

Purpose / Recommendation

HIB members are asked to:

- Note the summary of activity taken place to date
- Endorse and support next steps

Executive Summary

The HIB approved the process of implementing the 6-stage Whole Systems Approach (WSA) to Healthy Weight in Oxfordshire in April 2019.

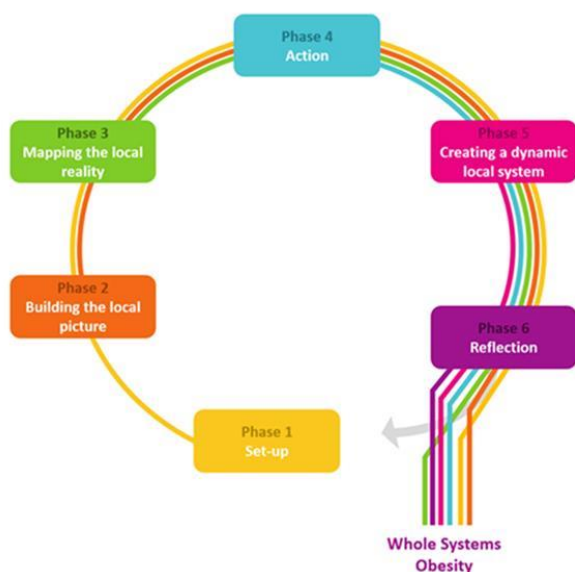
Stages 1-3 were completed 2019/21; partners were engaged to map existing actions and current support services, and to develop a healthy weight systems network.

Stakeholders were brought together at virtual workshops to review the existing system in Oxfordshire and agreed an initial focus on: a family approach to healthy weight, climate and food, and physical activity in and around schools. Causal maps were developed to focus actions and an outline action plan drafted. This action plan will be reviewed and finalised at a WSA network event on 27th January 2022 with a refocus on four pillars: Environment, Prevention, Support and Partnerships.

Stage 5 of the WSA process will include a health needs assessment, strategy development and further implementation of system actions.

Background

The process of implementing the Whole Systems Approach (WSA) to Healthy Weight in Oxfordshire began in 2019 following the HIB endorsement of the WSA approach.¹ A core working group was convened and a project plan developed.



¹ <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/whole-systems-approach-to-obesity>

Partners mapped existing work and developed a healthy weight systems network. A Healthy Weight Story Map² was created as a visual data tool to present local obesity and food related data to stakeholders and identify areas of need and potential actions.

More than 75 cross-sector stakeholders were brought together at virtual workshops from September 2020-April 2021 to review 3 themes identified by existing partners as areas they could influence and/or support system change (family approach to healthy weight, climate and food, and physical activity in and around schools). A process of causal mapping was undertaken to identify key actions

The causal mapping data and additional qualitative data from the workshops have now been divided into 4 action areas: -

- **Healthy weight environment** (health promoting food and built environment)
- **Prevention**; start well, live well and age well (primary prevention)
- **Support** services for residents to achieve a healthy weight (secondary prevention)
- **Partnership** working with partners to promote a healthy weight (system relationships)

Actions are currently co-ordinated by a Core Working Group with subgroups focussing on key issues for example, Children’s Subgroup; Food Sustainability and Health Group; Families Physical Activity Group

Table 1 below shows a snapshot of work to date. A comprehensive action plan will be reviewed and finalised at a network event on 27th January 2022. A draft version is included in appendix 1.

Table 1: WSA to healthy Weight Action Plan (snapshot)

Priority	Complete	Underway	Long-term ambitions
Healthy weight environment <i>(making it easier for people to make healthy choices where they live, work and play)</i>	2-part Healthy Weight Story Map to present local obesity and food related data	Work with schools and caterers to review the levers and barriers to incentivise healthy catering and improve the standard of school food	Consider the broader opportunities within the environment to influence factors linked to obesity e.g. Inclusion of policies in Local Plans which support the development of healthy weight environments
Prevention ; start well, live well and age well <i>(primary prevention - communications, knowledge and skills)</i>	Eat Them to Defeat Them primary schools programme to encourage children to eat more vegetables (21 schools in 2020 and 33 in 2021)	Creating an Active Schools Framework pilot in 20 primary schools Review of evidence base and good practice related to early prevention	A system wide prevention plan related to achieving healthy weight developed and being implemented by all partners Review approaches to reduce weight stigma and develop a workforce that is confident talking about healthy weight

² [Healthy Weight Story Map \(arcgis.com\)](https://arcgis.com)

<p>Support services for residents to achieve a healthy weight (<i>secondary prevention - weight management services and support</i>)</p>	<p>Extended and expanded our adult weight management service at tier 1 and 2 for a more targeted approach and in line with JSNA</p>	<p>Building on targeted work for weight management initiatives (Men, BAME, mental health pilot)</p> <p>Pilot a weight management service for children and families</p>	<p>Develop an all age (from maternity onwards) options for healthy weight support</p>
<p>Partnership working to promote a healthy weight (<i>system relationships, connections and insight</i>)</p>	<p>Working group established to inform the County-wide food strategy</p> <p>Childhood malnutrition roundtable held with academia, district councils and voluntary sector</p>	<p>Childhood Healthy Weight pathway</p> <p>Healthy Weight Community insight project report due Spring 2022 to inform action plan and highlight gaps for further insight</p>	<p>Health Needs Assessment (children's focus)</p> <p>Healthy Weight Strategy</p>

Key Issues

Despite a recent revision of the action plan the following areas are anticipated to remain priorities: -

Childhood obesity

There is a renewed focus on childhood obesity nationally and locally following the latest National Childhood Measurement Programme (NCMP) results for England (2020-21) that show a large increase in the proportions of children living with overweight (including obesity), and severe obesity compared to previous years.

Reception year has seen the highest increase (see figure 1 and 2) and obesity rates in both reception year (YR) and year 6 pupils (Y6) increased by around 4.5 percentage points between 2019-20 and 2020-21; this is the highest annual rise since the NCMP began in 2006/07. The data also shows a further widening of the inequalities gap in obesity prevalence between children in the most and least deprived areas in England, this is most noticeable among children in YR.³

There are clear links between obesity and inequality with those living in areas of greatest deprivation having the highest levels.

³ [National Child Measurement Programme, England 2020/21 School Year - NHS Digital](#)

Figure 1: **Reception** - Trend in prevalence of obesity, severe obesity, and overweight (including obesity) NCMP 2006/07 to 2020/21

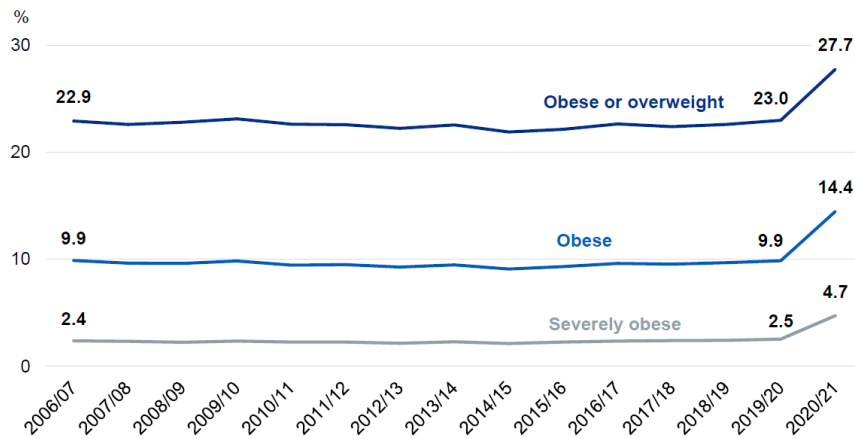


Figure 2: **Year 6** - Trend in prevalence of obesity, severe obesity, and overweight (including obesity) NCMP 2006/07 to 2020/21



In Oxfordshire, limitations in the numbers of children measured for the NCMP in 2020/21 due to the impact of COVID-19 (1/2 of the usual cohort) mean that the local data are not statistically robust and should be treated with caution. However, local data suggests a reflection of the national picture in that childhood overweight and obesity was relatively stable from 2007/8 to 2019/20 but increased in YR from 18.6% in 2019/20 to 25.1% in 2020/21 and for Y6 from 29.4% in 2019/20 to 37% in 2020/21 (similar for both YR and Y6).

Food Poverty and obesity

The WSA identified several actions related to food access and food poverty in its initial action planning and is continuing to work with partners to take forward related areas of work through a Food Sustainability and Health Group. Nationally, the link between food poverty and obesity was highlighted in the National Food Strategy (2021).⁴ In August 2021, Good Food Oxfordshire (GFO) published a Food Poverty Action Plan which was an expression of collective action of over 40 partners across Oxfordshire to tackle food poverty. Following this the County and District councils recognised the need for a Food Strategy to consider the issues of food poverty and diet-related ill-health in the context of our wider

⁴ National Food Strategy Analysis of PHE Public Health Outcomes Framework: Public Health England. (2021). Public Health Outcomes Framework. HMG. Available at: Public Health Outcomes Framework – GOV.UK (www.gov.uk)

food system and the WSA to Healthy Weight. The development of the Oxfordshire Food Strategy is being led by GFO in a multi-stakeholder approach and will be presented by GFO today.

Physical Activity and obesity

Physical inactivity is linked to obesity, although supporting a healthy weight is just one of the positive aspects of being physically active. Active Lives data for Oxfordshire (2021) shows around 1 in 4 adults do not meet physical activity guidelines and 1 in 8 adults are inactive; 4 in 10 children are not achieving the recommended levels of physical activity and inactivity levels have worsened during COVID 19.

There is a clear inequality gradient with those living in the most deprived areas having lowest levels of activity and some groups, such as some ethnic groups and older people are negatively affected (least active) across all geographical areas.

There are many initiatives in place across Oxfordshire with the objective of reducing physical inactivity, some of which will be presented by Active Oxfordshire at the next HIB meeting.

Healthy Place Shaping

There are clear links between 'Place' and obesity. For example, opportunities to access healthy, affordable food, the proximity and density of outlets offering less healthy food options, and the ease of incorporating physical activity into our everyday lives are all influenced by the Place in which we live.

Public health is working closely with local planning authorities to ensure that policies are included in Local Plans which support the development of healthy weight environments. In 2021 the Future Oxfordshire Partnership endorsed the use of a health impact assessment tool for use across the county to ensure that plans for major developments are assessed against a range of healthy place shaping criteria, including whether they will create an environment which enables residents to enjoy a healthy weight. A particular focus is around the availability of and access to health promoting food as identified by the initial WSA.

Whilst the built environment is important in enabling healthy choices, behavioural change also needs the support of local community and voluntary groups and the activities that they provide in terms of access to food banks, opportunities for community growing, and support for physical activity. Supporting place-based neighbourhood initiatives that engage and increase the resilience of the community and voluntary sector is an important part of healthy place shaping that the public health team work closely with District and City Councils to deliver.

Equalities implications

The work on the WSA to healthy weight highlighted the need for a universal and targeted action to address health inequalities. The following wards with the highest obesity prevalence and free school meal uptake were identified, 6 of these wards are amongst the top 10 most deprived in Oxfordshire:

- Oxford - Blackbird Leys/Northfield Brook
- Cherwell - Banbury - Grimsbury/Ruscote
- Vale of White Horse - Abingdon

- South Oxfordshire - Berinsfield
- West Oxfordshire – Witney

In addition, the latest data shows:

- 67.5% of Black adults were overweight or obese – the highest percentage out of all ethnic groups⁵
- Overweight and obesity prevalence is higher in males (68.5%) than in females (56.1%)⁶
- The sharpest decrease in activity levels is at age 75+, we have seen consistently large drops throughout 2020-21⁷
- Females with life limiting illness or disability have a 13% higher prevalence of obesity or morbid obesity compared to females with no disability in Oxfordshire⁸
- There are more fast-food outlets in deprived areas than in more affluent areas which contributes to the risk of becoming an unhealthy weight⁹
- Obese persons had a 55% increased risk of developing depression over time, depressed persons had a 58% increased risk of becoming obese¹⁰

Work to begin to address these inequalities for adults includes the expansion of the weight management contract, commissioned by Oxfordshire County Council (delivered by Achieve Oxfordshire) to include more targeted provision with the weight management groups for BAME communities, delivered in faith settings, workplaces and community settings, and the delivery of a new mental health healthy weight pilot working with Oxford Health. Public health facilitated new partnerships to deliver and target the programmes, including with Banbury Mosque, OUH BAME network and the Men’s Health Partnership.

For children and their families, public health is in the process of commissioning a pilot tier 2 weight management service for children and their families. The provider will work with the Healthy Weight in Childhood Group to ensure services are joined up and communicated well across the system. The pilot will commence in Spring 2022 and be delivered in all 5 districts in Oxfordshire for an 18-month period to test and learn what works well, where and why for future commission.

In recognition that there are strong links between physical inactivity and deprivation District and City Council Colleagues are collectively planning a project to support families in receipt of benefit related free school meals to access physical activity opportunities.

Sustainability implications

Some causes of climate change and obesity are linked, as are many of the solutions to tackle them. For example, active travel, leading to more physical activity and eating a health promoting diet including more (ideally locally sourced) fruit and vegetables.

⁵ <https://www.ethnicity-facts-figures.service.gov.uk/health/diet-and-exercise/overweight-adults/latest>

⁶ <https://fingertips.phe.org.uk/profile/physical-activity/data#page/3/qid/1938133001/ati/6/iid/93088/age/168/sex/4/cid/4/tbrr/1>

⁷ <https://sportengland-production-files.s3.eu-west-2.amazonaws.com/s3fs-public/2021-10/Active%20Lives%20Adult%20Survey%20May%20202021%20Report.pdf?VersionId=YcsnWYZSKx4n12TH0cKpY392hBkRdA8N>

⁸ Sport England Active Lives Nov 15/16 – Nov 18/19 combined

⁹ <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/obesity-and-the-environment-briefing-a-regulating-the-growth-of-fast-food-outlets>

¹⁰ Luppino FS, de Wit LM, Bouvy PF, et al. Overweight, Obesity, and Depression: A Systematic Review and Meta-analysis of Longitudinal Studies. *Arch Gen Psychiatry*. 2010;67(3):220–229.

Developing a healthy weight environment also requires action in support of developing sustainable local food supply chains, reducing food waste and greater access to green spaces, including outdoor growing. This closely links into the delivery carbon reduction targets as identified in The Pathways to a Zero Carbon Oxfordshire (PAZCO) report published by Oxfordshire University in 2021. The Food Strategy will consider action required to develop sustainable healthy food systems.

Risk Management

There is a considerable amount of broad ranging of work needed to support the WSA to Healthy Weight plan. It will need significant system change and all our system partners to working together to make an impact in the short, medium, and long term, recognising that some actions are short term, quick wins, whereas others will need to span across many years for more aspirational and environmental change.

Communications

We know that we need build upon existing insight to further understand and learn more about the reality of healthy weight from the perspective of our residents.

A year-long local community insight project was commissioned in 2021 to explore how residents feel about where they live, work, learn and play; to understand what would motivate and support individuals to attain and sustain a healthy weight. The outcomes of this work will provide the opportunity to learn with local communities, exploring the barriers and opportunities and co-create solutions at a local level.

Key Dates

The next steps for the WSA to healthy weight include:

- Health needs assessment for healthy weight in Oxfordshire will be completed in 2022 to inform strategy development
- WSA to healthy weight action plan will be published later in 2022
- Renewed focus on childhood obesity and the commissioning of a pilot Tier 2 weight management service for children and their families in Oxfordshire to commence Spring 2022
- WSA to healthy weight strategy will be developed in 2022/23

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Appendix 1. WSA to healthy Weight Action Plan (draft high-level version)

Action area 1. Healthy weight environment (health promoting food and built environment)

- Use the [Creating Active Schools Framework](#) to test and learn with Oxfordshire schools to implement a **Whole Systems Approach addressing physical in activity**. 20 schools signed up to the pilot. Areas to explore include best practice for active teaching practices, school uniform policy and key roles in schools and the wider community.
- Review evidence of **active travel approaches** and impact across the County (Little Feet, WOW, Street Tag, School Streets, Wayfinder) to inform future funding decisions and co-ordination of activity.
- Shape and inform **Oxfordshire Food Strategy** to launch March 2022. Everyone in Oxfordshire to enjoy the healthy and sustainable food they need every day.
- To support the consumption of healthy and sustainable food we will work with schools and caterers to review the levers and barriers to incentivise healthy catering and improve the standard of school food.
- Work with County and District colleagues (Planning, Transport, Environmental Health, Healthy Place Shaping, Trading Standards, Licensing, Procurement, Climate) to explore existing policy, [guidance](#), training needs and the levers and barriers to promote **healthy weight environments**. Areas of interest include:
 1. Supporting and incentivising local businesses and workplaces to provide and promote healthier food and drink. For example regulations (calorie labelling on menus) and [guidance](#) for food and catering services.
 2. Advertising (High Fat Salt Sugar products, billboards) and restriction zones around schools
 3. Regulation of new hot food takeaway premises/mobile street traders around schools.
 4. Urban spaces; implementing food and growing innovations for sustainable greener, more edible and liveable places.
 5. Social value policy to maximise economic, social and environmental benefits.
 6. Connectivity and transport plans; [20-minute neighbourhood](#).

Action area 2. Prevention; start well, live well and age well (primary prevention)

- Development and expansion of the [Families, Active and Sporting Together](#) programme to support low-income families (in receipt of benefit related free school meals) with a year-round physical activity offer across all 5 districts.
- Outreach to **schools and with young people** to inform **food choices** that are good for health and the planet. For example [Eat Them to Defeat Them primary schools programme](#) helping encourage children to eat more vegetables.
- Improve the uptake of [Healthy Start vitamins and vouchers](#), including promoting the scheme, new digitalisation, communications and training for frontline professionals and volunteers. Healthy start task and finish group formed.
- Review the literature and approaches for better communications to reduce **weight stigma and bias**. Inform further frontline professional training to consider diversity and social perceptions of what a healthy weight is. Create local and responsive

messaging working with communities e.g faith leaders. Supported by Oxfordshire Communications Group and Men's Health Partnership (WSA subgroups).

- Review existing **physical activity initiatives** for children and young people to **tackle inequalities**. For example girls football programme, Junior Park Run, school swimming (every child school should be able to swim 25m).

Action area 3. Support services for residents to achieve a healthy weight (secondary prevention)

- Review opportunities to close the gaps in the **child healthy weight** pathway (from pregnancy to transition to adulthood). This includes Public Health commissioning a Tier 2 pilot approach for children and families, informed by the child healthy weight group (WSA subgroup).
- Develop a clear streamlined **healthy weight care pathway for adults** and improve the integration and referral experience across the pathway for adults and children.

Action area 4. Partnership working with partners to promote a healthy weight (system relationships)

- Review **Healthy Weight Community insight (local and national)** to gain further understanding of the needs and experiences of Oxfordshire residents. Including our diverse and multi-ethnic communities, children and young people.
- Develop a monitoring and evaluation framework for the **healthy weight story map** part 1 and 2.
- Co-ordinate and identify priorities and actions for the **Food Sustainability and Health Group, Climate and Food working group** (subgroups of the WSA) to support the Sustainable Food Places award, climate action plans and plant based food motion.
- Work in partnership with Active Oxfordshire to raise awareness of the role of physical activity and healthy weight and ensure **joined up working, communications and aligned strategies**.
- Monitor **funding opportunities** to extend and test new approaches to healthy weight environments (sugar levys, marketing, funds for schools/ideas for schools, water availability, single use plastic regulation/use, food access).
- **Working with providers in education settings** (early years, primary and secondary schools) to develop training/bitesize learning on healthy weight. Explore opportunities with Personal, Social, Health and Economic (PHSE) education and PGCert education seminars.