



# **HARTLEPOOL DIRECTOR OF PUBLIC HEALTH ANNUAL REPORT 2022**

**START**

## Introduction by Craig Blundred Director of Public Health for Hartlepool

Hartlepool has many strengths, with many people and organisations keen to work together to improve the wellbeing of the town.

However, people in Hartlepool continue to live shorter lives, and have worse health outcomes, than the average person in England.

By acting on the reasons for this, we can reduce the causes of ill-health and early death (and the causes of the causes) so people can live longer, healthy lives.

The report explores data, and first hand views from a number of local residents, in relation to three key stages of life: “the best start in life”, “living well” and “living well in later life”.

Where possible, the report uses an “average” Hartlepool street of one hundred people to help explain health data.

The biggest challenges we face in Hartlepool are caused by health inequalities. Health inequalities are the avoidable differences in health outcomes Hartlepool residents experience compared with their neighbours, or with other parts of the country. Therefore this report compares health data in Hartlepool with data from the North East and England.

The report ends with **what we can do together** to help people in Hartlepool live happier, healthier and longer lives. This includes acting on the building blocks of health (good housing, food, community, education, work, money and transport), **local information** on **support available to take healthy action** and **support to help with the cost of living**.



Video introduction by Craig Blundred



# Living well throughout your life

Welcome to our Hartlepool street – Click on each heading to find out more.

THE BEST START IN LIFE

LIVING WELL

LIVING WELL IN LATER LIFE



# THE BEST START IN LIFE

## What the best start in life means

Giving children the best start in life is vital, since experiences during pregnancy and in childhood can significantly affect wellbeing and opportunities over the whole of a person's life and even in the next generation.

Giving children the best start in life involves helping a child grow up healthy and reach their potential. It can include supporting healthy pregnancy, breast-feeding, play, learning, healthy food, good relationships with parents/carers and protecting children from harms (e.g. smoke, alcohol, drugs, serious illnesses and poverty).



Introduction by Nikki Clark, Public Health Practitioner for Hartlepool Borough Council





## The situation in Hartlepool

Detailed data is [available here](#) but some key challenges and positives are noted below:

- Hartlepool has one of the highest rates of child poverty in England. In an average street of one hundred children, 39 are living in poverty. This has increased in the last six years.
- In Hartlepool, more mothers smoking when their baby is born (14 in every one hundred mothers) and lower levels of breastfeeding (25 in every one hundred children at 6-8 weeks) than in the rest of England.
- In an average class of thirty children starting school in Hartlepool, 9 are already overweight or obese. This is higher than in the North East and England. By year six of school, 12 children in an average class of thirty are overweight or obese. A quarter of the class are obese.
- These issues can affect wellbeing in childhood and throughout a person's life. However, we know it is possible to make a difference to the health of children in Hartlepool because there is good news in some measures of child wellbeing. For example, around 95% of children under two years in Hartlepool have been vaccinated against key diseases, fewer people are starting smoking in Hartlepool and fewer under 18 year olds are becoming pregnant.

Every family deserves support to help them make sure their baby grows up healthy and reaches their potential. Examples of support available and what we can all do to give children the best start in life are outlined in the [What we can do together](#) section of the report.



What giving children the best start in life means to Hartlepool mums Meg and Ellie



Another perspective from James Sinclair, Children's Centre Lead for Hartlepool

# LIVING WELL

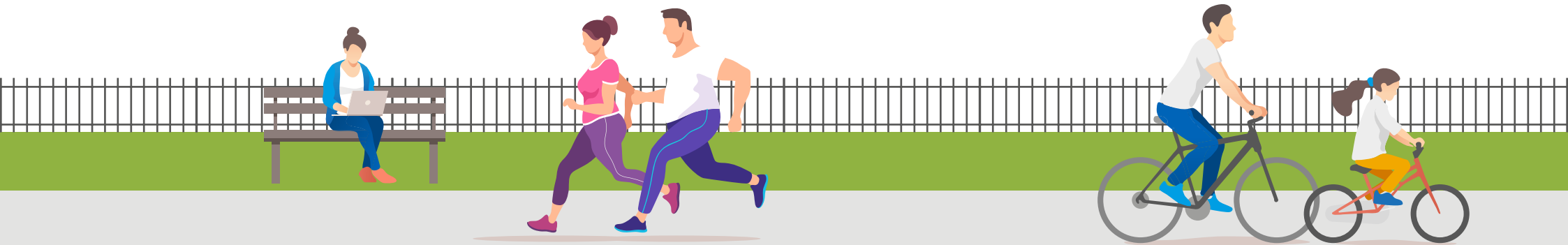
## What living well means

Living Well has different meanings for different people. It's about having the opportunities to enjoy life and this is affected by our health.

Our health depends on the building blocks of health such as good housing, food, community, education, work, money and transport. These issues can affect our ability to live well, live healthily and even how long we live.



Introduction by Claire Robinson, Public Health Principal with Hartlepool Borough Council



## The situation in Hartlepool

Detailed data is [available here](#) but some key challenges and positives are noted below:

- In an average Hartlepool street with one hundred adults, 16 people smoke, 45 are physically inactive, 73 are overweight or obese. These figures are worse than an average street in England and increase the risk of heart disease or other health problems.
- In Hartlepool people are more likely to die from heart disease at a young age than people in England. Between 2018 and 2020, 325 people died of heart disease in Hartlepool, including 70 people under 65 years old.
- People in Hartlepool are also more likely to die due to alcohol or drug use than people in England.
- Many of the deaths due to heart disease and other causes are preventable. Action to prevent deaths can include improving the building blocks of health, such as ensuring people can afford and access healthy food. Green spaces in the community can also allow people to be more physical active.
- One positive regarding breast screening in Hartlepool was that more than two thirds of eligible women were still screened even in 2021 (when screening was affected by the Covid pandemic). This means that, in the latest data, Hartlepool is performing better than the England average.

More information on screening, other support available and ideas for what we can all do to live healthier, longer lives is outlined in the [What we can do together](#) section of the report.



What living well means to Hartlepool resident Michael



What living well means to Hartlepool resident David



Another perspective from Donna Stone of Hartlepool Community Hubs

# LIVING WELL IN LATER LIFE

## What living well in later life (ageing well) means

When people retire there is often more opportunity to spend quality time doing activities they enjoy (such as seeing friends and family and doing hobbies). Many older people make a vital contribution to communities as paid workers, volunteers and carers. Our health can have a significant impact on our ability to do these activities.



Introduction by Catherine Guy from the Public Health team at Hartlepool Borough Council





## The situation in Hartlepool

Detailed data is [available here](#) but some key challenges and positives include:

- As people in Hartlepool age, they experience more ill health and die around two years earlier than people in the rest of England.
- Heart disease, stroke and cancer are some of the leading causes of death. In an average Hartlepool street with one hundred people, 4 people are living with heart disease. This is more than in an average street in England. Preventable early (under 75 years) deaths from heart disease and stroke are higher, and rising, in Hartlepool compared with the North East and England.
- People in Hartlepool have also been more likely to catch Covid and die from it than people in England. People living in the poorest areas of Hartlepool were twice as likely to die from Covid as people living in richer areas of Hartlepool.
- Screening for cancer saves lives but not everyone is screened. For bowel cancer screening, 65 in every 100 eligible people are screened in Hartlepool. This has been improving over time and is now similar to the England average.
- Another positive is that both carers over 65 years, and people who receive social care, in Hartlepool felt less lonely than in other parts of England. This may be related to community spirit and the active voluntary sector in the town. Interestingly, older people in Hartlepool are also less likely to be admitted to hospital due to a fall.

A healthy retirement depends on our life experiences throughout our lives but changes at any time can make a difference. Support already available in Hartlepool and ideas for what we can all do to live healthier, longer lives is outlined in the “What we can do together” section of the report.



Friends Pauline and Doreen tell us what living well in later life in Hartlepool means to them



What does living well in later life in Hartlepool mean to Mary?

# WHAT WE CAN DO TOGETHER

This report provides a summary of health in Hartlepool and looks at possible reasons why people in Hartlepool have shorter lives and poorer health. However, we also want to focus on what we can all do to improve the health of the town. As a whole town, we can work together to improve the health of our families, friends and community

For example, we can act together to ensure people:

- Live in good housing and can access green spaces nearby in the community
- Have access to good food (e.g. healthy food they can afford in shops they can reach)
- Feel connected with the community and know about opportunities for support (and ways they can contribute)
- Have opportunities for education and work that fit their needs and can increase the prosperity of the town
- Have enough money to live a happy and healthy life
- Can move around the town to access services (including active transport such as walking and cycling safely)

In the short term, we also recognise many people are currently struggling with the cost of living. A list of [support to help with the rising cost of living](#) is available on the main page of the Council website.

It is impossible to list all the opportunities and support available that can help people live well in Hartlepool in this document. However, [Hartlepool Now](#)

also contains a comprehensive, up-to-date, searchable list of local events, information and support (including Community Navigators, Community Hubs and children’s centres). Businesses, charities and other organisations can look at the [Better Health at Work Award](#), become “[breastfeeding friendly](#)” and look at other opportunities to improve the health of staff and people they support (e.g. Making Every Contact Count). There is also more information available online about giving children the best start in life, living well and ageing well and new Public Health webpages being developed within the Hartlepool Borough Council website.

Going forward, it is important that we work together with local communities and build on our strengths (such as community spirit and a vibrant voluntary sector) and what we have already achieved to really drive improvements in people’s lives.

By working together to make an effective difference to the building blocks of health (such as good housing, food, community, education, work, money and transport) we can help people in Hartlepool live happier, healthier and longer lives.



Conclusion by Craig Blundred, Director of Public Health for Hartlepool