



EPOA
Essex Planning
Officers Association

Thanks to Countryside Properties

ACTIVE ENVIRONMENTS AND ACTIVE DESIGN PRINCIPLES¹⁹

HEALTHY PLACES GUIDANCE





Activity
for all



Walkable
communities



Connected walking
and cycling routes



Multifunctional
open spaces



Co-location of
community facilities



High quality
streets and spaces



Appropriate
infrastructure



Active
buildings



Management, maintenance,
monitoring and evaluation



Activity promotion
and local champions

KEY FACTS

- Physical inactivity is believed to be responsible for 1 in 6 deaths in the United Kingdom²⁰.
- Not getting enough activity is associated with an increased risk of developing certain types of cancer, dementia, depression, type 2 diabetes, hip fractures and heart disease. Physical activity is associated with having a positive impact on mental health and wellbeing^{15,20,21}.
- Health recommendations are that adults are moderately active for 150 minutes per week, children are active for 60 minutes per day and young children are active for 180 minutes per day. In addition, adults should undertake strength building activity 3 times per week²².
- In Essex, only 66% of adults meet the recommended guidance of 150 minutes of moderate intensity per week²³. Some specific groups in the population are known to be more inactive than others including women, those with disabilities and those who are unemployed^{24,25}.
- Physical inactivity in the population is increasing – it's projected that by 2030 the population will be 35% more inactive than it is today²⁰.
- It is estimated that inactivity costs the UK £7.4 billion per year and, if inactivity increases, this cost will rise²⁰.

References

- Public Health England (2017) Spatial planning for health; an evidence resource for planning and designing healthier places. Public Health England
- Sport England supported by Public Health England (2015) Active Design: Planning for health and wellbeing through sport and physical activity
- Public Health England (2018 update) Physical Activity; applying All our Health
- Mental Health Foundation (2018) How to look after you mental health using exercise
- Department of Health and Social Care (2011) UK physical activity guidelines guidance
- Public Health England (2018) Physical Activity profile [Essex County]
- Active Essex (2017) Our Strategy 2017-2021. Active Essex
- Public Health England (2014) Everybody active, everyday. Public Health England
- Henderson and House (2018) TCPA Building Successful Communities Lessons from the TCPA's New Communities Group

How to encourage and improve active living and physical activity;

- Provide easy access to formal and informal open space with adequate infrastructure to support sport, physical activity and play.
- Consider approaches on how to support the integration of communities to come together in activity and play, and increase active travel opportunities to local services and facilities – especially walking and cycling.
- Consider how to apply the evidence and case studies from Public Health England in 2014 'Everybody active, everyday' framework²⁵ which gives ideas around how to address inequalities, the economic benefit and application of active environments.
- Providing infrastructure early in the development enables people to walk, cycle and play as soon as they become residents²⁶. This supports people to be physically active, and will potentially embed these behaviours into daily life.
- The design and layout of open space is important to increasing physical activity and play. Spaces should be inclusive, accessible and address the various, differing needs of people throughout their life stages supporting the reduction of inequalities¹⁵.
- Use England Active Design Principles, which were jointly prepared with Public Health England¹⁹, that advise on how to increase activity through the design process. These have been integrated into the Essex Design Guide with specialist input provided from Sport England.
- The Sport England Active Design Checklist should be used as an assessment tool as part of a health impact assessment. The details and the checklist for this can be found as a separate document on our web site.