

## **Active Dacorum: A Physical Activity and Sport Strategy for Dacorum 2019-2024**

### **Foreword**

“Physical activity and sport can have a hugely positive impact on individuals and local communities. The Council is committed to creating accessible opportunities for residents to be as active as possible. We want to create an environment that encourages an active lifestyle, allows aspiring athletes to perform at the highest level as well as motivating beginners to take up a new sport or activity. Working closely with our key partners, we hope to transform local communities, develop physical activity and sporting infrastructures, and make Dacorum the most active district in Hertfordshire”

*Cllr Neil Harden, Portfolio Holder for Community and Regulatory Services*

### **1. Purpose of this strategy**

*“To provide opportunities for Dacorum residents to be more active, helping to shape and promote a positive attitude towards physical activity and sport”*

- 1.1.** We have developed a strategy and vision ensuring we have the approach, infrastructure and commitment to deliver a lasting legacy for sports and physical activity across Dacorum. We want Dacorum to be a leader in the promotion of health and wellbeing with physical activity being a key driver in creating healthier, more active communities. We want to create an environment that allows our residents to be physically active as part of their daily routine, removing barriers and stigmas attached to physical activity and sport. We aim to deliver a high quality-sporting environment, which enables people to play, enjoy and benefit from sport, whether they are a beginner, enthusiastic amateur or an elite performer.
- 1.2.** This strategy gives us a clear vision that everyone can work towards over the next five years. It sets out our strategic priorities, supports improved engagement with stakeholders, and allows us to target resources to where we will see the greatest impact. In developing this strategy, we believe we will increase the amount of physical activity and sports participation across the borough which will in turn lead to a healthier and happier community.
- 1.3.** In collaboration with our partners and stakeholders, we will develop a detailed annual action plan to deliver this strategy. The action plan will give clearer, more in depth actions (with outcome measures), which will be governed by a project board.

### **Dacorum Physical Activity and Sports Key Partners**

Hertfordshire Sport and Physical Activity Partnership (HSP)  
Sport England  
Public Health  
Dacorum Sports Network (DSN)  
Local Sports Clubs  
Everyone Active  
Dacorum Sports Trust (DST)  
Dacorum Residents  
Local Schools  
Community Groups

## **2. How active is Dacorum now, and why is this so important?**

**2.1.** Dacorum is comprised of 25 wards and is considered a largely rural and affluent area.

However, Dacorum does have pockets of deprivation, with 6 of its wards being graded at a 4 or below on the index of multiple deprivation (1). About 12% (3,300) of children live in low income families primarily within these wards, where average life expectancy is 7.8 years lower for men and 5.1 years lower for women. Cardiovascular disease in people aged between 30 and 74 in Dacorum is statistically significantly higher than the averages for England and Hertfordshire and around 50,000 residents aged 50 and above suffer from a long-term health problem or disability (2).

	<b>Dacorum</b>	<b>South East England</b>	<b>England</b>
Excess weight in adults (including obesity)	66.1%	65.6%	64.8%
Physically Inactive adults (3)	21.2%	22.7 %	25.7%

(1) Department for Communities and Local Government, English Indices of Deprivation 2015

(2) Public Health England, Local Authority Health Profile 2018

(3) Sport England, Active Lives Survey

**2.2.** It has been scientifically proven that being physically active can dramatically improve an individual's physical health. It lowers the risk of heart disease, strokes, cancer and of developing type 2 diabetes by up to 50%. It also improves mental health, helping to lower the risk of depression and reduces cognitive decline. Taking part in sport and physical activity can also boost productivity and support increased learning.

**2.3.** Physical activity and sports participation is also shown to have a significant impact on the reduction of local crime rates. It can develop a sense of shared purpose and contribute to community cohesion. Sport is successful in bringing people from different communities together and forging strong, new friendships and creating a sense of pride and belonging within their communities.

## 2.4. How much physical activity should we be doing?

- Adults: 150 minutes per week of moderate physical activity (raised heartbeat, sweating e.g. brisk walking)
- Children and young people: At least 60 minutes and up to several hours of intense and vigorous activity per day (breathing hard and fast e.g. running) (4)

(4) NHS, Benefits of Exercise

## 3. Current Sporting Landscape

**3.1.** Dacorum Borough Council (DBC) is hugely supportive of local sport. There are over 200 sports clubs within Dacorum, which offer residents a whole host of different opportunities to take part and be active, as well as a number of high profile clubs within Dacorum, including Hemel Storm (Basketball), Hemel Football Club, Hemel Stags (Rugby League) and Sapphire Gymnastics. Our sport and leisure facilities (run by Everyone Active) have circa 4,800 members, a number that continues to grow with an ever-expanding offer of activities for the community. We also have many parks, adventure playgrounds and open spaces that cater for thousands of active residents across Dacorum, including Gadebridge Park and Tring Park which are used for Park Runs, attracting hundreds of people each week.

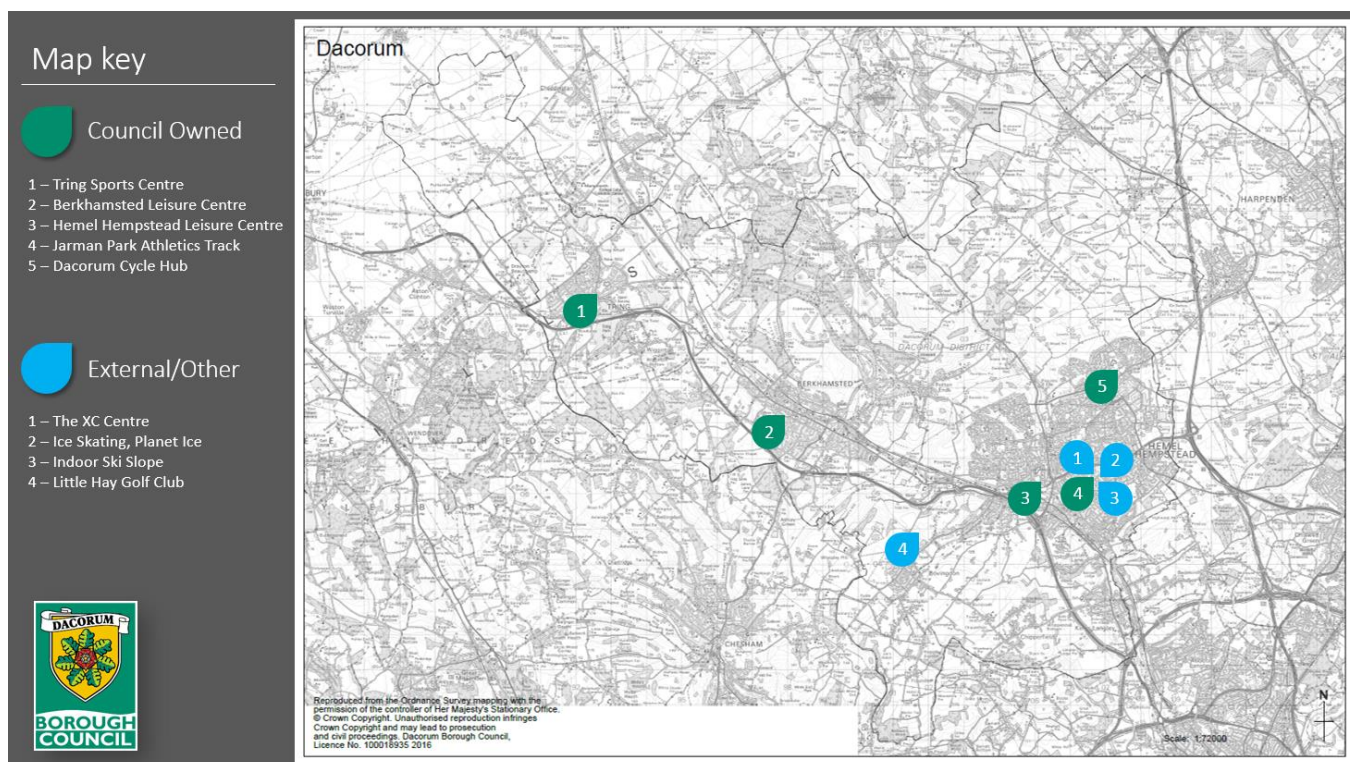
**3.2.** Within Dacorum we are fortunate enough to have a number of high quality facilities to support physical activity and sport provision. We have two large leisure centres that boast 6 swimming pools, 2 large sports halls and very well equipped gyms. As well as this, Dacorum has an athletics track, a golf course, an indoor extreme sports centre, an ice rink and a ski slope. Within Dacorum we have an abundance of green parks and open spaces, as well as 12 community centres all of which provide opportunity to be active within the borough.

In August 2018 Everyone Active has invested £1.3m in the refurbishment of the Hemel Hempstead Leisure Centre

In August 2018 Dacorum Borough Council has invested £1.2m in the refurbishment of Tring Swimming Pool

**3.3.** There are substantial facilities and opportunities that already exist within Dacorum for people to be more physically active. However, it is clear that there are factors and barriers that are preventing wider community involvement in adopting an active lifestyle.

## Map of Key Facilities



### 4. The Role of the Council

4.1. DBC understands that a strategy such as this requires a collaborative approach. We see the council's role as a supportive one, working closely and effectively with our multiple partners to deliver our vision: *"To provide opportunities for Dacorum residents to be more active, helping to shape and promote a positive attitude towards physical activity and sport"*. To achieve this vision we will:

- Provide leadership within the community. Working closely with partners from private, public and voluntary sectors to improve and promote access to resources, quality provision, and programmes of activity, with particular focus on underrepresented groups.
- Ensure there are high quality leisure facilities which meet the current and future needs of the borough.
- Champion and promote the benefits of physical activity and sport participation in achieving health, community cohesion and community safety outcomes.

### 5. Our commitments to deliver this strategy

5.1. We have worked collaboratively and consulted with key partners and stakeholders to identify the needs and priorities of the borough. Using stakeholder insight to develop this strategy, as well as supporting strategies from Central Government and Sport England, we have developed four outcome-based commitments

## **5.2. Tackling Physical Inactivity**

- Undertake consultation with local residents to better understand the barriers to participation
- Monitor and support the delivery of Everyone Active's physical activity and sports development and outreach plan
- Work with partners to actively source funding to support underrepresented groups to become more physically active
- Develop resources which support and promote an active lifestyle

## **5.3. Partnership Working**

- Work more closely with partners to ensure resources are maximised and duplication is avoided
- Ensure we are informed by the best practice on what works to achieve our ambition, learning from others and working with the best in the sector
- Ensure DBC leisure management contracts are well managed to deliver a great service

## **5.4. Facilities and Infrastructure**

- Continue to provide facilities and infrastructure which allow for increased use and greater opportunity for residents to have a more physically active lifestyle
- Work towards adopting a policy that supports community management and ownership of assets to local clubs, community groups and trusts.

## **5.5. Governance**

- Establish a strong governance model that holds to account those with the responsibility for the implementation of the strategy
- Have a clear action plan which details available resources and accountability for achieving outcomes/targets, which are regularly monitored and reviewed by the project board

## **6. Outcomes**

**6.1.** Everyone that lives and works in Dacorum will be able to find an activity or sport that meets their needs, which in turn will lead to increased participation and the benefits that come with this. Success will be measured through a series of key outcomes and targets.

**6.2.** Setting measurable targets is a key part of being able to evaluate the success of our actions and interventions. In those areas where we can use quantifiable targets it is important that we do so as this will be a valuable measure of progress for the strategy. The key outcomes that this strategy seeks to achieve are:

- 2,000 more physically active Dacorum residents (5)
- 3% increase in membership numbers of local sports clubs and leisure facilities

There are contributing factors in relation to individuals' health and wellbeing, but this strategy would also influence the:

- Reduction in the mortality rate for persons under 75 from cardiovascular diseases and cancer (circa. 20 fewer people) (6)
- 1,880 fewer adults (aged 18+) carrying excess weight (6)
- 36 fewer children reported as overweight or obese at year 6 (7)

(5) Sport England, Active Lives Survey

(6) Public Health, Local Authority Health Profiles

(7) Gov.uk, Child obesity and excess weight: small area level data

## **7. Putting Commitments into Action**

**7.1.** There is a fantastic opportunity for DBC and partners to develop physical activity and sport in Dacorum. The power and influence that physical activity and sport can have on people's lives and the positive impact they can have on entire communities is the exact purpose for developing this strategy.

**7.2.** The Council will prepare an annual action plan in collaboration with partners, both internal (e.g. Planning, Community Partnerships, Housing) and external (e.g. HSP, Public Health, DSN, Everyone Active) which will deliver this strategy. In this plan, we will set out a series of more specific actions, which will take place throughout the coming years.