



Central
Bedfordshire
Together



Healthier Communities Strategy **2010-2031**

Foreword

image

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The conditions required for economic success and wider community prosperity are underpinned by a healthy population. Equally, focusing on the determinants of health and working together to improve these throughout Central Bedfordshire will help to raise health and wellbeing and reduce inequalities throughout our population.

“Improving the health of the working age population is critically important for everyone, in order to secure both higher economic growth and increased social justice” Black Report (2008)

Central Bedfordshire has a relatively healthy population in relation to both the East of England and England. To provide the environment for all to benefit from improvements in health and new opportunity we need to work in close collaboration with a wide range of partners.

Most of the determinants of health sit outside the direct remit of the NHS. Place shaping, planning, housing, education, transport and access to services, together with projected population growth will all impact on population health.

This strategy sets out the strategic direction we will take throughout Central Bedfordshire and directs readers to other

strategic plans that have links to developing a healthier community.

Actions such as these, together with the wider agenda within this strategy will underpin the conditions required to create economic success, community prosperity and a reduction in inequalities.

Together, we will reduce the prevalence and impact of the major conditions which are associated to a greater or lesser extent with today's lifestyle choices:

- Cancer
- Smoking
- Cardiovascular Disease
- Obesity

Linking to and supporting delivery of the Sustainable Communities Strategy, this Healthier Communities Strategy identifies the actions we will undertake within a new environment of significant constraints on public spending to deliver health and wellbeing improvements within Central Bedfordshire.

Why we have a Healthier Communities Strategy

Central Bedfordshire's vision identifies a prosperous and ambitious environment for the benefit of all. To enable this all sections of the community must be afforded the opportunity to thrive and prosper. There is a wealth of evidence that links the economic development and success of a community to the underlying health.

“A healthy population is a key component in increased productivity, higher employment rates and a more adaptable workforce. This makes regions more attractive for investment and fosters sustainable economic growth. A healthy population is therefore an important asset for a regional economy. The role that health has in generating economic wealth and prosperity has been recognised in the twelve cohesion priorities for investment identified by the EU for 2007-2013”

A study of 10 industrialised countries in the mid 1990s identified that better health increased the rate of economic growth by around 30%. By developing healthier communities there are typically concomitant increases in levels of employment, improved productivity and reduced sickness absenteeism. This, in turn, improves social capital and can assist in delivering the population level improvements reducing costs associated with health and social care over time.

Within our vision of delivering sustainable growth, it is important that everyone within Central Bedfordshire is afforded the best opportunity to develop and that existing inequalities in health and economic status are reduced. While there is a need to focus on large scale improvements to the health of our

population, this Healthier Communities Strategy will set out how we will improve the health of people in areas and communities with the poorest health to further reduce the inequalities gap.

As the health of a community continues to improve there is an expectation that healthcare costs for some of the more common lifestyle related conditions will reduce. This enables additional focus on specific health inequalities, reducing the gap between differing geographical and demographic groups to provide a more equitable society.

Current Health profile in Central Bedfordshire

Overall, the health of people in Central Bedfordshire is generally similar to or significantly better than the England average. Average life expectancy in Central Bedfordshire is close to the East of England average (males 79.1 years and females 82.4 years).

A full and updated report of the Central Bedfordshire health profile is accessible through the Joint Strategic Needs Assessment (JSNA) [add hyperlink](#) and key points have been included within this strategy.

Our themes and priorities

The Sustainable Communities Strategy (SCS) identifies the high-level actions that will enable Central Bedfordshire to build strong and sustainable communities; it has the following priorities:

- Educating, protecting and providing opportunities for children and young people
- Supporting and caring for an ageing population and those who are most vulnerable
- Promoting health and reducing health inequalities
- Getting around and caring for a green and clean environment
- Ensuring our local people have the skills to prosper
- Keeping our communities safe
- Nurturing a sense of pride and belonging
- Maximising employment opportunities and delivering housing growth to meet the needs of our communities

This Healthier Communities Strategy (HCS) outlines the key priorities we will take to improve health and wellbeing throughout Central Bedfordshire and to support and enable the priorities of the SCS to be achieved.

The key priorities of the Healthier Communities Strategy are to:

- Ensure a healthy start to life
- Reduce health inequalities and increase healthy life expectancy
- Support people to have healthier lifestyles
- Promote choice and access to high quality services based on needs and preference
- Support and care for an ageing population and those who are most vulnerable

Figure 1 illustrates the determinants of health and wellbeing. It is only through enabling and supporting a range of programmes and developing strong partnership working that we will provide an environment where there is potential and opportunity for everyone to thrive.

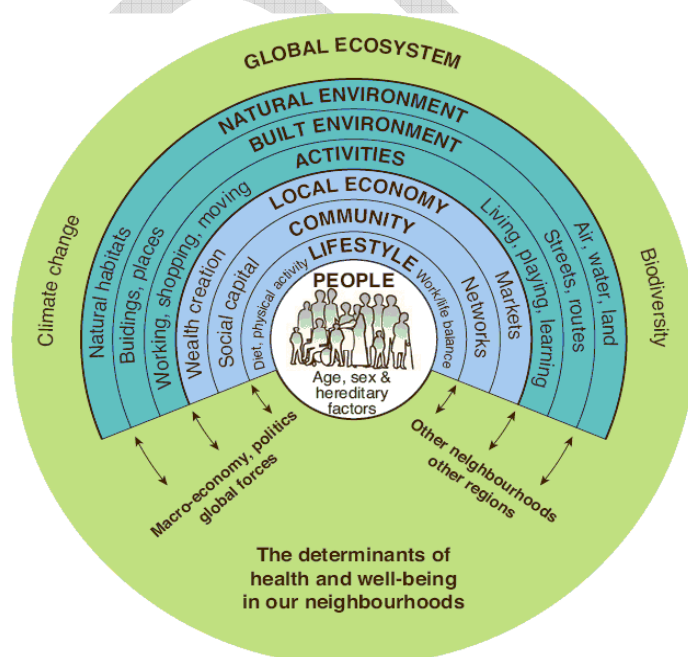


Figure 1: Social Determinants of Health Conceptual Framework Based on the Whitehead and Dahlgren (1991) diagram as amended by Barton and Grant (2006) and the UKPHA Strategic Interest Group (2006)

Our priority: Ensure a Healthy Start to Life

Outcome: Every child in Central Bedfordshire will have the best possible start to life and have a healthy childhood.

Why it's important:

There is growing evidence that the start a child receives in life, beginning with the parents' health at conception and continuing through maternal nutrition, length of time breastfeeding, food choice at weaning, levels of active play and social/emotional factors, impacts significantly on their health throughout their life.

The number of babies breastfed at 6-8 weeks in Central Bedfordshire is approximately 40%, but this level varies widely across wards. Breastfeeding brings significant health benefits for both mother and child.

A child born into poverty is more likely to die from an accident in childhood, have low educational achievement, turn to crime, be poor as an adult and raise their own children in poverty. 27% of children in the Central Bedfordshire live in low income households, rising to between 45% and 50% in parts of Houghton Regis and Dunstable.

In 2001 the proportion of school leavers across Central Bedfordshire going onto higher education was slightly above the England average of 24.3%. However, within Central Bedfordshire considerably lower rates were found in Tithes Farm (7.9%), Parkside (10.5%), Biggleswade Stratton (11.7%), and Sandy Pinnacle (12.8%).

Rates of obesity in children aged 4-5 were similar to the average for the East of England, with 7.3% found to be obese and 13.3% overweight in 2008/09. Rates of obesity in children aged 10-11 years were also similar to the average for the East of England, with 16.0% were found to be obese and 13.9% overweight.

14 % of young people aged 14-15 years report having taken drugs in the last month, and 33% to have drunk alcohol.

A significant proportion (56%) of young people aged 14-15 years report that they have a parent, sibling or friend who smokes on most days. 16% of boys and 18% of girls reported that they smoke occasionally or regularly. Nationally 80% of all smokers start when they are a teenager.

How we will achieve it:

In the short term (3-5 years) we will have:

- Achieved UNICEF Baby Friendly status in the community.

- Improved antenatal and postnatal breastfeeding support, through the implementation of the Healthy Child Programme and targeted programmes of work such as peer counsellors.
- Trained members of the local community to be breast feeding peer mentors
- Helped pregnant women to stop smoking.
- Promoted the Change 4 Life programme to all communities.
- Increased the capacity of childhood obesity management programmes.
- Worked with Healthy Schools to ensure that there is an evidence based approach in place to undertake tobacco education across each stage of the curriculum.
- Reduced the number of young people aged 15- 17 years who become pregnant.
- Promoted, protected and treated the mental and emotional health of children and young people.
- Transformed services for disabled children.

In the medium term (5-10 years) we will have:

- Developed and integrated an early intervention service to ensure prompt and timely support for children and young people with emerging mental health problems.
- Supported the delivery of parenting support programmes with a focus on improving the emotional wellbeing of children and young people.
- Provided a range of programmes within the extended services communities to give parents the skills and information they need to better manage their children's healthy weight.
- Ensured the delivery of 2 hours of physical activity per week in schools, moving towards 5 hours per week where possible.
- Increased the numbers of children using active transport to travel to school through the Enhanced Healthy Schools programme.

In the long term (10+ years) we will have:

- Enabled children and young people to lead healthy lifestyles, have good mental and emotional health and be able to make responsible decisions in relation to drugs, alcohol and sexual health.

The commitment of partner agencies in Central Bedfordshire to improving the health and wellbeing of children and young people is set out in the Central Bedfordshire Children & Young Peoples Plan, and is led by the Be Healthy Delivery Group accountable to the Children's Trust.

For full document please see [hyperlink \(add\)](#) to Children's and Young Peoples Plan.

Our priority:
Reduce health inequalities and increase healthy life expectancy

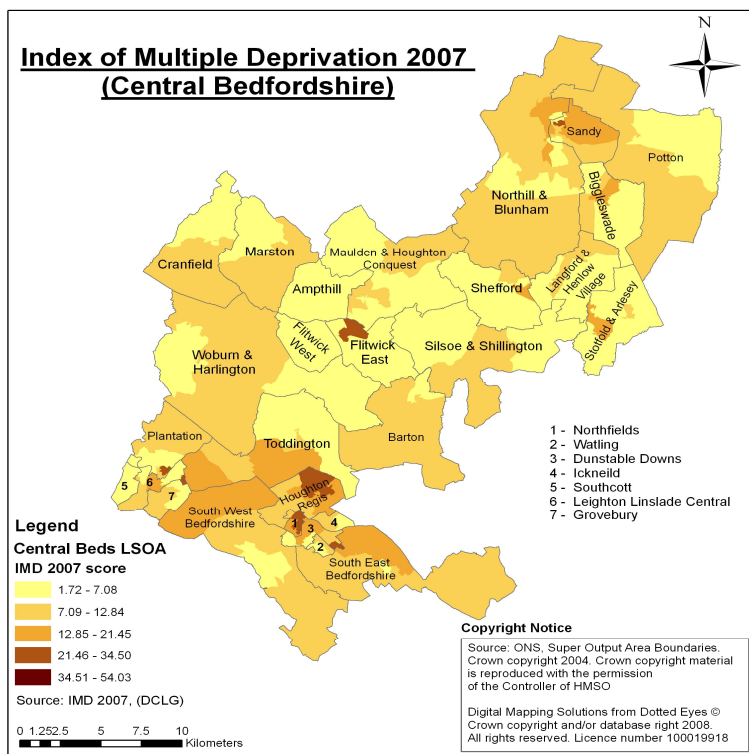
Outcome: Overall health and wellbeing is good; there are fewer health inequalities across our communities and people live more of their lives in good health.

Why it's important:

Overall health of people in Central Bedfordshire is good. The main causes of early deaths (for people aged under 75) are cancer (43%) and circulatory diseases, including heart disease and stroke (23%). This is in line with the national picture.

Although Central Bedfordshire has a higher average life expectancy than England, (life expectancy at birth is 1 year higher than the England average), the more deprived areas of the Central Bedfordshire experience significantly lower life expectancy. Current male life expectancy at birth is 5 years less in most deprived groups than least deprived groups.

These differences in our health are also likely to be seen among vulnerable groups of people: homeless people, veterans, looked after children, people with disabilities, people with mental health conditions, new migrants, asylum seekers, refugees, ethnic minorities and gypsies and travellers.



There is evidence that life expectancy is increasing at a faster rate than healthy life expectancy. If current trends continue, people are likely to spend a greater proportion of

their life living with disability or long-term illness and therefore require health and social care support.

There are a number of negative outcomes associated with teenage pregnancy, several wards in Central Bedfordshire experience high rates of teenage conception.

How we will achieve it:

In the short term (3-5 years) we will have:

- Ensured a healthy start to life by increasing access to high quality antenatal and postnatal care.
- Supported more people to stop smoking within areas of high inequalities.
- Delivered NHS Health Checks to people aged between 40 and 74.
- Increased the uptake of breast, cervical and bowel cancer screening.
- Supported more people to be more active and eat healthily.
- Trained young people who are not in employment, education or training as health trainers enabling them to gain NVQs and improve local health outcomes.
- Worked across all Thematic Partnerships to address the wider determinants of health e.g. education, housing, poverty.

In the medium term (5-10 years) we will have:

- Reduced the number of those with alcohol related illness in areas of high inequalities.
- Further strengthened Primary Care services to ensure care closer to home.
- Improved prevention and early detection for people at risk of cardiovascular disease (heart disease / stroke / diabetes), cancer and mental illness including dementia, and ensure high quality treatment once diagnosed.
- Developed social enterprise schemes to enable local people to drive improvements within their neighbourhoods.

In the long term (10+ years) we will have:

- Reduced differences in our health by focusing particularly on people in areas and communities with the poorest health.

Our Priority: **Support people to have healthier lifestyles**

Outcome: High levels of health and wellbeing of local people allows them to fully participate in the community and contribute the continued economic growth of Central Bedfordshire

Why it's important

Poor physical and mental health is associated with lower educational attainment, higher levels of unemployment and greater sickness absenteeism.

It is estimated that 29.1% of adults in the Central Bedfordshire are obese. Only 1 in 7 adults are sufficiently physically active to promote good health with 50% of people reporting taking no part in any moderate intensity activity within the past 28 days. The number of people with a mental health condition is predicted to rise. An estimated 33,500 people within Central Bedfordshire will suffer from anxiety and depression and almost 6,000 from a personality disorder by 2016.

3.2% of people are economically inactive as a result of a work-limiting illness, the main reasons being mental ill-health and musculo-skeletal disorders.

Better population level health has been demonstrated to increase the rate of economic growth by around 30%.

Alcohol is considered to be one of the issues driving criminal damage and anti-social behaviour.

How we will achieve it:

In the short term (3-5 years) we will have:

- Helped people with mental health conditions to maintain or return to work through the IAPT programme.
- Supported over 500 adults per year to access weight management programmes, particularly in more deprived areas.
- Increased the numbers of adults who are regularly physically active through the Get Back Into and Exercise Referral programmes.
- Helped all smokers to quit by providing stop smoking services which are accessible and meet the needs of younger people and their families.
- Developed an alcohol treatment pathway that is appropriate and responsive to the needs of the local population.
- Rolled out Screening and Brief advice in General Practice (IBA), and across the community.

In the medium term (5-10 years) we will have:

- Delivered the New Horizons Vision for Mental Health Programme
- Increased the number of adults and children choosing active transport as their preferred choice.
- Provided consistent high quality sex and relationships education within schools and support the development of parenting programmes which enable parents of teenagers to effectively discuss sex, relationships, drugs and alcohol issues.
- Worked with partners to produce a comprehensive communications and Social Marketing Strategy to ensure a multi-agency approach to all social marketing campaigns relating to alcohol.
- Increased the numbers of adults using active travel to their place of work within Central Bedfordshire.
- Enabled the majority of people to use active transport and the natural environment to be habitually physically active.

In the long term (10+ years) we will have:

- Reduced the number of economically inactive adults as a result of musculo-skeletal disorders through expansion of the Exercise Referral and green gym programmes.
- Reduced offending and the harm caused in our communities through substance misuse including drugs and alcohol.
- Reduced levels of adult obesity.

Our priority:

Promote choice and access to high quality services based on needs and preference

Outcome: People have more choice and access to high quality services based on their needs and preferences. Access to universal services are improved, particularly for people with more severe disabilities

Why it's important

Choice and control will ensure people have a say in how their needs are met which will maximise their independence

How we will achieve it:

In the short term (3-5 years) we will have:

- Increased access to relevant information, advice and guidance to enable users and carers to influence decisions on their care.
- Extended provision of effective reablement services which will help people to learn or re-learn the skills necessary for daily living and to maximise independence.
- Developed Personal Budgets and Personal Health Plans.

In the medium term (5-10 years) we will have:

- Improved access to quality Primary care across Central Bedfordshire specifically in areas of deprivation and in vulnerable communities.
- Ensured that there are services in place to enable patients in their final year of life to make choices about their treatment and place of death.

In the long term (10+ years) we will have:

- Integrated health and social care services to improve quality of care and efficiency.

Our priority:

Support and care for an ageing population and those who are most vulnerable

Outcome: Older people, carers and those who are vulnerable are safe and in good health, with choice and independence and have equal and timely access to high quality health and social care services.

Why it's important

Central Bedfordshire has a growing and ageing population, which is currently estimated to be 255,000 and expected to increase to 282,400 by 2021. The largest increase will be in the number of people aged 65 and above, including a doubling in the number of people aged 85+.

There were an estimated 12,697 people aged 65+ living alone and at higher risk of social isolation in Central Bedfordshire in 2008. Of these roughly 70% are women. High levels of rural living in Central Bedfordshire impact issues such as transport costs, number of changes required to get bus access to a desired location, and distances to access services. Social isolation can lead to deterioration in health.

Falls are a major cause of disability and the leading cause of mortality resulting from injury in older people. In 2009, 9,800 adults aged 65+ in Central Bedfordshire were estimated to have had a fall in the past 12 months.

There are an estimated 2,420 people currently living with dementia and 1,055 people who develop dementia each year in Central Bedfordshire. Approximately 37% are known to services. About 925 people are estimated to be at level 4 care (e.g. care homes) in Central Bedfordshire; the prevalence of dementia will rise significantly with the ageing population.

How we will achieve it:

In the short term (3-5 years) we will have:

- Introduced a range of assistive technologies including telehealth and telecare to help people remain safe in their own their own homes.
- Developed and delivered Personalisation and person-centred planning.
- Delivered against the Dementia strategy.
- Embedded safeguarding principles into all planning, commissioning and delivery services.
- Developed an accommodation strategy for older people which incorporates a range of support models such as Extra Care and reviewed current sheltered housing.

In the medium term (5-10 years) we will have:

- Good clear information to help people identify and access options available to them in their communities to meet care and support needs.
- Ensured decent home standards are met for older people.

In the long term (10+ years) we will have:

- Delivered a comprehensive Falls prevention programme across Central Bedfordshire
- Ensured that carers are supported to maintain economic wellbeing so that they can continue to live a life of their own

How we will report on progress and delivery

How we will report on progress and delivery

Central Bedfordshire Together has agreed the priorities set out in the Healthier Communities Strategy. A wide range of partners have had the opportunity to input to this strategy and are collectively committed to delivering the best possible outcomes for our residents.

There are action plans associated with the priorities within this strategy. These plans will be reported against on a quarterly basis through the Central Bedfordshire Together Board.

Partner organisations, with a focus on components of this strategy, will further develop their own strategies, giving greater detail of the contributions they will make towards delivering healthier communities within Central Bedfordshire.

This strategy will be reviewed annually and refreshed every three years.