

LIVE LONGER BETTER. *in Cumbria*



ANNUAL REPORT

November 2022 – March 2024

Introduction

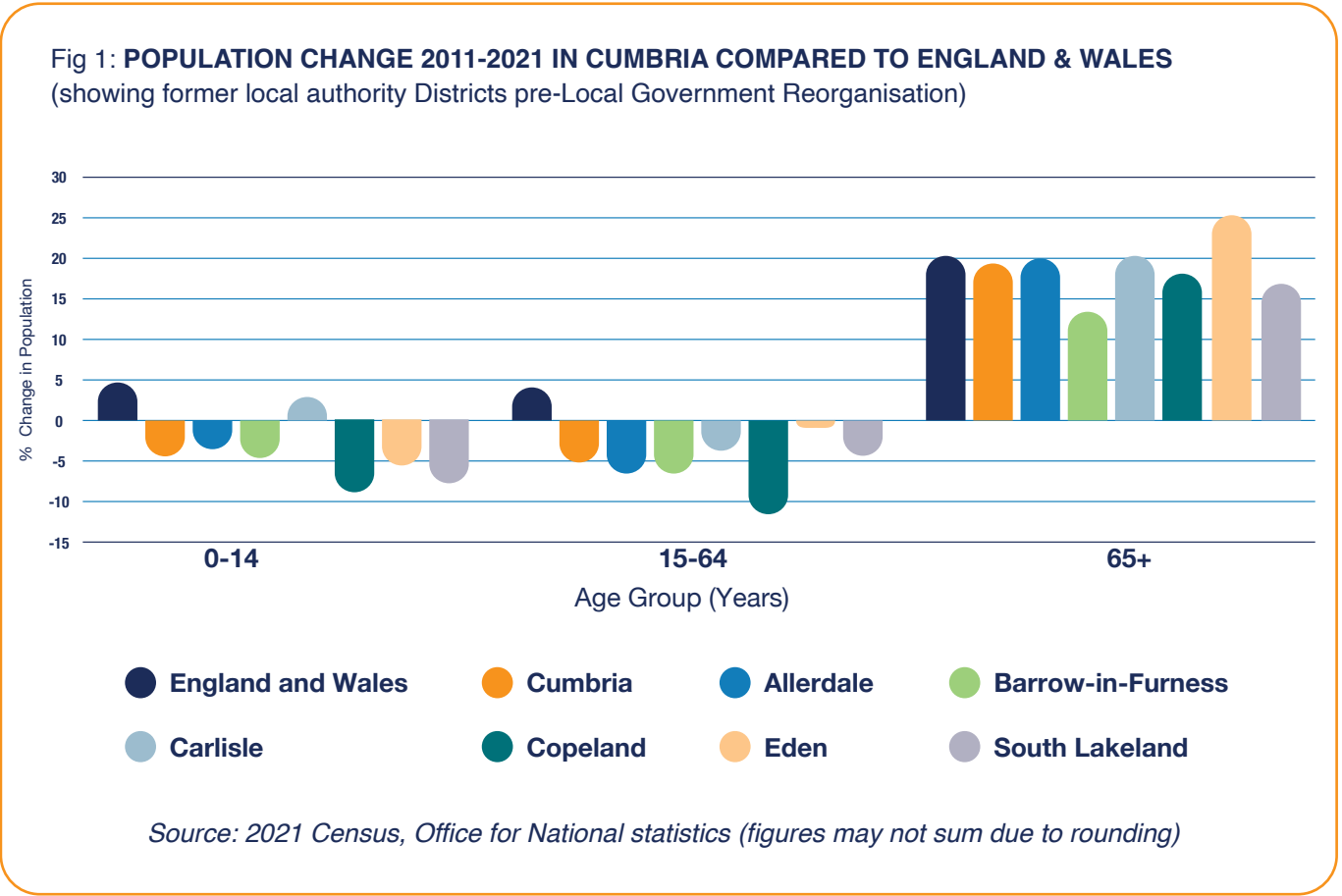


Live Longer Better in Cumbria is Active Cumbria’s programme to:

- Promote knowledge and understanding about living longer better - among health professionals and physical activity and movement providers, as well as the older adults they encounter - to counteract the detrimental effects of ageism.
- Work with partners and providers to increase physical ability and movement, resilience and healthspan, and to prevent falls and frailty, as well as reduce the risk of, and delay or prevent dementia, and prevent and minimise the effects of disease and multimorbidity including long COVID.
- Target resources to minimise and mitigate the effects of deprivation, and prevent and mitigate isolation.

This first annual report aims to give an overview of the activity organised within the programme’s four pillars of **Educate**, **Activate**, **Enable** and **Network**, engagement with this activity, its impact and plans for future developments.

The Population at Census Day 2021 for Cumbria and Districts shows very clearly that, compared to the national average, Cumbria had an older age profile; lower proportions of younger residents and higher proportions of older residents. Between 2011 and 2021, numbers of 0-14 year olds in Cumbria decreased (-3.7% vs. +4.7% nationally), as did numbers of 15-64 year olds (-4.9% vs. +3.3% nationally), while numbers of residents aged 65+ in Cumbria increased (+18.3% vs. +20% nationally).⁽¹⁾



This significant demographic shift to a ‘super ageing’ population brings considerable challenges to which Live Longer Better in Cumbria aims to be part of the solution. The self-proclaimed revolution’s clear, straightforward and achievable messages have drawn the attention of both partners and the public. The call to action to challenge ill-held beliefs about ageing, and for us all to move more regardless of the number of long-term health conditions or difficult circumstances, are appealing to everyone. For the sake of our health care systems and our older adults, we can and we must make a difference.

¹ Population at Census Day 2021 (cumbria.gov.uk)

Educate

Aim

To promote knowledge and understanding about living longer better - among health professionals and physical activity and movement providers, as well as the older adults they encounter - to counteract the detrimental effects of ageism. The Live Longer Better programme available online from Learning with the Experts is a key tool to achieving this aim.

Outputs

- Active Cumbria Officers delivered 23 different presentations and attended 21 different engagements, in person, online and in writing.
- They engaged with approximately 2000 stakeholders covering sectors including the NHS, VCSE, U3A, Adult Social Care, DWP, elected Members, housing providers, care settings, sports organisations and Radio Cumbria.
- 60 eLearning licences shared in Cumberland (80% activated).
- 61 eLearning licences shared in Westmorland and Furness (77% activated).

Figures 2 and 3 show the distribution of eLearning licences across 6 broad sectors within each council footprint: Voluntary; Community and Social Enterprise (VCSE); Physical Activity Provider (PA Provider); Local Authority; NHS and Housing.

Fig 2: **ELEARNING LICENCES IN CUMBERLAND**



Fig 3: **ELEARNING LICENCES IN WESTMORLAND AND FURNESS**



Educate case study



In February 2024, Development Officer and Older Adult Lead Clare Paling was invited by Westmorland and Furness Council's Director of Adult Social Care Cath Whalley to present to the directorate's management team. Covering the guiding principles behind Live Longer Better, the need for cultural change and the strong evidence base for the importance of physical activity, this first meeting signified the beginning of an enduring relationship between the Adult Social Care team and Active Cumbria. The synergy between the aims of Live Longer Better and the principles of 'Prevent, Reduce, Delay' from the Directorate's Promoting Independence programme are clear. Presentations at Staff Engagement events and CPD sessions with the Occupational Therapy team are just the first of many steps to embed daily movement into the provision of services.

"We need to be proactive to raise the profile of the importance of physical activity, to get the message out there, and most importantly increase take up and activity to impact positively upon the people we work with. The Live Longer Better in Cumbria programme's education is inspiring, and I am looking forward embedding its ethos into everything we are doing in Adult Social Care across Westmorland and Furness"

Cath Whalley, Director of Adult Social Care

Activate and Enable

Aims

To work with partners and providers to increase physical activity and movement, to improve resilience and healthspan. Furthermore to prevent, delay and reduce the risk of falls, frailty and dementia, as well as prevent and minimise the effects of disease and multimorbidity, including long COVID.

To manage applications from providers to 'The Reconditioning Fund', using direction from our 5-year strategic plan, to target resources to the places where they are needed the most. Active Cumbria officers work with local providers to identify suitable projects to recondition Older Adults, primarily those who live in the priority places identified in our Implementation Plan, as well as others that will reach a wider audience.

Outputs

- 100% of projects funded by Reconditioning Fund aimed to increase physical ability and movement, resilience and healthspan, and to help prevent falls and frailty.
- 50% of all projects funded by the Reconditioning Fund aimed to reduce the risk of and delay or prevent dementia.
- 65% of all projects funded by the Reconditioning Fund aimed to prevent and minimise the effects of disease and multimorbidity including long Covid.
- 88% of projects funded are located in or serve citizens from a Priority Place as identified by Active Cumbria's Implementation Plan.
- 42% of projects included learning and development opportunities for personnel.
- £56,640 made in Grant Awards to 15 projects in Cumberland and £33,631 made in Grant Awards to 9 projects in Westmorland & Furness.
- Average £3,761 Grant Award intended to benefit 49 individuals over a period of 7.5 months.

Partner and provider feedback:

- I feel confident to lead sessions alongside a member of staff, or to support clients by taking part in sessions alongside them. Memory Lane clients seem to enjoy the activity sessions as part of the programme.
- It was evident that the members' confidence and strength grew. We were able to support members to increase their ability to live independently, delaying admissions for additional care.
- This project has provided individuals with the opportunity to socialise with others that they may not otherwise have had the opportunity to engage with. We sought to promote and maintain individuals' general physical and mental well-being.

Learning boosted positive responses to the following areas in particular:

- As I get older I expect to be able to do the things I've always done, decline is not inevitable.
- I feel confident in talking about ageing and physical activity.
- I am confident in my knowledge of how and why physical activity is important for the ageing process.

Learner feedback to 'What's the main thing you have taken away from this course?':

- That exercise is key to everything including physical and mental health.
- There is so much we can do right now to improve our lives immediately – get into the habit now of movement.
- Better understanding of the positive link between physical activity and living well as we get older.
- How important is it for us to keep moving whatever our age. Adapt if necessary but don't stop.

Actions

Over the next 12 months we will aim to:

- 1 Create clearer pathways for those who activate their eLearning licence code but do not go on to make an application to the Reconditioning Fund.
- 2 Create clearer pathways for those who chose not to activate their eLearning code.
- 3 Strengthen the link between Live Longer Better and Making Every Contact Count training content and messaging.
- 4 Increase our knowledge of behaviour change theory and how it can be used to impact daily movement levels.
- 5 Maximise pipeline education opportunities presented by Westmorland and Furness Council Adult Social Care, Cumberland Council Public Health and Communities and North Cumbria GP Training Programme.

Where appropriate, participants in Reconditioning Fund projects were encouraged to complete a survey at beginning and towards the end of their time in attendance. This survey comprises three sections:

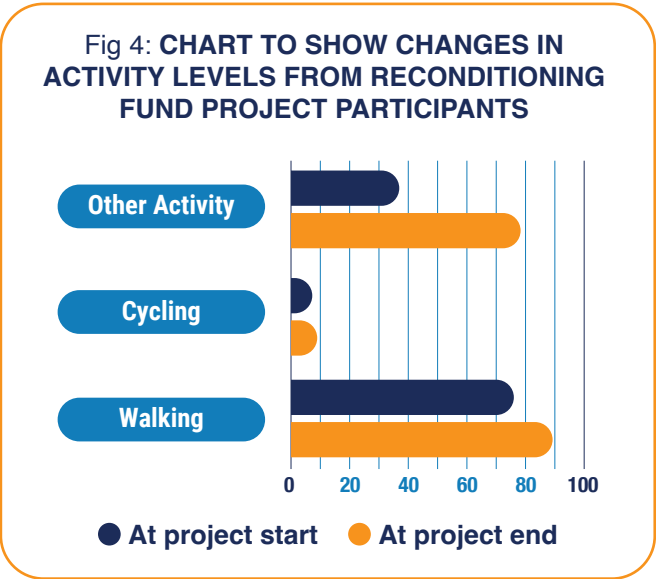
- EQ-5D-5L is a standardised measure of health-related quality of life developed by the EuroQol Group to provide a simple, generic questionnaire for use in clinical and economic appraisal and population health surveys ⁽²⁾
- Current activity levels in the last 7 days, in line with Sport England’s Together Fund project monitoring tool
- Attitudes to Ageing questionnaire (AAQ-24) – 24 questions to gauge how a person feels about getting older ⁽³⁾

Fully completed surveys from the 7 projects asked to collect this specific data show the following trends:

The EQ-5D-5L2 covers 5 key areas: Mobility, Self-Care, Usual Activities, Pain and Mental Health. While responses to questions related to self-care stayed consistent, in relation to pain there was an improvement of responses (by 50%) towards ‘slight pain or discomfort’ from ‘moderate’ and ‘severe’ pain. Marked improvements (of up to 50%) were also seen in the responses to questions regarding mobility, usual activities and anxiety/depression – which we would expect to see as these are well documented benefits of increasing physical activity levels.

The questions about current activity levels relate to walking, cycling and taking part in other activities such as an exercise class. It is encouraging to see that activity levels increased across all 3 areas (Fig. 4), but more significantly in relation to ‘other activities’. We would expect to see this as respondents had largely been taking part in organised group activities, and this data suggests that providers and partners have also been pro-active in encouraging activity in addition to that within the project.

Officers worked with all applicants to the Reconditioning Fund to promote reducing sedentary behaviour and these responses are a positive sign that this has been worthwhile.

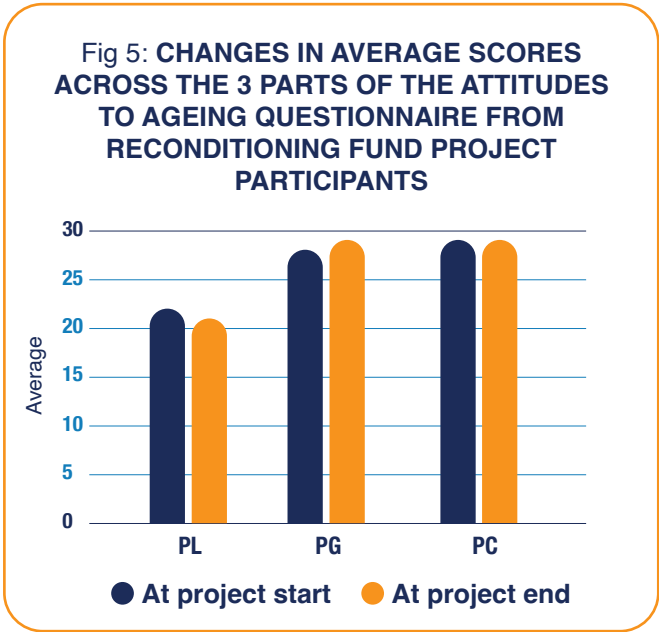


(2) EQ-5D-5L | EuroQol

(3) Attitudes_To_Ageing.pdf (futurelearn.com)

The Attitudes to Ageing questionnaire is divided into 3 parts: Psychosocial Loss (PL), Psychological Growth (PG) and Physical Change (PC). For very rough guidance, people in good health report scores for PL, PG & PC on average as 18, 28 & 28, respectively. A ‘positive’ attitude to ageing profile would be higher scores on Psychological Growth and Physical Change, and lower scores on Psychosocial Loss. This section was included as a key principle within Live Longer Better is promotion of a positive attitude to ageing and challenging ageism.

The data (Fig. 5) shows that the trends in responses are either moving in the direction we would wish or being maintained at a healthy level. The lowering of scores in relation to psychosocial loss (covers questions related to loneliness, social isolation and exclusion) reflects another well documented benefit seen from participation in group activity for older adults. The increase in scores in relation to physical change (questions related to the importance of exercise, managing long term health conditions and energy) are what we would always hope to see when someone has been engaged in more physical activity.



Participant feedback:

- Whilst we might face barriers in our life, with a bit of support and help, it doesn't have to limit what we can do.
- I really look forward to the sessions, they are a life line.
- I am main carer for my husband, we used to enjoy walking a lot but the dementia has stopped this. When the dementia café started doing these exercises it made me feel happy, I knew you were helping people like my husband.
- I'm more confident walking around the house with my walker. I'm standing up taller than before, I'm much steadier on my legs really pleased. I'm doing 10-15mins a day. I break my day up – when music comes on the telly, I move. I never used to – I forgot how to. I'm doing crosswords now. I don't think I'm in as much pain like I used to be. I wish I had kept up with my exercises years ago. I have thought about more things to occupy myself – it is like a light being switched on in my brain.

Activate and Enable case study



Penrith based Move It or Lose It instructor Pauline Ireland received a grant award from the Reconditioning Fund to deliver a project that included both one-to-one movement sessions across 3 housing locations as well as training and development for staff working in those settings to enable them to continue to promote physical activity for their resident. Over the course of the project self-reported mobility, daily activity, pain and mental health problems all reduced, while activity levels including walking and taking part in other activities significantly increased.

82 year old Eileen (pictured) began the 12-week programme with small movements to help her stiff joints, especially her ankles which were affecting her

walking and shoulders stiffness which was affecting her range of movement in reaching up to do the basics of looking after herself such as combing her hair. As the photo shows she is now able to lift her arms well above her head and after just a few weeks of seated exercises, Eileen’s chiropodist commented that he could feel a pulse in her feet that he had not been able to previously get and that the ankle exercises were helping her circulation.

“Before I started the project, I was doing no exercise, I knew in my mind I had to do something, Pauline gave me the motivation to do this and got me in the right mindset. I can now bend down and touch my toes (seated) and I’ve never been able to do that”.

Activate and Enable case study



Using a grant award from the Reconditioning Fund, Later Life Training’s Care to Move was delivered to Age UK Carlisle and Eden staff who provide the Well@Home post hospital discharge support service. One staff member reports *“It was extremely informative for myself and my team. We deal daily with older people who struggle with their mobility. The use of the term ‘movements’ rather than exercise helps when approaching the subject with our clients. As well as the movements, we were taught how best to talk to people so they would more likely engage with us regarding the movements.”*

One client Mrs. H is 79 years old, lives on her own and has a degenerative spinal condition, COPD, a heart condition, and Osteoarthritis. Mrs. H had been admitted to hospital after falling at home. She struggled with daily living tasks and finds it hard to mobilise around the house, especially using the stairs to access the bathroom and bedroom. After referral to Age UK Carlisle and Eden’s Well@home, staff supported her to mobilise correctly and become confident using her newly installed stair lift. This allowed Mrs. H to be able to navigate her whole home again. Working on seated chair exercises has helped improve Mrs. H’s posture when seated, which she said has made sitting much more comfortable for her. Ankle exercises have helped Mrs. H feel less stiff when walking and she feels more confident walking and manoeuvring her outside rollator.

Another staff member reports *“My client told me how she had been doing some of the movements we had showed her, she also showed me that she had been doing little things for herself again. Standing to wash the pots herself, which before she had stopped doing and was leaving for the carers. She told me she had noticed a difference in herself in just the last week and was incredibly grateful for our support and advice.”*

Actions

Over the next 12 months we will aim to:

- 1 Support existing Reconditioning Fund projects including gathering monitoring and evaluation data from participants and partner organisations.
- 2 Develop new Reconditioning Fund projects to be presented to the grant Award Panel in November, focusing on under-represented audiences and activities including specific falls prevention work and those with long term health conditions.

- 3 Use the learning from completed projects to inform project development.
- 4 Work with partners to support the use and promotion of anti-ageist and age-friendly attitudes and resources.
- 5 Work with partners to support behaviour change interventions to reduce sedentary behaviour (both within their organisations and for their service users).

Network

Objectives

To hold a launch event and a mid-point programme event to bring together key stakeholders to network and share with one another. The Live Longer Better in Cumbria Network will unite partners and providers in a community of practice and learning.

Outputs

- Officers attended 23 different networking events, creating the opportunity to engage with 1390 stakeholders and share information about Live Longer Better in Cumbria.
- 150 delegates attended the Live Longer Better in Cumbria launch event at Energus in Workington on 22 November 2022 and 50 delegates joined the Spring On-line Live Longer Better event on 27 April 2023
- Page views for the Live Longer Better section of the Active Cumbria website average between 68 and 91 views per month

The monthly Live Longer Better in Cumbria Newsletter is a key tool in maintaining our relationship with partners and providers. Covering the latest research, challenging ageism and sharing funding and development opportunities, its recipients are divided into a stakeholder group identified from Active Cumbria records and 'sign ups', those who have elected to receive the newsletter. Open rates are on average 46% and 62% respectively. 3383 individuals have read a Live Longer Better in Cumbria Newsletter since its launch in December 2022.



Pictured left: l-r Bruce Lawson, Alex Wilkinson, Colin Cox, Richard Johnston and Clare Paling at the Live Longer Better in Cumbria Launch event.



Pictured right: Live Longer Better in Cumbria Launch event.

Network case study



The Hiking Household, in partnership with Active Cumbria, produced six maps focused on popular parks and open spaces in Carlisle, Penrith, Workington, Cleator Moor, Ulverston and Barrow-in-Furness.

As well as providing short easy-to-follow routes, the maps include information about the benefits of being active and simple exercises which can easily be done outdoors using benches along each walk. They also highlight how being outdoors can

significantly improve mental wellbeing. Founder of The Hiking Household and creator behind the maps, Laura Earl said *"I have really enjoyed working with Active Cumbria to develop these maps and I am excited to see them come to fruition. I hope the maps can help older adults use their local area and enjoy getting outside more."*

The maps were launched by Active Cumbria officers in each of the localities, supported by a news story and social media posts. 6 events took place, with over 50 attendees including members of the public, local Councillors and officers, third sector volunteers, social prescribers and fitness instructors. The events created an opportunity for discussion about use of parks and the importance of physical activity for older adults in our public spaces. Maps are located in a range of publicly accessible buildings such as town halls, leisure centres and libraries in order to make every contact count about the importance of physical activity in green spaces.

Pictured: The launch of the Hiking Household's Live Longer Better Map in Lightburn Park, Ulverston

The year ahead

Network case study



In December 2022, Sir Muir Gray, eminent physician and founder of the national Live Longer Better movement, created a Christmas list for older adults to encourage their loved ones to buy gifts that would contribute to their healthy longevity. Active Cumbria ran a news and social media campaign to promote the idea with some success. In November 2023, the campaign was revisited and refreshed, and was adopted by 8 Active Partnerships from within the national Live Longer Better Community of Practice and Learning.

Actions

Over the next 12 months we will aim to:

- 1 Maintain our output of monthly newsletters, increasing subscriptions and engagement.
- 2 Host an on-line learning event to mark the mid-point of the Reconditioning Fund's lifetime in collaboration with Later Life Training.
- 3 Host an in-person mid-point Live Longer Better in Cumbria event themed on the prevention of falls, frailty and dementia.
- 4 Monitor officer engagement at a locality level with the variety of health, wellbeing, equity, ageing well and age friendly community networks in existence.



It is important to remember the impact of Local Government Reform and the creation of two new authorities to bring on board with Live Longer Better. LGR has created both challenges and opportunities for engagement, as each of the new councils establish their commitment to prioritising health and wellbeing. Within this context, it was particularly gratifying for Cumberland Council to be invited to contribute a case study for the Chief Medical Officer's annual report 2023: health in an ageing society.⁽⁴⁾ This, combined with the subsequent invitation to present at a webinar led by Sir Chris Witty, hosted by Local Government Agency, was an exciting opportunity to highlight the emerging Cumberland approach. Rather than fearing the potential 'demographic timebomb', two important and connected strands of work have been established: investment in healthy and active ageing; and challenging entrenched attitudes to older people. Live Longer Better in Cumbria is the golden thread that runs through this approach.

The resonance between the aims of the CMO's annual report and Live Longer Better principles is strong encouragement to continue as we have started. There is a focus on improving health span and of preventing and delaying disease through actions that individuals can take to maintain their physical health. Mental and social activity, along with the consequent reduction in pressure on health and social care systems, are also a priority. This is an excellent endorsement for the approach we have taken. The report recommends:

Central and local government (the State) have the principal responsibility for environmental factors which can delay or prevent the probability of early ageing (primary prevention). Making it easy and attractive for people to exercise throughout their lives is one of the most effective ways of maintaining independence into older age.

The work for the year ahead must be to continue to work with all stakeholders to uphold this responsibility and embed physical activity in the systems and networks supporting our older adults.

⁽⁴⁾ Chief Medical Officer's annual report 2023: health in an ageing society - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk)



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