

Kent's Older Adults and Physical Activity

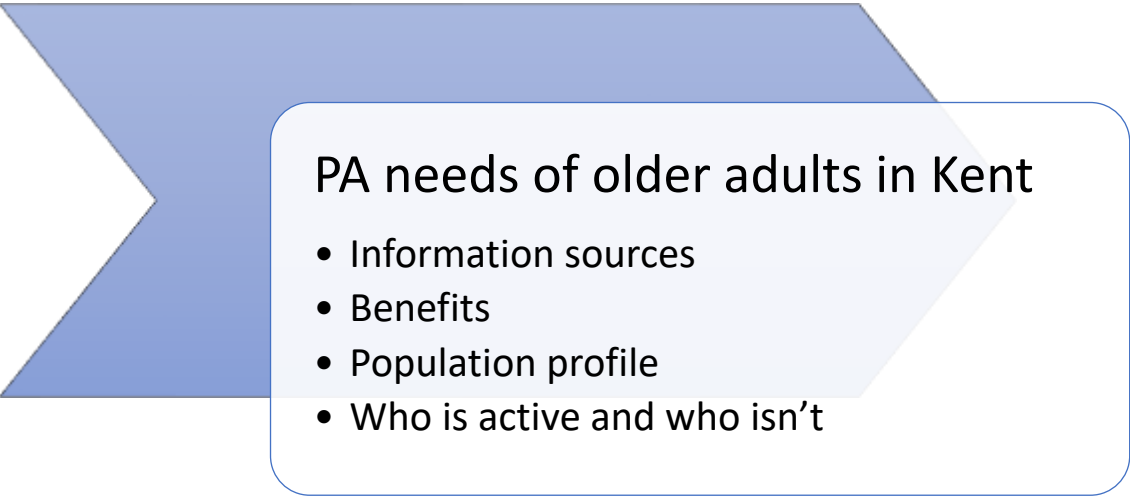
"If physical activity were a drug,
we would refer to it as a miracle cure"

UKCMO, 2019

Linda Smith, PH Specialist, KCC

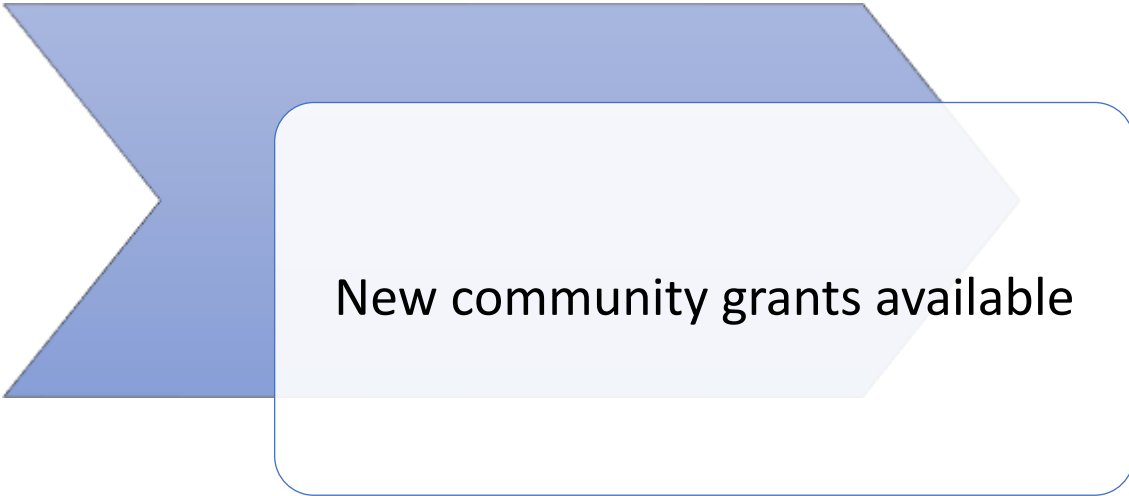
October 2025

Content



PA needs of older adults in Kent

- Information sources
- Benefits
- Population profile
- Who is active and who isn't



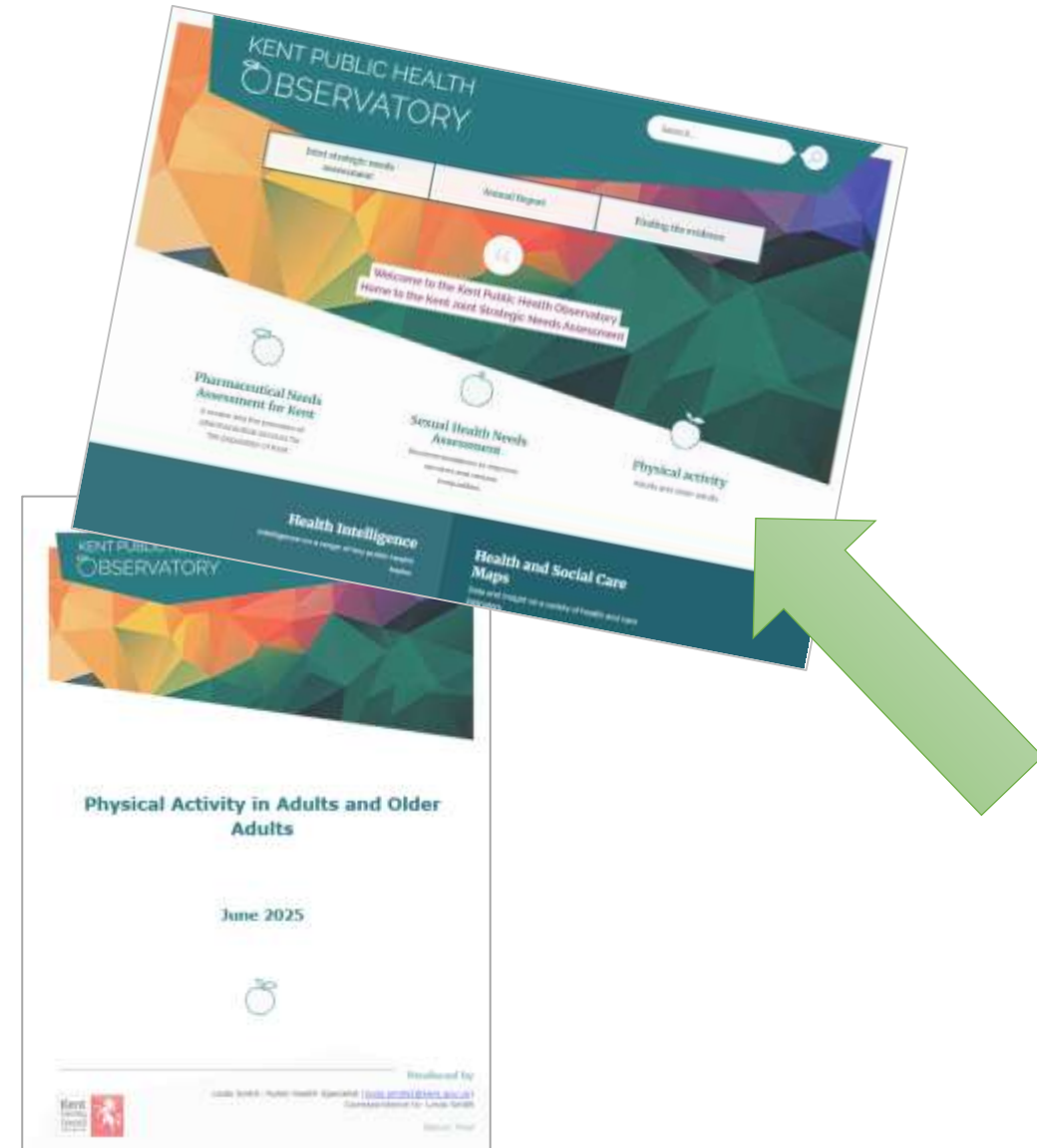
New community grants available

Population Need

Staying active as we, age isn't just important—it's **essential**. It boosts our quality of life, keeps illness and disability at bay, and helps us live well and independent for longer.

This Health Needs Assessment [HNA] Report is **your go-to guide** for making movement a part of everyday life. It shows what works, **highlights who stands to gain the most**, and spells out the support available.

It will help turn **knowledge into action**—promoting a healthier, more active society and reducing the high costs of inactivity.



Why

Stay independent for longer

Do the things you want to do

Play with grandchildren

Reduce risk of falling & negative impacts*

Better quality of life

Sleep better / less anxiety

Boost & protect health

Help with your aches and pains

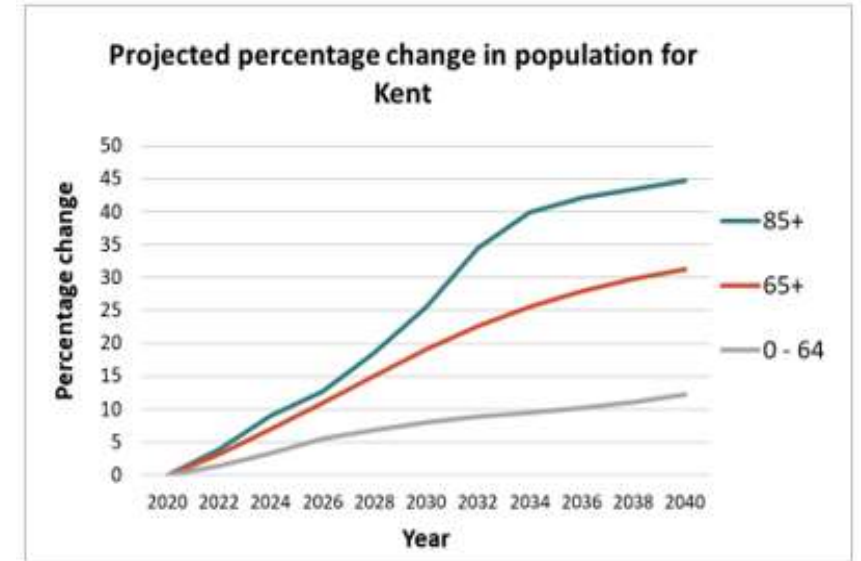
* To individuals and system related; e.g. hospital admission, care packages, costs++, poorer outcomes and quality of life, financial hardship, premature disability, death



Kent's older adults

- In 2021, on average 8% of Kent district residents were aged 50+, 40% (633,943)] of Kent's population.
- District averages were:
 - Maidstone (11%)
 - Canterbury (10%)
 - Swale (10%)
 - Thanet [9%]

The rest are between 7- 8%



ONS, [Nomis on 26 October 2023]

- Maidstone has the most residents aged between 50-64
- Canterbury has the most residents aged between 65-85
- In the future, Folkestone & Hythe, Thanet and Dover will have the highest OA dependency ratios

Who is inactive?

Levels of activity

Active: 150+ minutes a week

Nov 23-24
ADULT SURVEY

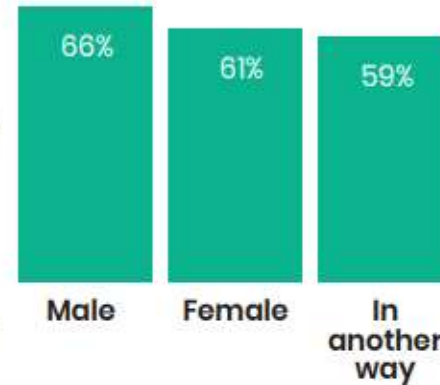


Summary of demographic differences

Our data shows there are significant inequalities:

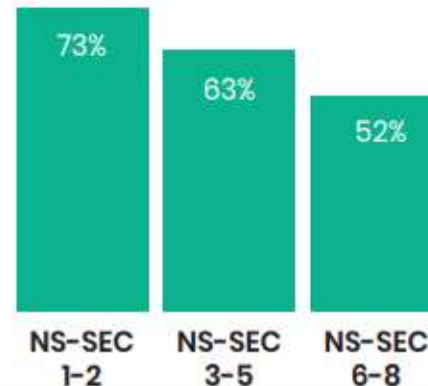
1 Gender

Men (66% or 15.1m) are more likely to be active than women (61% or 14.6m) and those who describe themselves in another way (59% or 0.2m).



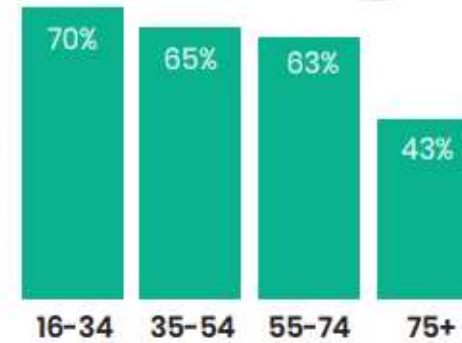
2 Socio-economic groups

Those from lower social groups (NS-SEC 6-8*) are less likely to be active (52%).



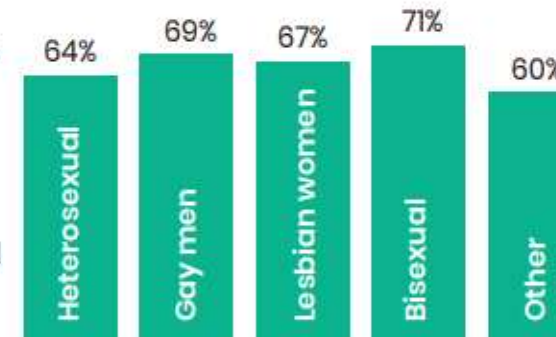
3 Age

Activity levels generally decrease with age, with the sharpest decrease coming at age 75+ (to 43%).



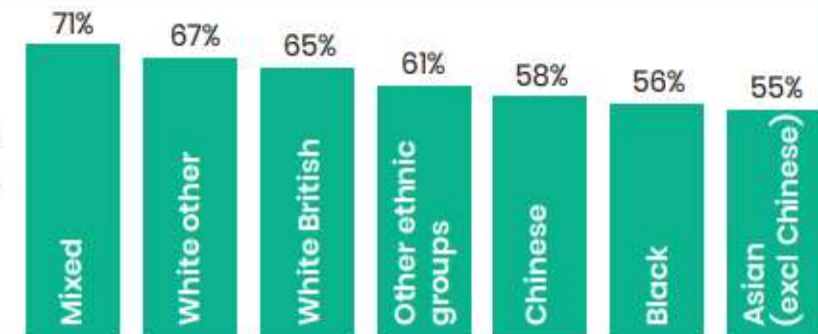
4 Sexual orientation

Gay men and bisexual adults are both more likely to be active than heterosexual adults.



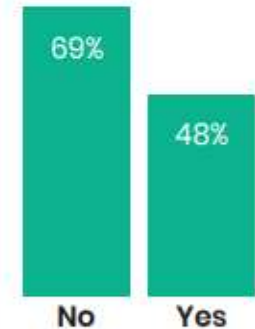
5 Ethnicity

There are differences in activity levels based on ethnic background.



6 Disability and long-term health conditions

Activity is less common for adults with a disability or long-term health condition* (48%) than for those without (69%).



[Link to data tables](#)

*See our [definitions](#) page for the full definition of

Who is inactive in Kent [2]

Same as previous demographic and some other examples include:

- Some groups and **places** are less active than others
 - E.g. women in Thanet, men in Gravesham
 - Support information will be provided for you to identify these
- Severe **Mental Illness** [SMI]
 - Poor physical health is common amongst people with SMI
 - People with SMI face one of the greatest health inequality gaps in England, with a **life expectancy 15-20 years shorter** than that of the general population.
 - It is estimated that for people with SMI, **2 in 3 deaths are from physical illnesses that can be prevented.**
- People with a **learning disability**

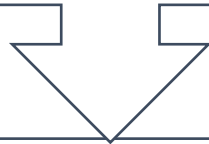
Forever Active Kent

Increasing Physical Activity in Kent for Adults Aged 50+

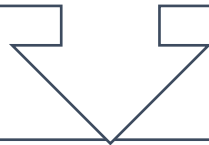
[Forever Active Kent - ActiveKent](#)

Service Vision

Priority older adults will have the information they need, with accessible, desirable and stimulating activity options closer to home



Help them to increase and maintain their strength, flexibility, balance and coordination



Reduce sedentary lifestyles to remain independent for longer, enjoy a better quality of life, and delay the onset of disability



How?

Attractive and helpful activities closer to home to keep people active and independent for longer

Spend money with local organisations where it can have the biggest impact and reach more people



Promotion



Contact e mail: foreveractivekent@kent.gov.uk



Linda Smith, PH Specialist, KCC

