outlines how we and partners including the VCS will work together to ensure that everyone in Westminster can access opportunities to be active that are suitable and appealing to them, regardless of factors like their age, where they live, or whether they have existing health conditions or a disability.
- **Our work to deliver a city where everyone is active links to a wide range of existing council strategies and policies.** Through this close alignment, the ActiveWestminster Strategy and the connected strategies lend mutual support to one another, further increasing our scope to impact on our desired objectives.

Outcomes

These are the results we want to see:



1. ACTIVE HEALTH AND WELLBEING

- People who live, work and study in Westminster move more for improved health, well-being and happiness.



2. EQUALITY

- There is equal opportunity to be active, regardless of background.



3. ACCESSIBILITY

- There are accessible opportunities to be active in leisure centres, activity facilities, school facilities, parks, open spaces, green spaces, playgrounds, community places/spaces, streets and highways via an active environment.



4. STRONG NEIGHBOURHOODS

- Leisure centres, activity facilities, school facilities, parks, open spaces, playgrounds, community places/spaces, streets and highways are all strong contributors in creating neighbourhoods which people want to live and work in.



5. ENVIRONMENTAL SUSTAINABILITY

- Contribute towards reducing our carbon footprint, improve air quality and make active travel a way of life.



6. SKILLS DEVELOPMENT

- Develop skills and access to employment for people to thrive.

The Active Westminster Strategy 2024-2028 - 'Move for Life!'

Three themes through which we will deliver our six outcomes:

Active Lives

Everyone in Westminster should be able to be active within their everyday lives, in a way that works for them. This may be to and from work, study, volunteering and training in parks and open spaces, in their local leisure centre, on their own or with friends and family.

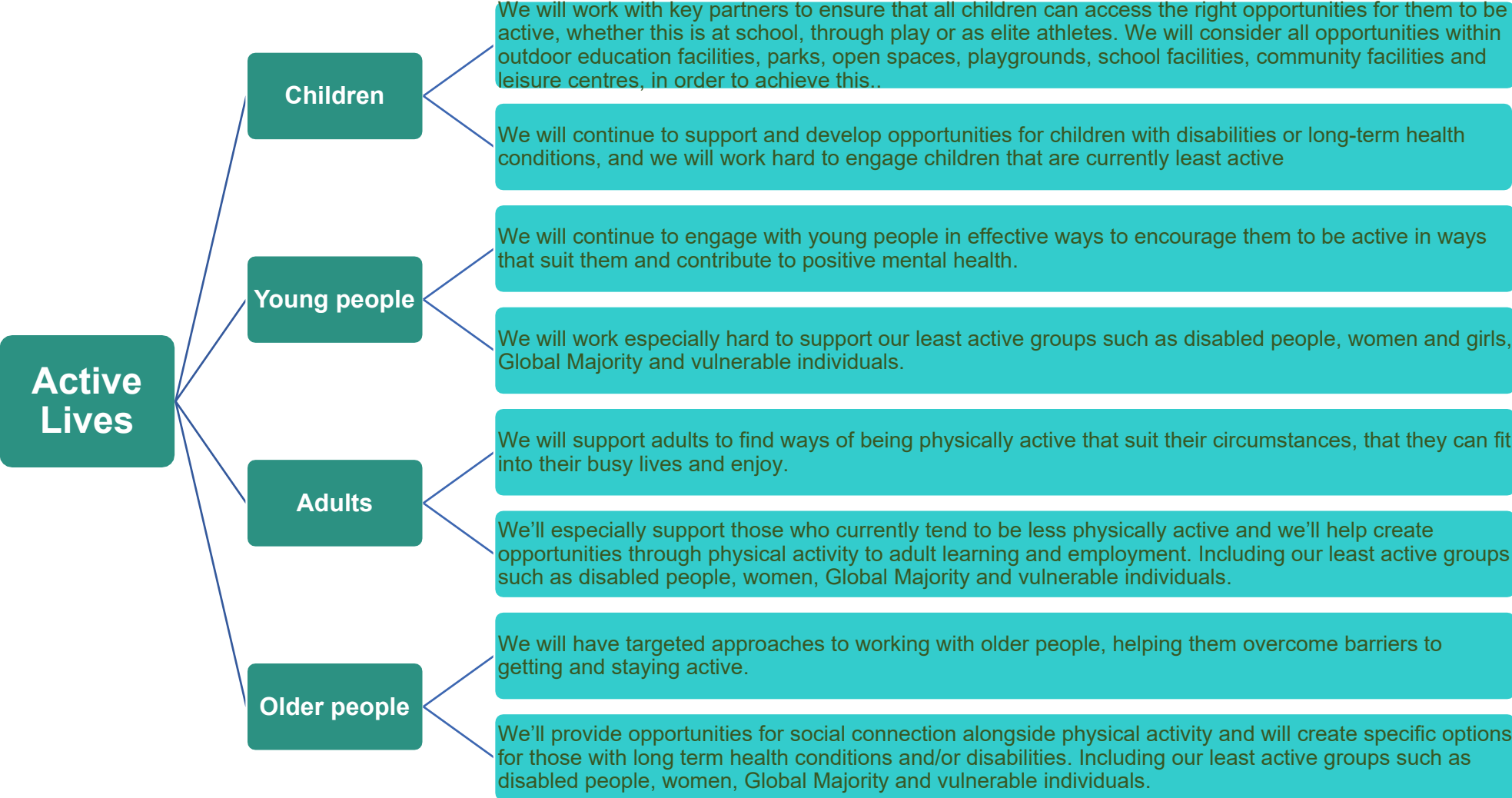
Active Neighbourhoods

We will strive to ensure all neighbourhoods have opportunities for our residents, students and workers to be active and connect in their local neighbourhood. We recognise that all neighbourhoods are distinct, and we will work at a local level to determine what needs to be in place to support an active neighbourhood

Active City

The infrastructure across the City should support people to be active; whether this is our leisure centres, activity facilities, school facilities, parks, open spaces, green spaces, playgrounds, community places/spaces, cycle and walking routes on our streets and highways.

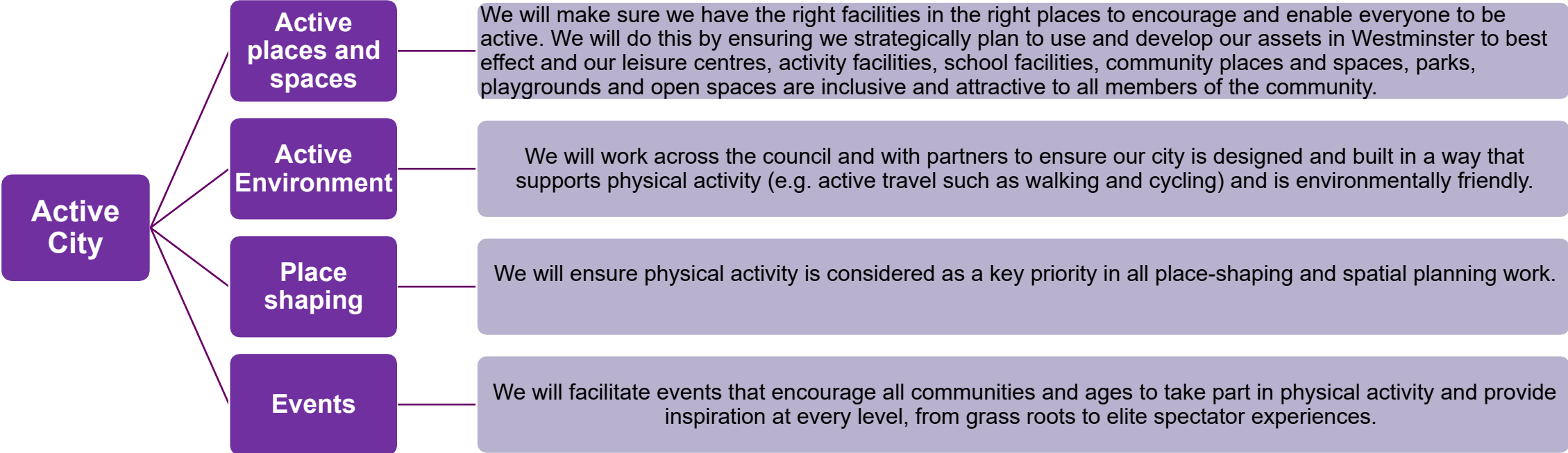
What we'll do under this strategy



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A Strategic Way of Working

If we are going to drive engagement and participation in physical activity through the ActiveWestminster Strategy 2024-2028, we will need to work strategically across all council departments and with external partners. In the past the Sport, Leisure and Active Communities team has been the main focal point for delivery in this space. Of course, the team will always have a leadership role and convening role here, but in this iteration of the strategy we want to ‘zoom out’ from the service-specific perspective, thinking about the high-level outcomes we want to achieve and all the levers and resources at the council’s disposal that could potentially help us get there.

In order to achieve this, we will be focusing on **three core principles**:

1. Place based approaches

- Using locality as a lens through which we view all the various services and interventions which contribute to people’s activity levels – maximising local insights and feedback. This includes physical environment (streets, parks and open spaces, air quality), as well as service delivery (leisure facilities, Public Health services, social care), and all the other elements that shape people’s daily lives within their neighbourhoods (schools, transport, local VCS activity, and so on).

2. Clever collaboration

- Working jointly with key partners in a targeted way – tailor making our collaborative work to get the greatest impact out of the collective strengths, expertise and resources we hold.

3. Delivery mechanisms

- Thinking about all the different ways an outcome might be delivered, and by whom. Tapping into effective and impactful actions at the front end rather than trying to do everything from a single, central point. Coordinating efforts to meet our physical activity goals for Westminster with a ‘commissioning’-style approach to getting things done.

Working together with departments across the council, we want to develop our capacity to work in this way to deliver a more active Westminster.

Next Steps

1. Final draft and sign-off in August 2024
2. Strategy design followed by launch in Autumn 2024

Looking ahead: Post-Launch Work

- Following the launch of the new ActiveWestminster Strategy in 2024 a whole council delivery plan will be formed in collaboration with WCC Services and external partners.
- The proposed process for this will be as follows:

