



# Healthy Weight, Healthy Communities, Healthy Lives

How we can support people in Oxfordshire to be a healthy weight  
**2022/23 Director of Public Health Annual Report**





# Chapter 1: Why does it matter



## Why excess weight matters – the consequences

Living with overweight or obesity can have a hugely detrimental impact on individuals, families and society. It increases the risk of developing illnesses ranging from arthritis to diabetes to cancer. Not only does this reduce an individual's quality of life, but it also has implications for the health and care system, for productivity and on the workforce.

In Oxfordshire, over half of adults and one in three year six children are overweight or obese. These figures have risen over the years, particularly during the pandemic, alongside a decline in the amount of physical activity of both adults and children.

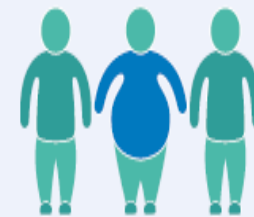
These numbers are not distributed evenly across Oxfordshire.

### Latest Data for Oxfordshire shows



**58%**

58 per cent of adults were overweight or obese



**1 in 3**

One in three year six children were overweight or obese



**OXFORDSHIRE  
COUNTY COUNCIL**



## The cost to physical & mental Health

Obesity in children strongly predicts adult obesity, with obese children and adolescents around five times more likely to be obese in adulthood.

### Obesity harms children and young people



Emotional and behavioural

- Stigmatisation
- Bullying
- Low self esteem



School absence  
School attendance

Educational attainment



High cholesterol  
High blood pressure  
Pre-diabetes  
Bone and joint problems  
Breathing difficulties



Increased risk of becoming overweight adults  
Risk of ill-health and premature mortality in adult life

### Obesity harms adults



Less likely to be in employment



Discrimination and stigmatisation



Increased risk of hospitalisation



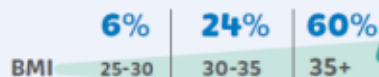
Reduction in life expectancy by an average of three years or by 8-10 years with severe obesity



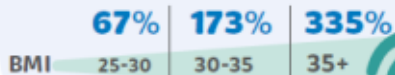


# Increased risks and conditions

Increased risks of contracting COVID-19 for people living with excess weight compared with those who are a healthy weight.



Increased risks of being admitted to ICU with COVID-19 infection for people living with excess weight compared with those who are a healthy weight.



Public Health England

## Obesity harms health

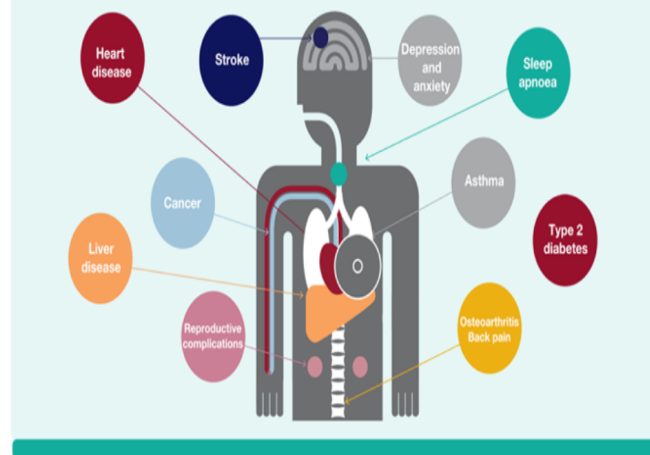


Table 2: Percentage of cases in England attributable to obesity

Condition	Percentage of cases attributable to obesity
Type 2 diabetes	47%
Gout	47%
Hypertension	36%
Colon cancer	29%
Myocardial infarction	18%
Angina	15%
Gallstones	15%
Endometrial cancer	14%
Ovarian cancer	13%
Osteoarthritis	12%
Stroke	6%
Prostate cancer	3%
Rectal cancer	1%



# Costs , hospital admissions and quality of life

In the UK living with excess weight is strongly associated with higher annual rates of hospital admission. Over a million hospital admissions a year have obesity as the main or contributing factor. There is a direct relationship between excess BMI and the chance of hospital admission.

## Type of cost for the UK

### Costs to the NHS

Including primary care, medications and hospitalisation

**£6.5 billion**

### Costs to the NHS

Additional COVID-19 related costs due to higher probability of hospitalisation and death in those living with obesity

**£4.2 billion**

### Social care and reduced productivity costs

Due to obesity related, long term conditions

**£7.5 billion**

### Costs of loss of quality of life

Measured using Quality Adjusted Life Years (QALYs)

**£39.8 billion**

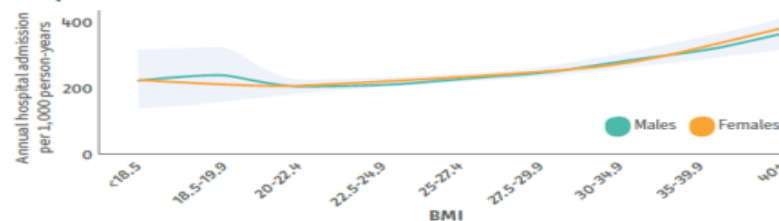
### Social costs

Cost of unemployment benefits paid to people with obesity

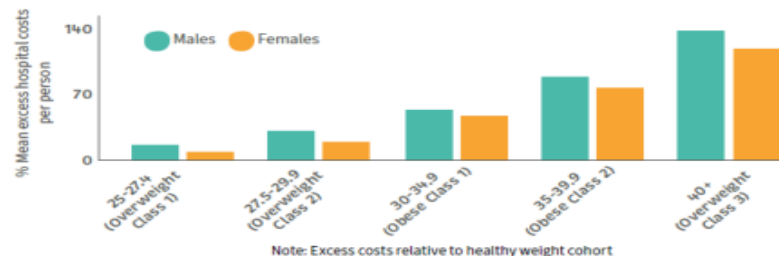
**£4 billion**

**Total cost for the UK  
£62 billion**

## High BMI is strongly correlated with the chances of hospital admission



## There is a link between excess NHS costs and BMI upon admission





# Chapter 2: Size of the problem

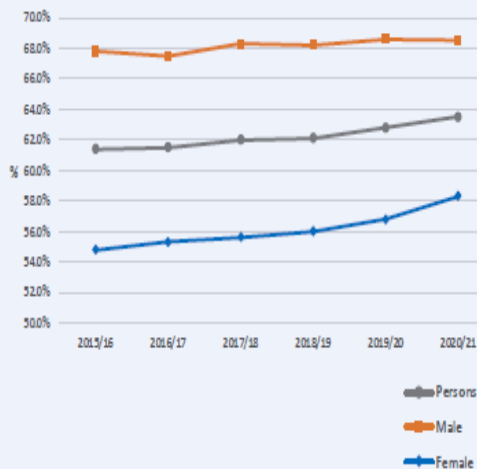


# The scale of obesity – adul

Nationally, the proportion of children and adults who are overweight or obese has risen in recent years. Excess weight increases throughout adult life before declining in later old age (75 years and older).

More men are living with excess weight but numbers for women have risen faster over time.

### Percentage of adults (aged 18+) classified as overweight or obese



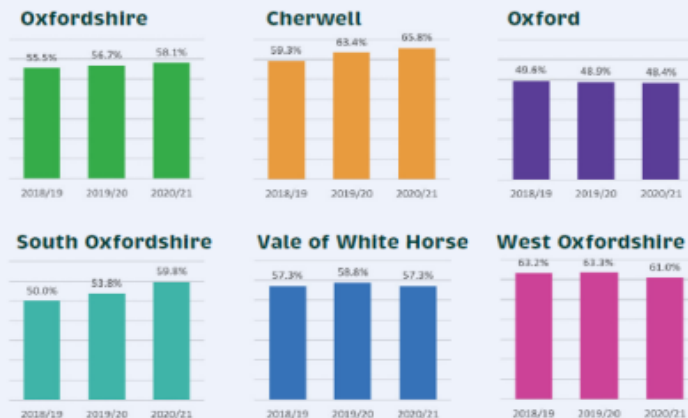
**Almost one in five pregnant women in Oxfordshire were obese early on in pregnancy (2018/19).**

## Living with obesity in Oxfordshire (2021/2022 figures)



### Adults in Oxfordshire 58 per cent

There is also variation by district as shown below.



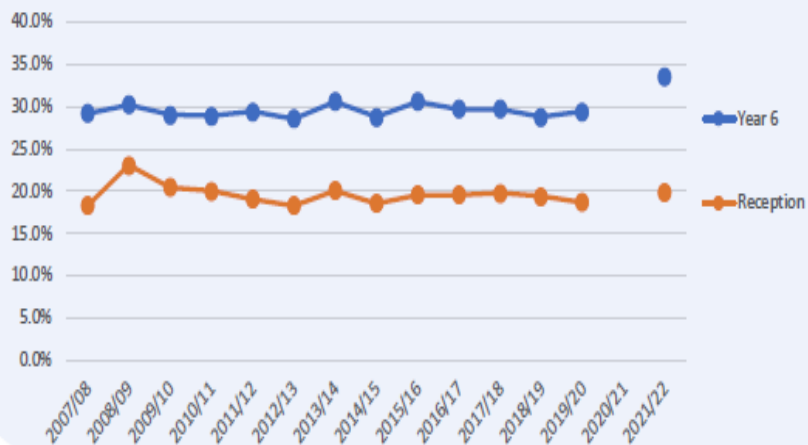




## The scale of obesity – children

The number of children who were overweight or obese in Oxfordshire fell between 2018 & 2020. Latest latest figures show this has risen. For year six these are the highest numbers ever recorded.

Oxfordshire - overweight including obese



### Reception

Percentage of obese children



2015/16 **7 per cent**

2021/22 **8.5 per cent**

Percentage of overweight or obese children



2021/22 **19.9 per cent**

### Year 6

Percentage of obese children



2015/16 **16 per cent**

2021/22 **19.5 per cent**

Percentage of overweight or obese children



2021/22 **33.6 per cent**





## Adults: Inequalities and excess weight

Nationally some **ethnic groups** are more likely to experience excess weight or be at increased risk of some obesity related conditions at a lower BMI.

**Black adults are most likely to be overweight or obese** at 67.5% (Oxfordshire data is not available)

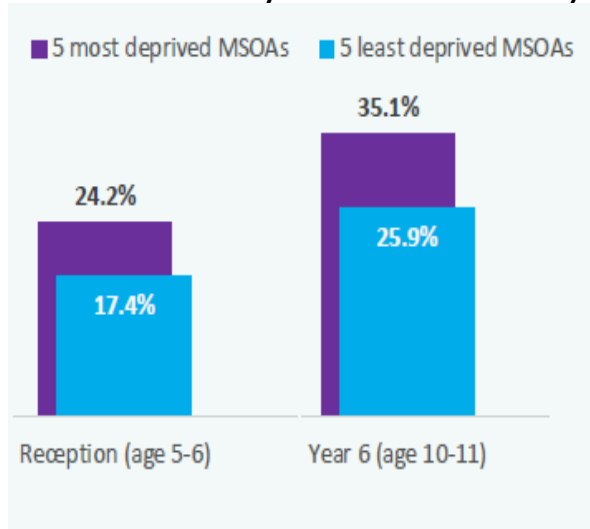
Nationally, a higher proportion of adults with **learning disabilities** are obese.

**Data from Oxfordshire** reflects this with 68% of adults with learning disability recorded as overweight and 40% obese (compared to 58% and 21%, general population)

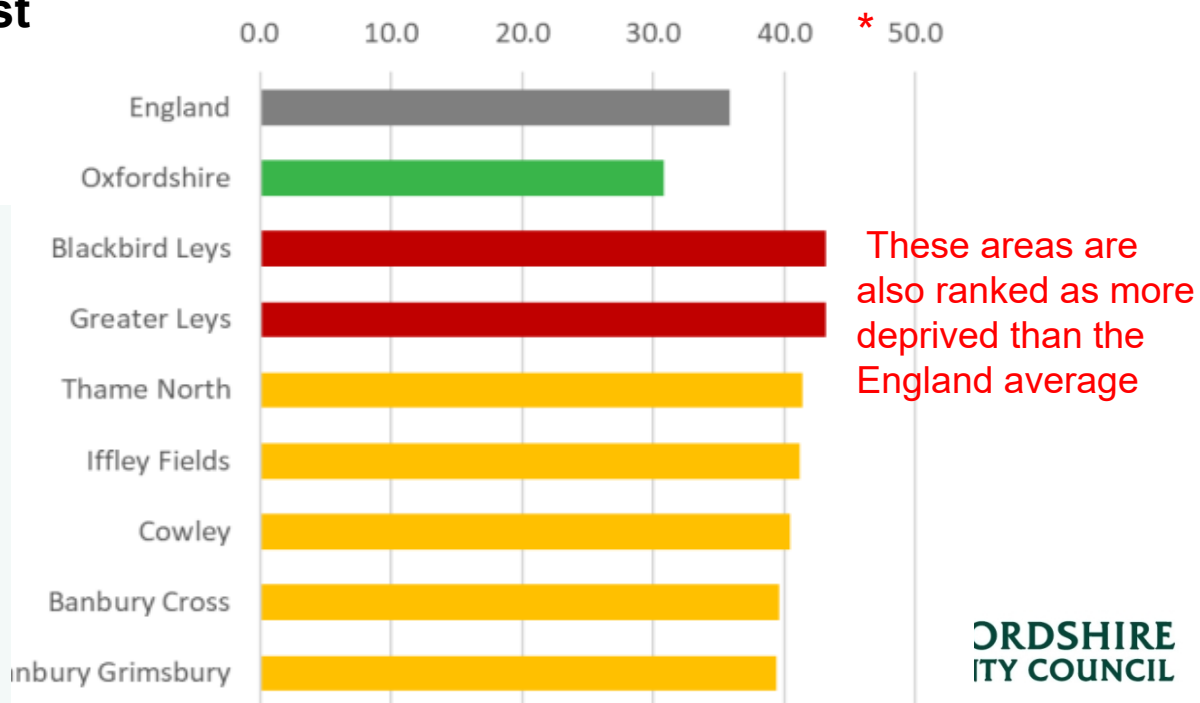


# Children: Inequalities and excess weight

**Oxfordshire gap between 5 least deprived and 5 most deprived: childhood overweight & Obese Combined years 2019-22)**



**Areas of Oxfordshire with the highest prevalence of Y6 (obesity & overweight)**





# Chapter 3: Understanding the causes



# Understanding the causes of overweight and obesity

Being overweight or obese is largely driven by the circumstances in which people live – root causes such as poverty, employment, housing, and access to parks and safe places to walk. These are known as the wider determinants of health.

### What makes us healthy?

Good health matters, to individuals and to society. But we don't all have the same opportunities to live healthy lives.

To understand why, we need to look at the bigger picture:

The healthy life expectancy gap between the most and least deprived areas in England is over **18** YEARS

Find out more: [health.org.uk/what-makes-us-healthy](http://health.org.uk/what-makes-us-healthy)

The Health Foundation

© 2019 The Health Foundation.

### The situation in Oxfordshire

Households living in fuel poverty increased by **10 per cent** to almost 23,000.

Around **14,000** school pupils eligible for free school meals

Almost **15,000** children aged 0-15 living in low income families

Over **8,000** older people claimed pension credit

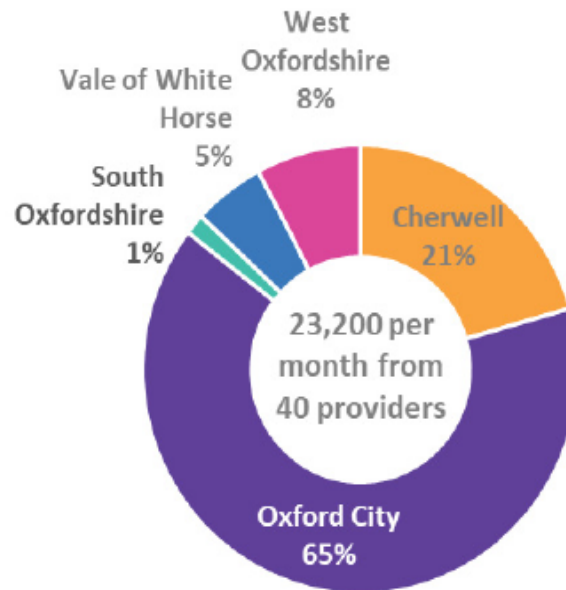


## Food poverty

In Oxfordshire, around 100 community food services operated by 74 organisations are working to address food poverty by providing thousands of food parcel and meals each week.

A Snapshot of 40 found:

**Community Food Service beneficiaries in average month (July 2021 Good Food Oxfordshire survey)**



→ Healthier foods are nearly x3 as expensive as less healthy foods calorie for calorie.

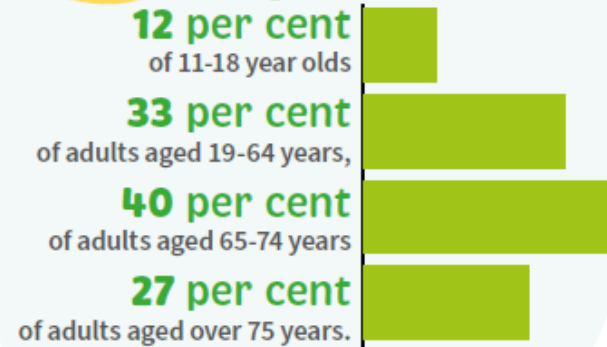


# Access to healthy food

Between 2008-19 The UK National Diet and Nutrition Survey found saturated Fat intake increased, Fibre intake remained too low and more sugar and chocolate confectionary was being eaten.

60% Oxfordshire adults NOT consuming '5 a day'

## Percentage consuming '5 a day'



Source: Public Health England in collaboration with the Health Government, Food Standards Scotland and the Food Standards Agency in Northern Ireland

© Copyright 2018



## Access to Healthy Food – children and families

**As children, our eating behaviours can be inherited or affected by our environment. What and how food is provided inside and outside of the home is important to developing healthy eating habits.**

### **Breastfeeding**

- For three months in the first year of a baby's life is proven to have a positive impact, reducing the risk of obesity by 13 per cent in later life.
- Mothers who breastfeed also benefit from a faster return to pre pregnancy weight.
- Oxfordshire: 61% babies partially or fully breastfed at 6-8 weeks.

### **School**

- For some children school lunch is their main meal, providing a critical nutritional safety net.
- As the number of children accessing free school meals increases and the cost of living impacts on what some families can afford, it is even more important to ensure the food offer in school meets nutritional needs.
- Nutrition in school is linked to educational attainment





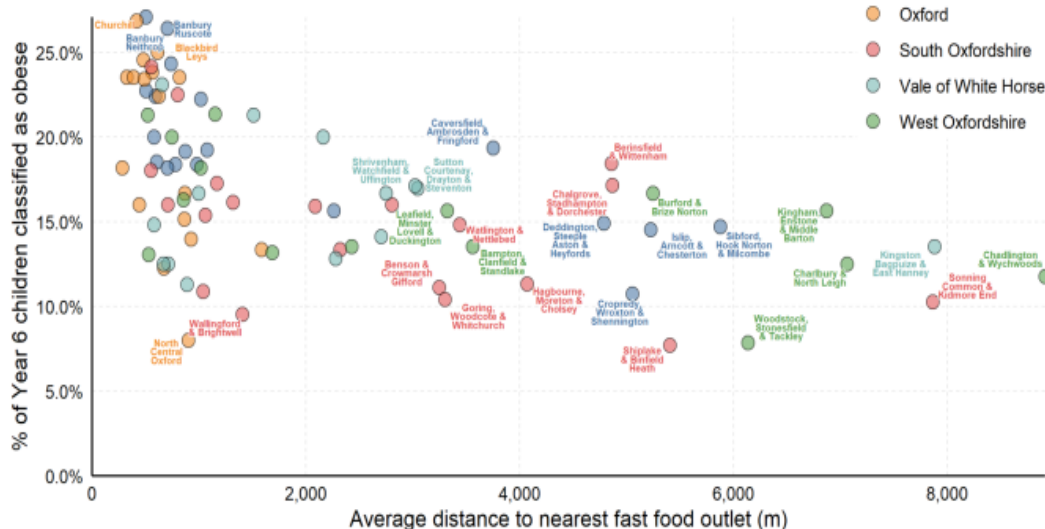
# Fast food outlets

More than a quarter of adults **27%** and one fifth of children eat food from out of home food outlets at least once a week

Meals eaten outside of the home tend to be associated with higher intakes of **sugar, fat, and salt** and portion sizes tend to be bigger

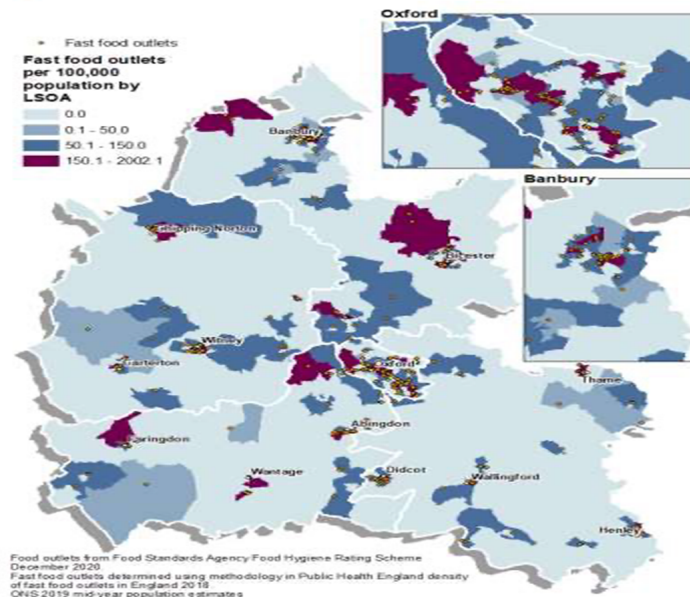
The increasing consumption of out-of-home meals has been identified as an important factor contributing to **rising levels of obesity**

Year 6 obesity by nearest fast food outlet distance



- Links between fast food availability and diet. Outlets selling fast food cluster around areas of deprivation.
- We are influenced by food availability, promotions and targeted advertising.

Fast food outlets





## Physical activity

At the simplest level, excess weight is caused by an energy imbalance – where energy intake exceeds energy expended

As well as helping to maintain a healthy weight, regular physical activity builds strength and improves balance, concentration and mental wellbeing. It reduces the risk of many common and serious illnesses like cardiovascular disease, stroke, diabetes, osteoporosis and some cancers

**49 per cent of Oxfordshire's children don't meet physical activity guidelines**

**18 per cent of Oxfordshire's adults are inactive**



# Chapter 4: Strategy going forward

## Building from strength

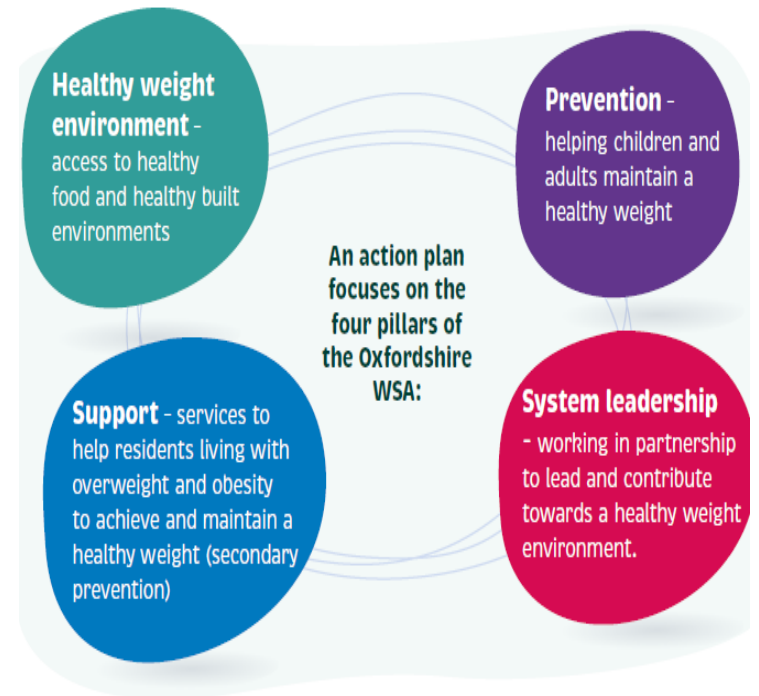


# Whole Systems Approach to Healthy Weight – making it everybody’s business

Preventing excess weight requires a shift in focus away from individual behaviours towards the wider environment.

No, one organisation has the knowledge, tools or power to solve it and a co-ordinated whole systems approach is needed to change factors that lie outside of an individual’s control.

These factors include the environments we live and work in, our social circles, media and marketing messages, and policies.



The school and childcare setting



Increasing healthy food consumption



Creating healthy workplaces



Increasing active travel



Planning a healthier food environment



Providing access to weight management support



Promoting local opportunities and community engagement



Planning and creating an environment that promotes physical activity





# Emerging actions from the Oxfordshire Whole System Approach to Health Weight

Other initiatives we are working on or aspire to include:-

Understanding the needs of communities across the county and mapping existing community assets



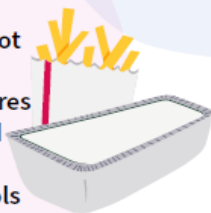
Improving uptake of Healthy Start vitamins and vouchers



Supporting the growing of food and cooking in communities



Ensuring development avoids the over concentration of hot food takeaways in existing town centres or high streets and restricts their proximity to schools



Improving the healthy food offer in places like leisure centres, workplaces, colleges, hospitals and schools



Engaging with school settings to support a whole school approach such as working with school catering providers to meet minimum requirements and increasing physical activity uptake in schools



Developing streamlined healthy weight care protocols and pathways



Supporting local food businesses to provide healthier options

Planning and licensing policies to regulate and promote healthier food choices and related advertising, particularly those close to schools



Developing local cycling and walking infrastructure and programmes



Our work is targeted at the areas with greatest need. We are exploring the Local Authority Declaration on Healthy Weight and a Health Needs Assessment is underway to further inform the approach.



# Building from our strengths – case studies



**Oxfordshire Food Strategy**



**Community Insight Project**



**Nutritious school food**



**OX4 FOOD CREW**  
fighting food inequality

**Community wealth building**



**Family Healthy Weight Service**



**The baby friendly initiative**



**Community empowerment**



**Supporting young women to access green space**



**You Move- physical activity for families**