

LIVE LONGER BETTER. *in Cumbria*



ANNUAL REPORT

April 2024 – March 2025

Introduction

On 24th April 2024, Sport England released the Active Lives Adult Survey November 2023-24 Report (scan the QR code to access the report). The data shows a significant growth in activity levels for older adults, supporting them to achieve the goal of living longer better. With the understanding that 'active' means at least 150 minutes of moderate intensity physical activity a week, the report explains:

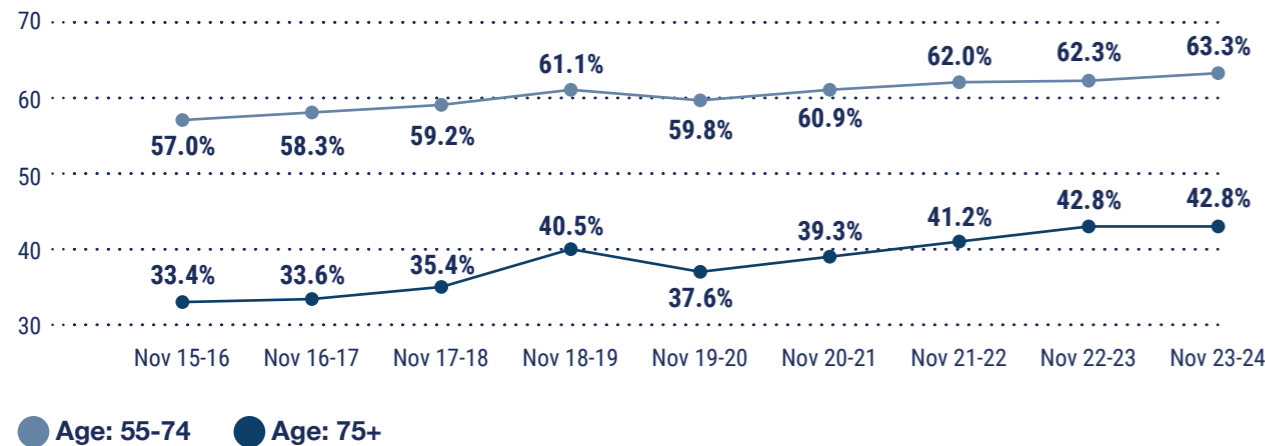
“Both adults aged 55-74 and 75+ continue to see a slight but steady increase in activity levels over the last three years. This is part of a long-term increase of 1.9m (6.4%) compared to eight years ago (Nov 15-16). While adults aged 75+ have seen no statistically reportable change in the proportion active compared to 12 months ago, we continue to see a long-term increase of 600,000 (9.4%) compared to eight years ago (Nov 15-16).”



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SPORT ENGLAND ACTIVE LIVES ADULT SURVEY NOVEMBER 2023-24 REPORT

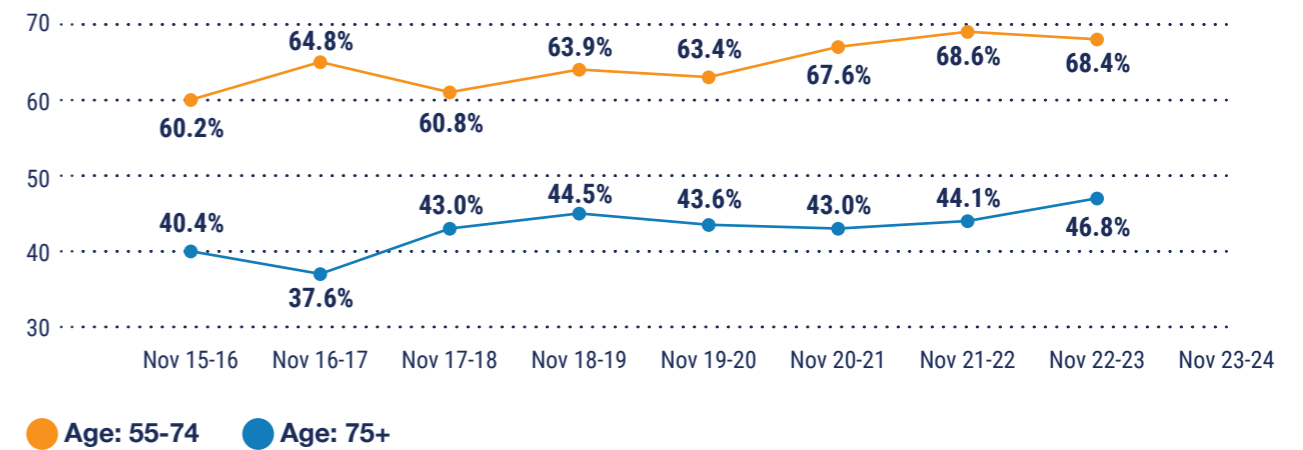
Active: 150+ minutes a week



We can compare this national picture against the data from Cumbria and see the same long-term increase in activity across both age groups, with higher than the national rates for activity from the latest reporting period.

ACTIVITY LEVEL CUMBRIA: ACTIVE PARTNERSHIP – AGE CUMBRIA AP

Active: 150+ minutes a week



This is undeniably good news, showing signs of the cultural shift that our programme has been working towards. Indeed, the Cumberland Public Health Annual Report 2025 (<https://www.cumberland.gov.uk/publications/cumberland-public-health-annual-report-2025>) cites Live Longer Better in Cumbria as one of the pivotal services to help older adults to live independently and maintain their health and wellbeing (Chapter 6).



[Click to view](#)

While the demographic trends in Cumbria continue to show a clear shift towards an ageing population, with an increasing proportion of older residents compared to regional and national figures (ONS, 2023), we cannot rest on our laurels. While the demographic trends in Cumbria continue to show a clear shift towards an ageing population, with an increasing proportion of older residents compared to regional and national figures (ONS, 2023), we cannot rest on our laurels. We reflect here on the intended actions for Live Longer Better in Cumbria from the 2022-24 Annual Report. It is clear that while progress continues to be made, there is still much more to be done to create opportunities for more movement, physical activity and exercise to support better outcomes for our older citizens.

Front cover photo credit (top right): Kendal 'Auld Greys' Walking Rugby by Paul Want

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

In 2024-25 Active Cumbria Officers delivered 15 different presentations and attended 46 different engagements, in person, online and in writing.

They engaged with approximately 1200 stakeholders covering sectors including the NHS, VCSE, Adult Social Care, DWP, elected Members, housing providers, care settings and sports organisations.

ACTION

- create clearer pathways for those who activate their eLearning licence code but do not go on to make an application to the Reconditioning Fund
- create clearer pathways for those who choose not to activate their eLearning code

Update:

Everyone who receives an access code to the Learning with the Experts eLearning is now subscribed to the Live Longer Better in Cumbria Monthly Newsletter. All those who choose not to activate their eLearning within 12 weeks are contacted to give them a further 2 weeks' notice to use the code before it is reclaimed and recycled. To reflect the impact of this action, eLearning distribution data reflects those shared and activated from November 2022 to March 2024.

51 eLearning licences shared in Cumberland
56 eLearning licences shared in Westmorland and Furness



Sir Muir Gray - Learning with the experts

ACTION

- strengthen the link between Live Longer Better and Making Every Contact Count training content and messaging
- increase our knowledge of behaviour change theory and how it can be used to impact daily movement levels

Update:

In 2024, Active Cumbria Officers delivered a total of 15 Making Every Contact Count (MECC) workshops of between 45mins and 3hrs duration with Live Longer Better principles embedded in the core messages. All 161 attendees were asked to complete pre- and post-course evaluations:

- 91.1% of respondents said the resources from the workshop would be useful to them in their role
- 80% of respondents said the course had prompted them to consider their own health behaviour.

2 more officers from Active Cumbria have now completed their MECC trainers' training.

Over a period of 4 weeks in October 2024, Clare Paling (Development Officer and Older Adults Lead) completed University College London's online course 'Behaviour Change Principles: Introductory Principles and Practice'. Resources and learning from this course were cascaded to the wider team.

ACTION

- maximise pipeline education opportunities presented by: Westmorland and Furness Council Adult Social Care; Cumberland Council Public Health, Customer and Community Wellbeing; North Cumbria GP Training Programme.

Update:

We delivered Live Longer Better in Cumbria presentations at 3 different Westmorland and Furness Adult Social Care Roadshows, as well as a half-day Active Conversations and Active Ageing workshop with their occupational therapy team. We also presented to Cumberland Adult Social Care Senior Leadership team.

We were thrilled to be invited to deliver an Active Conversations and Active Ageing workshop to a cohort of GP registrars on the North Cumbria GP Training Programme in Wigton in September 2024. 100% of the attendees felt that the session was relevant to their training and would recommend it to a friend.

Activate and Enable

Educate case study

Later Life Training Active Learning Agendas Pilot Project

Later Life Training (LLT) are a not-for-profit organisation established in 2003 who deliver education and training across the UK (and wider) promoting independence and wellbeing in later life. Building on the success of the Care to Move training delivered to Age UK North Cumbria, LLT designed a series of fit for purpose, achievable Active Learning Agendas for team leads seeking the opportunity to increase learning, consistency and more standardised approaches to supporting behaviour changes relating to home exercise, physical activity and moving more.

Bex Townley launched this project at the Live Longer Better in Cumbria - Continuing the Movement for Active Ageing event held on 26 February 2025.

After the event, 26 leads of teams who support older adults expressed their interest in this free in-house training opportunity, of whom 20 committed to the project running from April to July 2025. They will select 4 out of 7 available Active Learning Agendas intended to fit in with usual team meetings, forming a 20-30 minute conversation to tackle poor uptake of home exercise and reduce sedentary behaviour in older adults. The aim is to shift narratives, stereotypes and professional practice around having meaningful conversations about physical activity and movement for older people, empowering teams with evidence-informed and standardised approaches.

Bex says “We hope that a more consistent approach across whole teams will lead to sufficient exercise doses to reduce falls, get people off to a good start with home exercise/movement plans, and increase physical literacy for workforce and the people they support. These wins are what we are all looking for.”

Pending evaluation of the project, it is intended to be rolled out across the county, including embedment into Westmorland and Furness and Cumberland Adult Social Care services.



Bex Townley - LLT Active Learning Agendas Pilot Project

Aims

To work with partners and providers to:

- Increase physical activity and movement, resilience and healthspan
- Prevent falls and frailty
- Reduce the risk of, and delay, or prevent dementia
- 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

ACTION

- Support existing Reconditioning Fund projects including gathering monitoring and evaluation data from participants and partner organisations.
- 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.
- Use the learning from completed projects to inform project development.

Update:

- 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.
- 40% of all projects funded by the Reconditioning Fund aimed to prevent and minimise the effects of disease and multimorbidity including long Covid.
- £69,344 made in Grant Awards to 20 projects countywide
- £31,659 made in Grant Awards to 9 projects in Cumberland
- £37,685 made in Grant Awards to 11 projects in Westmorland & Furness
- Average £3,467 Grant Award intended to benefit 48 individuals over a period of 6 months

- 85% of projects funded are located in or serve citizens from a Priority Place as identified by Active Cumbria's Implementation Plan.
- 45% of projects included learning and development opportunities for personnel.

Partner and provider feedback:

- The fund helped us embed reconditioning principles into our approach to dementia care, such as improving physical movement and cognitive engagement, in a way that is enjoyable, meaningful, and sustainable.
- The project has enabled us to collect evidence of impact through surveys, case studies and informal feedback. This has helped us to secure support and funding from elsewhere.
- This has been an extraordinary project, working closely with a very proactive and close community. If one word could sum up the overriding experience of participants, volunteers, visitors and the three project leaders it is JOY. That really does deserve the last word.

Participant feedback:

- I will continue to do the yoga at home and hope the project continues for a long time to come. I am now able to get about more.
- The games made it fun—and you realise you're being active without even thinking. The activities were always adapted so I could take part. I looked forward to the sessions every week. The instructor's calm and gentle approach made me feel able. It really boosted my mental health.
- When I joined, I couldn't get in or out of the bath, now I can.

Activate and Enable case study

Find Your Feet – Safe Falls Project at Kendal Dojo



Falls are the number one reason older people are taken to A&E, with unaddressed fall hazards in homes costing the NHS in England an estimated £435 million, according to the Office for Health Improvement and Disparities (OHID); as one in three adults over 65 and half of people over 80 will have at least one fall a year according to the NHS.

Finding Your Feet sessions teach older adults, and the wider public, how to keep their balance, fall safely and get up easily using adapted judo techniques. Other key techniques include learning how to tuck the chin in when falling backwards, how to fall forward safely without using hands, and rolling techniques to get up safely.

This is not traditional 'falls prevention' – it is designed to enable ageing adults to respond and recover well in a situation that might cause them harm or distress otherwise.

Mike Liptrot is a qualified coach educator in the programme with almost 40 years' experience of coaching. A grant from the Reconditioning Fund allowed development of a pilot established using UKSPF monies from Westmorland and Furness Council, embedding the programme as free at point of access in Kendal and a 10-week taster block in Penrith.



Click to view

As featured on Border TV, the programme has had excellent attendance and outcomes. Over 100 older adults (aged between 58 and 94 years old) have embraced this proactive training. Respondents to the programme's bespoke attitudes to falling questionnaire show a 13.3% improvement in their confidence about falling safely and recovery, with many positive stories to support the hard data. Kendal Dojo are currently seeking a corporate sponsor to support the programme. Judo Knight in Copeland have received a Reconditioning Fund grant to take the scheme to the west of the county.

Network

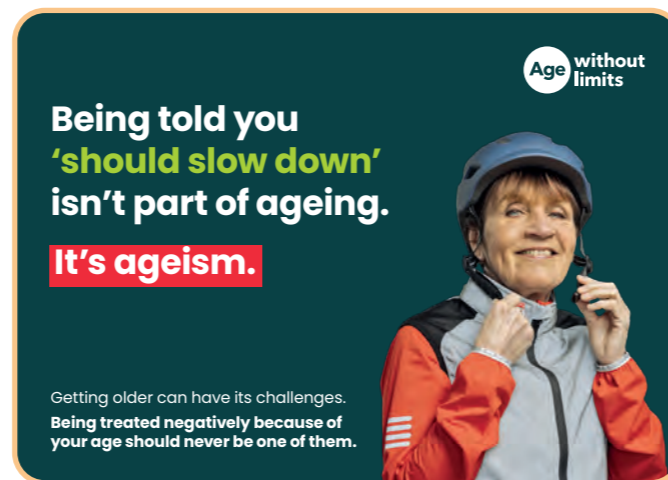
ACTION

- Work with partners to support the use and promotion of anti-ageist and age-friendly attitudes and resources

Update:

The Centre for Ageing Better's articles, reports and image library continue to be standing features in the Live Longer Better in Cumbria Newsletter, as does promotion of both the Age Without Limits Campaign and national day, and the World Health Organisation's International Day for Older Persons.

100% of responding organisations funded by the Reconditioning Fund in 24-25 gave an average rating of 9 out of 10 (where 10 is the highest rating) for how important challenging ageism is to them by the end of their project.



Campaign Postcard from the Age Without Limits Campaign 2025

ACTION

- Work with partners to support behaviour change interventions to reduce sedentary behaviour (both within their organisations and for their service users).

Update:

The Later Life Training project described on page 6 has behaviour change theory and tackling sedentary behaviour at its core. Of the 20 organisations committed to the Later Life Training Active Learning Agendas Pilot Project, 4 are from the VCSE sector, 7 from the NHS, 7 are Physical Activity Providers and 2 are from Social Care (Cumberland Council).

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

ACTION

- Maintain our output of monthly newsletters, increasing subscriptions and engagement

Update:

The monthly Live Longer Better in Cumbria Newsletter remains a key tool in maintaining our relationship with partners and providers. Its recipients include a stakeholder group identified from Active Cumbria records and 'sign ups', those who have elected to receive the newsletter. The first group has maintained a steady average number of recipients around the 370 mark, with an average open rate of 35%. The second group of 'sign ups' has seen significant growth from 147 recipients to 320 in the period from April 2024 to March 2025, with an average open rate of 43%. 2619 individuals have read a Live Longer Better in Cumbria Newsletter during 2024-25.

ACTION

- Host an in-person mid-point Live Longer Better in Cumbria event themed on the prevention of falls, frailty and dementia.

Update:

Live Longer Better in Cumbria – Continuing the Movement for Active Ageing



Our in-person event on 26th February 2025 saw over 140 delegates come together for a day of learning and development around the role of physical activity in ageing well. Partners and providers travelled from across the county to hear keynote speeches and take part in workshops, representing the NHS, both councils, leisure and physical activity as well as the voluntary and community sector.

The energy in the room was palpable, and the feedback from the day shows how worthwhile it proved to be.

- Everyone who registered for the event was asked how confident they felt about talking to older adults about moving more: after the event, there was a 20% increase in confidence in total.
- 54% of attendees said they now felt extremely confident compared with 41% before.
- 92% of respondents gave the event content overall a rating of 5 out of 5.
- Between 66% and 92% of respondents rated the keynote speeches from all speakers as Very Good and Excellent.
- Between 64% and 75% of respondents rated the 3 different workshops Very Good and Excellent, as delivered by Bex Townley from Later Life Training, Dr Angela White from Going for Old CIC and Julia Gover and Jagit Mankelow from Flippin' Pain.

The overwhelming sense from the day is one of inspiration and motivation – from the content delivered and the opportunity to network with those sharing common goals for long, healthy lives for our citizens.



“Found the event really engaging. Good representation of services and providers. Very rare to be able to get onto training for a day and it be affordable (FREE!!!) for organisations. Hard to summarise the amazing positives”.

“I feel inspired and confident that we can do better, am going to be so mindful of my language I use around frailty, older age and activity from now on!”

“This event has been one of the most inspiring, exciting and relevant days that I've been privileged to attend. Thank you”.

Scan the code to watch a video about the event.

Visit our website to watch videos of all the keynote speeches.



[Click to view](#)

Network case study

Partnership with Flippin' Pain



The We Are Undefeatable: ‘Bridging the Gap’ Report found that pain was the number one reason preventing those with long term conditions from getting active. The report also found that many professionals working alongside these people didn’t know pain was the number one factor, instead citing a lack of motivation and cost as the main reasons. This evident ‘empathy gap’ creates a challenge for both patients and the providers of services: providers who are keen to support people as best they can. In partnership with Flippin' Pain, ‘Pain Education? Good Move!’ was created to introduce persistent pain as an influencing factor, giving professionals the awareness and tools to tackle the problem.

The campaign ran as a series of news articles in the Live Longer Better in Cumbria monthly newsletter from September 2024 to January 2025. Each news article was designed to lead partners and providers through a series of steps to support their understanding of pain science. The aim was to empower them to encourage the older adults they work with to move more with confidence that it would not make their pain worse and should actually make it better.

Flippin' Pain came to support the Castle Green event in February and Julia Gover (pictured above) challenged the audience’s understanding of pain, in particularly focusing on one of Flippin' Pain’s key messages that ‘Hurt does not always mean harm’. She shared renown reports from medical journals as well as calling upon the audience to reflect on their own everyday experiences – the bruise that appears from nowhere, the headache that can be treated with a simple paracetamol.

Active Cumbria took part in Flippin' Pain’s first ‘Train the trainer’ pilot, connecting with partners from the NHS and the third sector to explore further how pain education for practitioners could be used to support work to reduce the number of opioid prescriptions.

The year ahead

Established Influencers

The Discovery Exercise is an activity led by the Active Partnership National Organisation (APNO) in partnership with Sport England where all 43 Active Partnerships are asked to share their work priorities and experiences focusing on integrating physical activity into local health and care systems. The Enquiry Form that Active Cumbria submitted to the Discovery Exercise in 2024, which also took account of changes since completing the same exercise in June 2023, allows evaluation of how the whole system is changing rather than directly evaluating specific interventions or services.

Press Red, data consultants with a difference who generate insights to inform policy and service design, undertook an Active Partnerships cluster analysis, looking at the network's data input both for 2023 and 2024. From this cluster analysis, Press Red worked with four Active Partnerships to develop detailed case studies that would help bring to life the four different clusters that emerged from the Discovery Exercise data, creating a story from the data to explore and further build on.



Scott Hartley, Director of Press Red

Active Cumbria was identified as one within the Established Influencers cluster. Director of Press Red, Scott Hartley, and APNO Strategic Health Lead Annie Holden, spent the day with the Active Cumbria Team in January 2025, digging deep into our journey around health, care and physical activity. The Live Longer Better in Cumbria programme has contributed to this agenda hugely in the last 3 years.

Early analysis of one of our 'success stories' was presented at a national event in Spring 2025 hosted by NHS Horizons where the transition of the relationship between Age UK North Cumbria and Active Cumbria from transactional to transformational was described. Funding from the Reconditioning Fund to support Age UK staff to complete Care to Move training with Later Life training saw the importance of movement being embedded in the team's ethos.

Observing the improvements in their clients' confidence and mobility levels led to an application to the Travel Actively fund for the rollator programme 'Rolling On'. And as Sport England's Place Expansion programme reached Cumbria, it was clear that Age UK North Cumbria were key partners to be involved, especially as their geographical coverage changed and they were keen to connect with new and different organisations in the west of the county.



Age UK North Cumbria 'Rolling On'

"Active Cumbria have been instrumental in developing appropriate relationships that we need. We've had a cultural shift and that's changed our reputation as well" - Age UK North Cumbria

We were delighted that Active Cumbria had been selected and that the case study will reflect the commitment that Active Cumbria staff have put into making our journey of health, care and physical activity integration so progressive and positive. The Age UK North Cumbria example is just one of the ripple effects that can be traced from this work; there are countless more. As we await full publication and dissemination of the case study, the drive to change cultural attitudes to ageing and the role of physical activity and movement in supporting healthy ageing continues.

We would like to take this opportunity to thank all our partners who have been so supportive and passionate over the last year to make the Live Longer Better in Cumbria programme the success that it is.



Cumberland Council

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