

# Healthy Weight Strategy for Hartlepool 2015-2025

## Introduction

This document describes a strategy for reducing excess weight and maximising the proportion of individuals who achieve and maintain a healthy weight in Hartlepool. Excess weight has been identified as an issue both nationally and locally because it is associated with a significantly increased risk of health problems. At a population level, obesity results in a major increase in chronic diseases, leading to distress, sickness, and an unsustainable burden on health and social care systems.

We outline our strategy for Hartlepool with a social and physical environment conducive to healthy weight, together with our strategic aims and objectives around reducing excess weight.

The following healthy weight strategic themes are:

1: To transform the environment so that it supports healthy lifestyles (Primary Prevention)

2: Making healthier choices easier by providing information and practical support (Secondary Prevention)

3: Services – To secure the services needed to tackle excess weight (Tertiary Prevention)

## The scale of the challenge

As a nation each generation is becoming heavier (passive obesity), with weight creeping up without us consciously realising it so that obesity is now a global epidemic<sup>1</sup>. Reducing obesity is a national aim<sup>2</sup> and a local priority. However, there needs to be a shift in focus to healthy weight in its widest sense and not solely obesity treatment, which is a symptom of the underlying factors that need addressing i.e. poor nutrition and physical inactivity.

## What do we mean by healthy weight?

'Healthy weight' is the term used to describe an individual whose height and weight is proportional and falls within defined parameters where the risk of ill-health (due to weight) is at its lowest. Those individuals above (overweight or obese) or below

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<sup>1</sup> Foresight, 2007

<sup>2</sup> DH, 2011

(underweight) a healthy weight are at increased risk of adverse effects on their health and wellbeing during childhood, adulthood and later life.

### Factors affecting weight

In simple terms the balance between the food we consume (calories) and energy we use through our metabolism and physical activity (metabolic equivalent) is known as the 'energy balance'. An imbalance in this equation can cause weight gain or weight loss and if balanced, weight maintenance. There are many different contributory factors contriving to affect an individual's weight, including the so-called 'obesogenic' environment.



### Engagement with communities

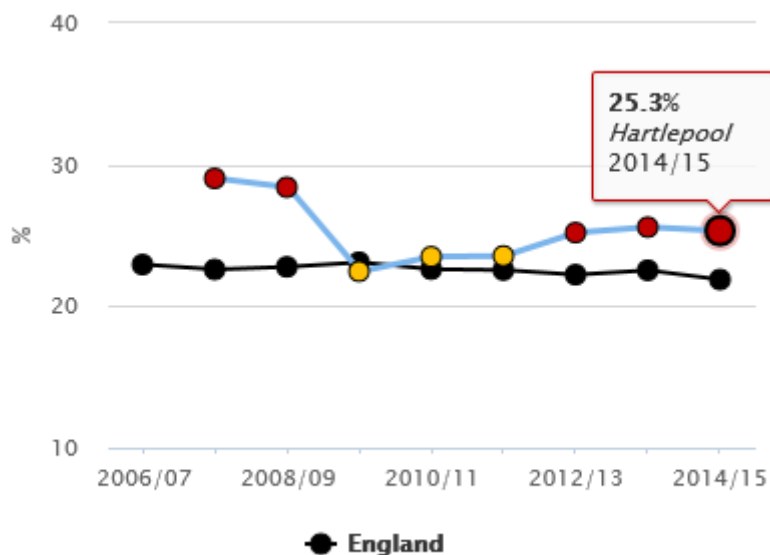
Communities have numerous assets (people, places, insight etc.) that are crucial when addressing health inequalities and improving health. Successful engagement and empowerment of communities will ensure that the resources within them are understood and utilised, achieving maximum benefit and successes that a top down approach to tackling healthy weight would not achieve.

Multi-factorial strategies to create substantive changes to re-engineer the obesogenic environment and challenge and change social and cultural norms will be required to tackle excess weight effectively. This is a crucial challenge in public health and strong, resolute, resilient and sustained political support and leadership in the face of potentially challenging conflicts with existing priorities and perspectives is required to affect wide reaching and novel approaches to this major political issue in respect of its economic considerations.

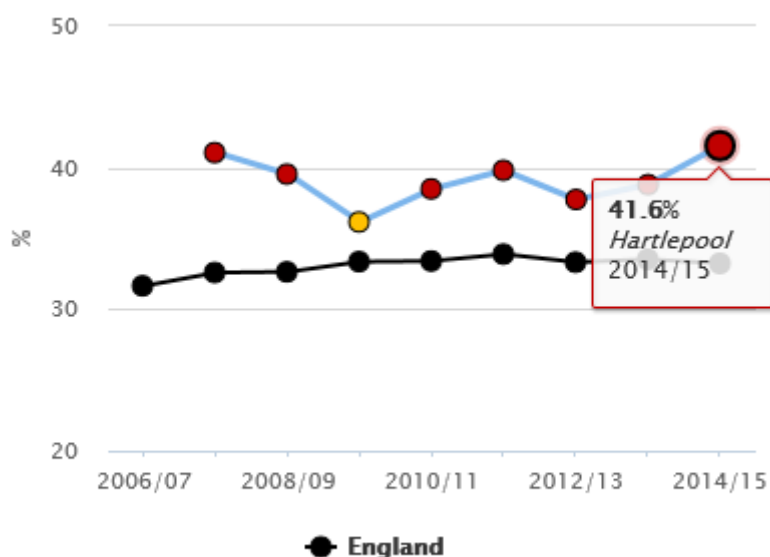
### Statistical Drivers

<b>Children (Reception)</b>	Overweight	Obese	Combined
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England	12.8	9.1	21.9
North East	13.7	10.0	23.7
Hartlepool	13.7	11.6 (joint highest in region)	25.3

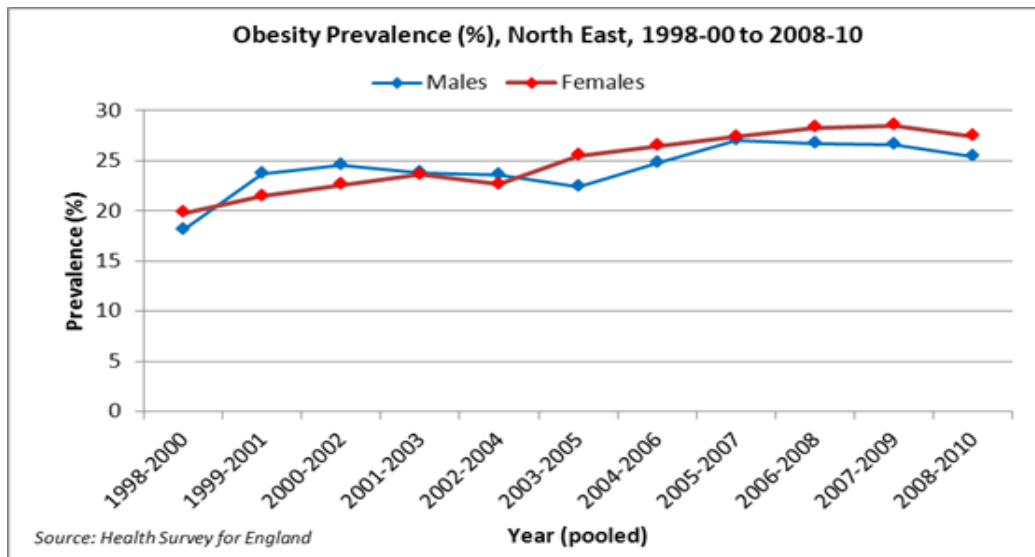


Children (Yr6)	Overweight	Obese	Combined
England	14.2	19.1	33.2
North East	14.5	21.5	35.9
Hartlepool	15.7	25.9 (highest in region)	41.6 (highest in region)



Adults	Overweight	Obese	Combined
England	40.6	24.0	64.6
North East	41.9	26.7	68.6

Hartlepool	40.5	32.7 (highest in region)	73.2 (highest in region)
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### Hartlepool Healthy Weight Conference 2015

In February 2015, a Healthy Weight, Healthy Lives – Tackling Obesity in Hartlepool Conference took place. Stakeholders including weight management services users, residents, Elected Members, young people, healthcare professionals, council officers, schools, voluntary sector agencies, community organisations and academics were invited to take part. After ‘setting the scene’ presentations, a ‘cafe’ style consultation took place and the event ended with a series of workshops covering the following themes:

- The role of clinical health services
- Raising the issue of obesity
- What more can schools do to play their part?
- Obesogenic environments
- Engaging teenagers (making it ‘cool’) – led by young people
- Active travel/physical activity

The outcomes of the workshop and ‘cafe’ consultation are included in appendix 1 and 2.

A group of relevant stakeholders met in March and April to consider and develop the learning from the conference and start to develop the strategy and action plan. The agencies represented included:

Health Visiting – North Tees and Hartlepool Foundation Trust

School Nursing - North Tees and Hartlepool Foundation Trust  
Public Health – Hartlepool Borough Council  
Educational Psychology – Hartlepool Borough Council  
Children’s Centres – Hartlepool Borough Council  
Youth Participation – Hartlepool Borough Council  
Commissioning – Clinical Commissioning Group  
Planning – Hartlepool Borough Council  
Chief Executives Department

The information gathered from these meetings is included appendix 3.

### **Policy context and key documents**

Over the last few years, the government has developed a number of policies to demonstrate its commitment to addressing the increasing population problem of obesity, and the associated risks of developing cardiovascular disease, Type 2 Diabetes, cancers, and many other health conditions which result in increased ill health and escalating costs to society if no action is taken.

NICE Guidance on each of these disease specific areas as well as Public Health guides to improving health provides direction to support this strategy.

Healthy Lives Healthy People – A call to action on obesity in England (2011) outlines National ambitions;

- A sustained downward trend in the level of excess weight in children by 2020
- A downward trend in the level of excess weight averaged across all adults by 2020

And overall a shift in focus;

- from Obesity to Excess Weight to highlight the health issues of overweight
- from the focus on children to a life stage approach including adults as an influence on children as part of a family
- from individual choice alone to prevention through a supportive environmental change
- a greater emphasis on the psychosocial aspects of weight management.

Marmot suggests a proportional universalism and life course approach, which will be incorporated into the action planning, as whilst excess weight is more prevalent in deprived areas it is a condition which affects all social gradients.

### **Key partners and responsibilities**

Hartlepool Borough Council will take strategic leadership of the Healthy Weight Strategy, but in order to address the issue of obesity effectively, it will require all partners to pull in the same direction and work in partnership to address the challenges highlighted within. It is envisaged that a wide range of services and partners will be engaged including:

- Hartlepool Borough Council
- North Tees and Hartlepool Clinical Commissioning Group
- North Tees and Hartlepool NHS Foundation Trust
- Public Health England
- Schools and school governors
- General Practices
- Pharmacies
- Young people
- Community and Voluntary Sector
- Providers of weight management services
- Retailers
- Employers
- Sports and leisure providers and clubs

**Overall aim/vision:**

To narrow the gap in child and adult obesity levels between Hartlepool and the regional and national average, and secure a sustained downward trend in levels of obesity in children and adults in Hartlepool by 2025.

**Key themes:****Strategic Theme 1: Universal – To transform the environment so that it supports healthy lifestyles (Primary Prevention)**

- a. Planning and retail: Work with partners to improve access to healthy food options and remove barriers to adopting a healthy diet (incorporating takeaway licensing, access to healthy food outlets and facilitating cooking on a budget)
- b. Physical activity: improve access to green spaces for health and exercise reasons (removing the traditional barriers to physical activity)
- c. Travel and infrastructure: create a more supportive environment for cycling and walking to improve rates of active travel in schools, workplaces and communities (including reduced car use, school parking restrictions and 20mph zones)

**Strategic Theme 2: Preventative – Making Healthier Choices Easier by providing information and practical support (Secondary Prevention)**

- a. Develop a social marketing and communications plan for Hartlepool to promote and facilitate a healthy weight and lifestyle (incorporating social media, wellness campaigns, supporting national and regional communications and improving promotion and awareness of new technologies for health)
- b. Ensure obesity is tackled by early intervention through improved training and awareness for front line staff and in communities (incorporating Making Every Contact Count, brief intervention skills and better signposting to services)
- c. Ensure that tackling obesity is a key priority as part of the planning and implementation process for the Hartlepool Vision (including Health Impact Assessment of new developments, creating healthier communities and removing barriers to health)

**Strategic Theme 3: Services – To secure the services needed to tackle excess weight (Tertiary Prevention)**

- a. Create an integrated pathway of support, driven by GPs and Primary Care, to improve accessibility into healthy weight services (creating a clear obesity pathway, more joined up services and referrals and better links with clinical services)
- b. Support schools and children's centres to develop a 'Curriculum for Life' which promotes a healthy weight and lifestyle from an early age (targeting breakfast

and after school clubs, support for school governors, education around life skills, cooking for families and school meals provision)

- c. Ensure healthy weight services are part of the vision for the provision of a Hartlepool 'Health and Social Care Plan' (embracing the Better Care Fund, holiday hunger, better childhood programme and more integrated models of community support hubs with a whole-family approach)