

# **Living Well in Woking – a Health and Wellbeing Strategy 2021-2031**

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## Foreword

I am delighted to introduce Woking Borough Council's inaugural Health and Wellbeing Strategy. This document describes our ambition to improve the health and wellbeing of Woking residents over the next ten years and sets out the key priorities we have identified.

Although the council does not directly provide healthcare services, there are many other factors that influence people's health and wellbeing. These include how active people are, their employment status, the social support they can access and the quality of their housing. The council has a role to play in improving these wider determinants and narrowing the gap between those with the best and worst wellbeing in the borough.

The population of Woking is generally healthy, but we know that outcomes are not universally as good as they could be. In the most deprived areas of Woking, life expectancy is almost six years lower for men and over four years lower for women compared to those in the least deprived areas. We have seen the pandemic and lockdowns have a significant impact on health and we have heard from our residents that many are concerned about their mental health and wellbeing.

The pandemic has also changed the way we deliver services and I am proud of the way teams across the Council have responded flexibly to support residents during this time. Through delivery of this strategy we will build on this work with our local communities.

We cannot realise this aim alone, so it is vital that we work with a wide range of partners to deliver this strategy. These include North West Surrey Integrated Care Partnership and the numerous voluntary, community and faith organisations in Woking. We are committed to working innovatively to deliver sustainable improvements in health and wellbeing and ultimately realise our vision of everyone in Woking living a healthy and independent life.

Councillor Deborah Harlow

## Setting the scene

### *The wider determinants of health*

Health is impacted by a wide range of factors - the circumstances in which people are born, grow, live, work and age, as well as their access to and quality of the health and social care system. These wider determinants can have a positive or negative impact on health.



This influence of wider determinants has been recognised in a number of national reports. The Marmot Review<sup>1</sup> into health inequalities in England, published in February 2010, found that people living in the poorest neighbourhoods in England will on average die seven years earlier and spend more of their lives with disability. The Review found that health inequalities are largely preventable and action is required across all the social determinants of health to create the necessary conditions for people to take control of their own lives. Central to the Review is the recognition that disadvantage starts before birth and accumulates throughout life.

Unfortunately, since then the situation has become worse. Health Equity in England,<sup>2</sup> a follow up report published in 2020, found that since 2010 life expectancy in England has stalled and differences in years in ill health and life expectancy both within and between regions have tended to increase.

The NHS Long Term Plan<sup>3</sup> (LTP), published in January 2019, set out an ambitious plan to make improvements for patients over the next ten years. The LTP responded to the Marmot Review, setting out actions the NHS will take to strengthen its contribution to prevention and tackling health inequalities. The LTP committed to funding prevention programmes to cut smoking, reduce obesity, limit alcohol-related A&E admissions and lower air pollution with a particular focus on areas with health inequalities and unmet need.

The LTP priorities also included new service models, improvements in care quality and outcomes, tackling workforce pressures, and upgrading technology and digitally enabled care with a five-year funding settlement.

<sup>1</sup> <https://www.parliament.uk/globalassets/documents/fair-society-healthy-lives-full-report.pdf>

<sup>2</sup> [https://www.health.org.uk/sites/default/files/upload/publications/2020/Health%20Equity%20in%20England\\_The%20Marmot%20Review%2010%20Years%20On\\_full%20report.pdf](https://www.health.org.uk/sites/default/files/upload/publications/2020/Health%20Equity%20in%20England_The%20Marmot%20Review%2010%20Years%20On_full%20report.pdf)

<sup>3</sup> <https://www.longtermplan.nhs.uk/wp-content/uploads/2019/08/nhs-long-term-plan-version-1.2.pdf>

The LTP recognised the role that local authorities, the voluntary and community sector, and other partners working alongside NHS organisations play in improving the health of the local population. The LTP stated that Integrated Care Systems (ICSs), including representation from all these partners, will be created everywhere by April 2021 to plan and deliver services which meet the needs of local communities. The council is a key partner in the Surrey Heartlands ICS.

The LTP also emphasised the need to work alongside patients and individuals to engage them in decisions about their health and wellbeing and to deliver more person-centred care, integrating services around the individual.

The wider determinants of health have also influenced county-wide strategic approaches. In 2019, the Surrey Health and Wellbeing Board published a ten-year **Health and Wellbeing Strategy**<sup>4</sup>. Based on evidence from the Surrey Joint Strategic Needs Assessment and the views of Surrey residents, the strategy set out how different partners across Surrey can work with local communities to tackle the wider determinants of health and improve wellbeing together.

The strategy was focused around three key priorities: helping people in Surrey to lead a healthy life; supporting the mental health and emotional wellbeing of people in Surrey; and supporting people to fulfil their potential. The strategy emphasised the importance of working together within local communities to transform services across Surrey to achieve these aims. Rather than focusing on just the symptoms of ill health, it adopted a preventative approach to addressing root causes of poor health and wellbeing. These include factors such as poor housing and the environment.

A partnership approach is also evident in **Time for Kids**, a new approach and perspective to guide agencies working with children, young people and their families in Surrey. This work was initiated in 2019 by the voluntary sector in Surrey, via Surrey Youth Focus and has involved a ‘think tank’ approach including the police, NHS, local authorities, schools and children and young people. Time for Kids has five core principles:

- Focus on human connection with a child, with patience and passion, to achieve the very best for all children and young people;
- Enable professionals and volunteers working with children and young people to have the time and resources to provide stability and earn the child/young person’s trust;
- Encourage young people to tell their story, to listen, believe and help the young person to make the changes they need to develop hope for their future;
- Find ways to build on the individual strengths of each child whatever they might be and help them to shine; and
- Believe in the child or young person and what they can achieve.

Partnership working is also at the heart of the **North West Surrey Integrated Care Partnership** (NWS ICP). ICPs have formed across Surrey Heartlands, bringing together health, local government and wider partners to utilise their collective resources and expertise for the ultimate benefit of local people.

Figure 1: Map showing Integrated Care Partnerships in Surrey

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<sup>4</sup> [https://www.healthysurrey.org.uk/data/assets/pdf\\_file/0007/197530/Surrey-Health-and-Wellbeing-Strategy-FINAL-19.11.20.pdf](https://www.healthysurrey.org.uk/data/assets/pdf_file/0007/197530/Surrey-Health-and-Wellbeing-Strategy-FINAL-19.11.20.pdf)



In December 2020 the NWS ICP partners, including the council, adopted an Alliance Agreement setting out a shared vision, value set and objectives, as well as a framework for the collective oversight of resources and decision making. The objectives of the Alliance are:

- To help people to prevent ill health and manage their own care;
- To reduce health inequalities, using our collective resources to support those with the highest need and deliver excellent outcomes for all North West Surrey residents;
- To deliver planned, responsive, joined up health and care services;
- To create a culture of excellence and a supportive environment for our staff;
- To deliver innovative solutions supported by technological and digital infrastructure;
- To provide services as close to people’s homes as possible;
- To create One Team to facilitate the best holistic care and to attract and retain the best talent;
- To reduce duplication and waste;
- To reconsider the way we invest our resources, focusing on prevention and the wider determinants of health outcomes;
- To work with local communities to build new forms of partnership between the public sector, local citizens, community groups, the voluntary sector and local business; and
- To develop a vibrant, sustainable Alliance between partner organisations.

The NWS Health and Care Alliance Board oversees delivery of the Alliance agenda and objectives. The council’s Chief Executive is a member of the Alliance Board. NWS ICP has agreed three key priorities as part of their response to the pandemic:

- Looking after our people through effective decompression and effective long-term support – sustained wellbeing support approach and strategy for our people;
- Restoring critical services – getting ahead on key pressure points e.g. diagnostics, system approach to sharing capacity and tackling key challenges including mental health, children and widening inequalities; and
- Embedding innovation – sustained structure for vaccination, embedding digital models and embracing the health and public sector role in socio-economic development.

Delivery of these recover priorities will support the longer-term priorities agreed in January 2021 by the Alliance Board:

- Place Based Teams around Primary Care Networks<sup>5</sup>;
- Frailty, local hubs and community response;
- Integrated discharge; and
- Service configuration and borough developments.

On an even more local level, the Woking **Redeeming Our Communities** conversation<sup>6</sup>, commissioned by Trinity Methodist Church as part of its Foundry Project, held a well-attended engagement event in March 2020 and identified the following as the top three community issues: provision of activities for youth, isolation/loneliness, and mental health.

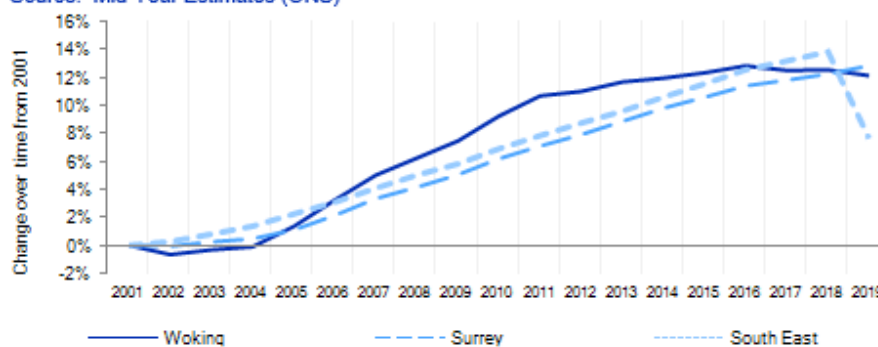
The importance of the wider determinants and their impact on the health of local communities is increasingly recognised beyond the health and care sector by national and regional bodies. For example, **Creating Healthier Built Environments**, Surrey County Council’s Guidance for Health and Local Planning published in January 2020, was specifically developed to support and enable health and planning colleagues to share planning policy that addresses public health issues and embed health and wellbeing into planning policies and decisions.

The guidance focuses on two elements of planning and health. One is the creation of healthy environments that support and encourage healthy lifestyles and consider the wider determinants of health. The other is identifying and securing appropriate local health infrastructure to support the health and care system.

### *A picture of Woking now*

Woking is one of 11 districts and boroughs in the county of Surrey<sup>7</sup>. It has a population of 100,793 across ten wards, which has plateaued in recent years following an above average increase from 2006 – 2015. Of the total population, 50.0% are male and 50.0% are female.

Figure: % change in total population from 2001-2019  
Source: Mid-Year Estimates (ONS)



Woking has a slightly younger population profile than both England and the South East region. Of the Woking population, 21.6% are aged 0 to 15 (South East: 19.2%, England: 19.2%), 61.1% are aged 16 to 64 (South East: 61.3%, England 62.4%) and 17.3% are aged 65 and over (South East: 19.5%, England: 18.4%).

<sup>5</sup> Primary Care Networks bring general practices together to work at scale (covering populations of approximately 30,000-50,000 patients), focusing on service delivery.

<sup>6</sup> <https://roc.uk.com/woking/>

<sup>7</sup> Throughout this document ‘Woking’ is used to refer to the borough of Woking (as opposed to the town of Woking).

However, in common with the rest of the country, Woking has an ageing population and the over 65 population is expected to increase by 3,900, more than 20%, in the next ten years.

Woking is the most ethnically diverse borough in Surrey, with a large Pakistani community (5.7% - the highest proportion in Surrey). In 2011, 83.6% of Woking's population identified themselves as white, 11.6% as Asian or Asian British, 1.4% as black or black British, 2.4% as mixed and 1.1% as other ethnic group.

Woking has the biggest Syrian Refugee Resettlement programme in the South East region. 50 Syrian families have been resettled in Woking over the last five years through the Home Office Vulnerable Person's Relocation Scheme. The council provides housing and intensive support for resettlement including health needs, benefits, employment, language training and social integration.

In March 2021 it was announced that Woking was top of the UK Vitality Index 2021<sup>8</sup> which assesses locations outside London to identify the best places to live, work and do business, in addition to those with the highest growth potential. The index incorporates a range of indicators including economy, business, health outcomes and the environment. Woking has also scored highly in other rankings, earning a spot among the happiest places in the UK, according to the Office for National Statistics, while the most recent Halifax Quality of Life Survey named Woking among the 20 best places to live in Britain.

### *The health of Woking*

The health of people in Woking is generally better than the English average. The life expectancy for both men and women is higher than the average for England – in Woking, life expectancy at birth for males is 82.7 years (compared to 80.8 for the South East region and 79.8 for England) and for females is 84.9 years (compared to 84.3 for the South East region and 83.4 for England).

However, there are health inequalities – differences between the health status of different groups of people – in Woking. In the most deprived areas of Woking, life expectancy is 5.7 years lower for men and 4.6 years lower for women than in the least deprived areas. This is, however, less pronounced than in the South East region generally (7.9 and 6.0 years respectively) and England as a whole (9.5 and 7.5 years respectively).

The Covid-19 pandemic has brought health inequalities into sharp focus. A Public Health England report<sup>9</sup> published in June 2020 found that the impact of Covid-19 has replicated existing health inequalities, and in some cases has increased them. Nationally, the mortality rates from Covid-19 in the most deprived areas were more than double those in the least deprived areas for both males and females. This is greater than the inequality seen in mortality rates in previous years.

Woking performs well for most other measures of physical health - the infant mortality rate of 3.7 is in line with the South East region (3.7) and lower than England (3.9) and the under 75 mortality rate from cardiovascular diseases (46.8) is better than the averages for the South East region (57.1) and England (70.4), as is the under 75 mortality rate from cancer (110.6 in Woking compared to 121.6 in South East region and 129.2 in England). As the chart below

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<sup>8</sup> <https://www.lsh.co.uk/explore/research-and-views/research/2021/feb/vitality-index-2021>

<sup>9</sup>

[https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/908434/Disparities\\_in\\_the\\_risk\\_and\\_outcomes\\_of\\_COVID\\_August\\_2020\\_update.pdf](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/908434/Disparities_in_the_risk_and_outcomes_of_COVID_August_2020_update.pdf)

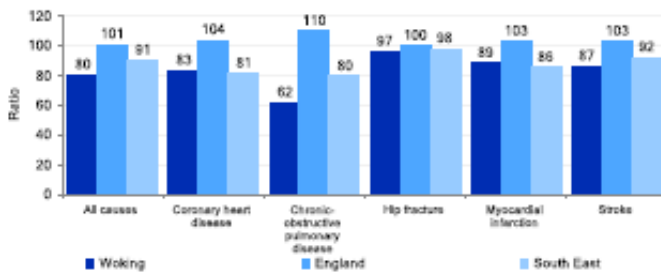


shows, Woking had a lower emergency admission rate to hospital than other areas in England and the South East from 2013 – 2018.

Figure: Emergency hospital admissions: Standardised ratio (select causes)

Source: Hospital Episode Statistics, Information Centre for Health and Social Care, Office for National Statistics (2013/14 – 2017/18)

If an area is above 100, there is a higher proportion of admissions than had been expected. If it is below 100, there is a lower proportion of admissions than expected.



However, the estimated prevalence of diabetes in Woking is 5.7%, higher than the Surrey average of 5.4% and broadly in line with the national average of 6.8%. As highlighted in the Government’s White Paper **Working Together To Improve Health and Social Care For All** published in February 2021, diabetes is on the rise. The rate of diabetes in England is expected to increase by more than 15% by 2030.

There are over 14 million disabled people in the UK. Into this group fall 19% of working age adults, 44% of pensioners and 8% of children. Woking is the district/borough in Surrey with the highest percentage of adults claiming Disability Living Allowance (1.7% compared to 1.5% Surrey average). The top three wards for disability benefit claims are Hoe Valley, Goldsworth Park and Knaphill. The council’s Homelink service has seen an increase in the number of clients with mobility issues as a result of the pandemic.

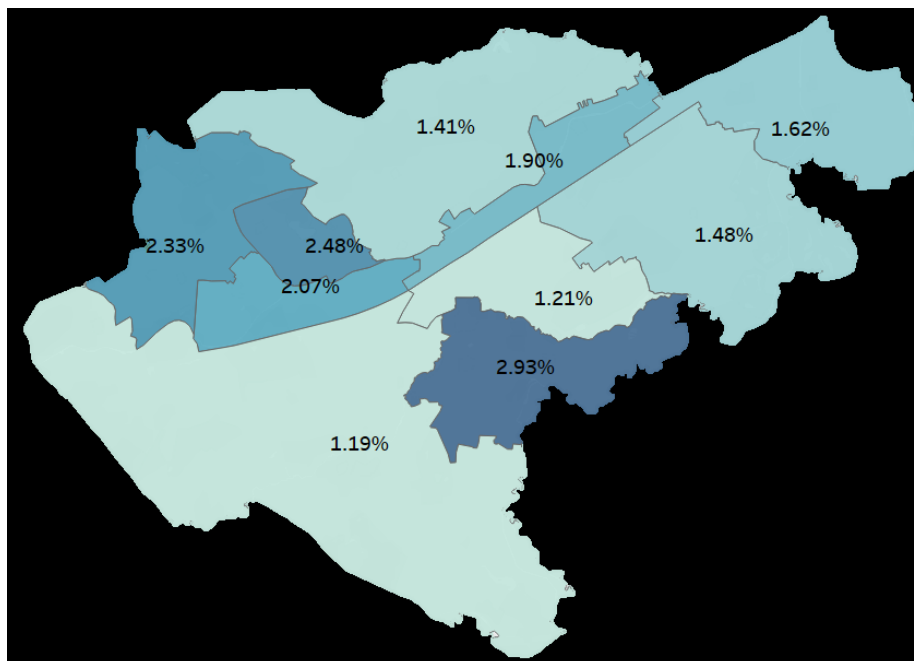


Figure 2: Shows proportion of people who are disabled and receiving Disability Living Allowance (DLA) Source: Department for Work and Pensions – February 2021

Woking has the second highest rate in Surrey for children with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) in Year R (aged 4-5 years) at 79.1 per 1,000 compared to the Surrey average of 55.3. At Year 6 (aged 10-11 years) the rate in Woking of 108.1 is slightly below the Surrey average of 109.6.

Surrey County Council's Graduated Response<sup>10</sup>, also known as 'SEND Support', provides an approach for early identification and intervention to support children who experience barriers in making progress. This 'staged' approach follows a four-part cycle - assess, plan, do and review – and sets out how services in Surrey work together with parents/carers, schools and settings to improve outcomes for children and young people with SEND.

In terms of mental health, the rate for self-harm related hospital admissions in Woking is 106.4 (representing 100 admissions per year), lower than the average for both the South East region (199.7) and England (193.4). Similarly, Woking's suicide rate of 8.0 per 100,000 people is lower than that of the South East region (9.6) and England (10.1). Males account for around 75% of suicide deaths, with 45-60 being the highest risk age group. The Surrey Suicide Prevention Strategy 2019-22 aims to reduce levels of suicide by 10% by 2021.

Mental health problems are distributed according to a gradient of economic disadvantage i.e. the poorer and more disadvantaged are more likely to be affected by a mental illness.

Nationally, one in six adults experiences a common mental health problem such as anxiety or depression. The estimated prevalence of common mental disorders in Woking is lower compared to the South East region and England for both the population aged 16 and over (England: 16.9%, South East region: 14.8%, Woking: 13.1%) and the population aged 65 and over (England: 10.2%, South East region: 9.2%, Woking: 7.9%).

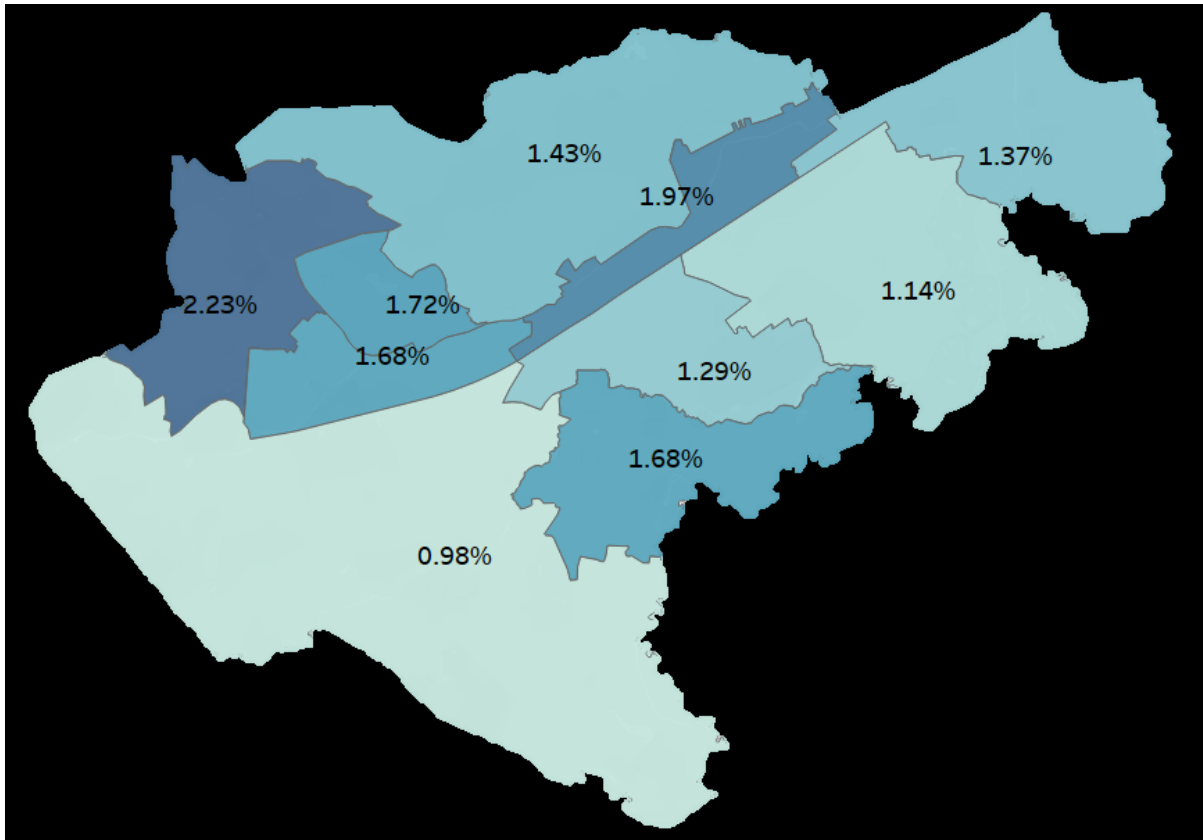
However, Woking has a slightly higher percentage of adults claiming incapacity benefit for mental health issues (1.6% of all incapacity benefit claimants) compared to the rest of Surrey (1.5%), ranking joint second out of the 11 borough and districts in Surrey. It should be noted that this is lower than the England average of 2.3% and no Woking wards fall above this national average. The top three wards for mental health incapacity benefit are Knaphill<sup>11</sup> (2.2%), Canalside (2.0%) and Goldsworth Park (1.7%), as show in the map below.

Figure 3: Claimants of Incapacity Benefit who are claiming due to mental health related conditions Source: Department for Work and Pensions – May 2020

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<sup>10</sup> <https://www.surreylocaloffer.org.uk/kb5/surrey/localoffer/site.page?id=6soPrqlr3vA>

<sup>11</sup> Brookwood Asylum in Knaphill was the leading mental hospital in West Surrey until its closure in 1994. Many former residents chose to stay in the area.



The trend for those claiming Incapacity Benefit due to mental health has remained largely flat across the last 10 years.

Mental health has been identified as a particular issue in young people. In 2020, Redeeming Our Communities undertook a survey of more than 150 young people in Woking. When asked what the biggest issue was in Woking, the main response was mental health, followed by a lack of things to do / being bored and bullying in school, online and through phone and text messages. During the past year, 73% of young people surveyed had experienced anxiety, 40% had felt isolation, 37% had periods of sustained mental health illness and depression, 24% had suffered from self-harm, and 8% said their long-term mental health had been affected by a disability.

The lockdowns as a result of the pandemic have had a significant impact on mental health and social isolation. The UCL COVID-19 Social Study published in February 2021 found that anxiety and depression levels are consistently higher than pre-pandemic averages. The ONS report **Coronavirus and the Social Impacts on Great Britain**, published in November 2020, found that restrictions on socialising have had an impact on people's wellbeing and mental health with nearly half of adults (49%) reporting boredom, loneliness, anxiety or stress arising due to the pandemic. In November 2020 Surrey County Council published a Covid-19 Community Impact Assessment<sup>12</sup> which found that 58% of Woking residents were concerned about their mental health and wellbeing for the following six months. This figure is 11% higher than the Surrey average and the highest of the districts and boroughs in Surrey.

A social prescribing survey of 29 link workers and wellbeing advisers across Surrey in January 2021 found that the most common issues being experienced by clients were mental

<sup>12</sup> <https://www.surreyi.gov.uk/covid-impacts/>

health and emotional support, and social interaction or loneliness. An ONS survey<sup>13</sup> between October 2020 and February 2021 found that 6.58% of people in Woking often or always felt lonely, compared to 6.17% in Surrey and 7.26% in England.

The mental health impact of the pandemic on children and young people has been widely reported. In July 2020 NHS Digital undertook a survey<sup>14</sup> of the mental health of children and young people across England, a follow-up to a 2017 survey. This latest survey found that rates of probable mental disorder in children aged 5 - 16 years have increased from one in nine (10.8%) in 2017 to one in six (16.0%) in 2020. The likelihood of a probable mental disorder increased with age, and there was a noticeable difference in gender for the older age group (17 - 22 years); 27.2% of young women and 13.3% of young men were identified as having a probable mental disorder in 2020.

Dementia is now the leading cause of death in the UK. 1.29% of the Woking population (which equates to 1,370 people)<sup>15</sup> is living with dementia. This is broadly in line with the UK average of 1.29%. The number of people with dementia is predicted to rise by up to 35% by 2025 and 146% by 2050.

The remainder of this chapter summaries the wider determinants of health and key services and facilities in Woking with a more detailed analysis in Appendix B.

### Health behaviours

	HEADLINES	KEY SERVICES AND FACILITIES
SMOKING	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>7.6% of adults in Woking smoke, lower than both Surrey (12.2%) and England (13.9%)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>One You Surrey provides smoking cessation services across the county</li> </ul>
DIET	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Obesity prevalence (8.5%) – highest rate in Surrey</li> <li>Childhood obesity rates higher than Surrey averages</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>'Be Your Best' weight management programme (Surrey wide)</li> <li>Foodwise</li> <li>Foodbanks</li> </ul>
EXERCISE	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Over a quarter of adults and almost a third of children do less than 30 minutes moderate intensity physical activity a week</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Leisure facilities, sports clubs</li> <li>Cycle routes</li> </ul>

<sup>13</sup>

<https://www.ons.gov.uk/peoplepopulationandcommunity/wellbeing/datasets/lonelinessratesandwellbeingindicatorbylocalauthority>

<sup>14</sup> <https://digital.nhs.uk/data-and-information/publications/statistical/mental-health-of-children-and-young-people-in-england/2020-wave-1-follow-up>

<sup>15</sup> [https://app.polimapper.co.uk/?dataSetKey=38d03a57d2f948c8b577839a1cf16543#\\_=&con\\_over=Woking](https://app.polimapper.co.uk/?dataSetKey=38d03a57d2f948c8b577839a1cf16543#_=&con_over=Woking)

ALCOHOL	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Rate for alcohol-related harm admissions lower than Surrey and England</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• i-access drug and alcohol service (Surrey wide)</li> </ul>
SEXUAL HEALTH	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Rate of new STIs lower than Surrey and England</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Sexual Health Clinic at Woking Community Hospital (commissioned by Public Health)</li> </ul>

*Socio economic factors*

	HEADLINES	KEY SERVICES AND FACILITIES
EDUCATION	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Average 8 attainment score better than both Surrey and England</li> <li>• % of working age population qualified to at least Level 2 or higher is above South East average</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Surrey County Council is responsible for education – 30+ primary schools, 10 secondary schools, 4 further education institutions</li> </ul>
EMPLOYMENT	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Historically, unemployment has been below national average but slightly higher than Surrey</li> <li>• Youth unemployment 7.7% vs 5.8% in Surrey</li> <li>• Pandemic has had an impact and will continue to do so</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Economic Growth Strategy</li> <li>• Strategy with Department for Work and Pensions for youth training and skills development</li> </ul>
INCOME	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Woking is one of the 20% least deprived districts/unitary authorities in England</li> <li>• 9.7% of children live in low income families (Surrey: 12.9%)</li> </ul>	
FAMILY AND SOCIAL SUPPORT	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Over 14,000 single person households</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Family Centres and Family Support Programme</li> <li>• Targeted youth-work</li> <li>• Centres for the Community</li> <li>• Volunteer management and charity support</li> <li>• Social prescribing</li> <li>• Carers support</li> </ul>

COMMUNITY SAFETY	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Overall Woking is a safe place.</li> <li>• Rates of violent crime above south east average and rate of anti-social behaviour above Surrey and England averages</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Safer Woking Partnership</li> <li>• Woking Street Angels</li> <li>• Your Sanctuary</li> </ul>
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### *Environment*

	HEADLINES	KEY SERVICES AND FACILITIES
ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Over 15% of Woking is green space, higher than Surrey and England</li> <li>• Air pollutants in line with Surrey and England</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Woking 2050</li> <li>• Climate Emergency Action Plan</li> <li>• Planet Woking</li> <li>• Natural Woking</li> </ul>
BUILT ENVIRONMENT	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Increasing house prices</li> <li>• Rents above Housing Benefit</li> <li>• Need for affordable homes</li> <li>• Overcrowding above Surrey average</li> <li>• Increase in homeless households</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Sheerwater regeneration programme</li> <li>• Housing strategy</li> <li>• Planning approach considers health and wellbeing</li> <li>• Wide range of services to support people in own homes: Independent Support Service, HomeSafe Plus, Handyperson Service, Community Meals, Careline, Woking Independence Show Home, Homelink, Falls Responder Service, Woking Safer Living and Independence Consultancy Clinic, Home2Home Service</li> </ul>

### *Clinical care*

Physical and mental health and care services are provided by a range of organisations including NHS providers, Surrey County Council and the voluntary and community sector.

Although the Council has limited influence over the quality of clinical care, it can and does influence access to clinical care, for example through the provision of space for health services in the local community and ensuring transport provides easy access to health services.

- In November 2020 outpatient physiotherapy services were relocated from Ashford and St Peter's Hospital to five new physio rooms at Woking Leisure Centre to

improve access, provide the opportunity to link recovery programmes with exercise at the gym and encourage local residents to access facilities and activities they may never have done before.

In addition, the stigma in relation to mental health issues can prevent people from seeking help and the Council can play a role in reducing this.

- In 2019, Woking was recognised by the Alzheimer's Society as the first Dementia Friendly Community in Surrey.

## Our priorities

We have identified five key priorities to address the main challenges and inequalities set out in the previous chapter. These priorities will guide us to deliver our vision for the health and wellbeing of the Woking population:

### “Everyone in Woking lives a healthy and independent life”

#### 1. **We will support, and wherever possible improve, the mental health of people in Woking.**

Mental health is a positive state of mind and body, feeling safe and able to cope, with a sense of connection with people, communities and the wider environment<sup>16</sup>. Our mental health influences our physical health, as well as our capability to lead a healthy lifestyle and to manage and recover from physical health conditions. Mental health was a strong theme from the staff workshops (see Engagement chapter) and is aligned with the Surrey Health and Wellbeing Strategy which has “supporting the mental health and emotional wellbeing of people in Surrey” as one of its three priorities.

We will seek to prevent poor mental health and support people with mental health needs, including dementia, learning disabilities, autism and substance misuse. We will achieve this by ensuring that our services are inclusive and accessible by signposting people with mental health needs to other services that will assist them in accessing the appropriate help and resources, and by creating communities and environments that support good mental health.

*“There are lots of really good charities and services available to people, but it is hard to know when or how to refer people and what services are right for the situation.”*  
(WBC staff member)

Mental health is a priority for our **whole population**. In addition, we have identified **children and young adults** as a particular focus group because of the increasing number of children experiencing mental health problems and the strong association between experiencing mental health problems in childhood and then in adulthood<sup>17</sup>. Delivery of this priority is likely to involve working with families.

Our objective is to improve overall mental health and ensure that those with mental health issues feel supported.

#### 2. **We will identify and support people experiencing social isolation and loneliness in Woking.**

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<sup>16</sup>

[https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/138253/dh\\_124058.pdf](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/138253/dh_124058.pdf)

<sup>17</sup> Research shows that around half of all lifetime mental health problems start by mid-teens, and three-quarters by the mid-20s.



Loneliness and social isolation are different but related concepts. Loneliness is a subjective feeling about the gap between a person's desired levels of social contact and their actual level of social contact. It refers to the perceived quality of a person's relationships. Social isolation is a lack of social connections. It is an objective measure of the quantity (not quality) of relationships. People may choose to have a small number of contacts.<sup>18</sup> People can become socially isolated for a variety of reasons including leaving the workplace, the deaths of spouses and friends or through disability, illness or ageing.

People can be isolated (alone) yet not feel lonely. People can be surrounded by other people, yet still feel lonely. We will therefore seek to increase opportunities for people to meet or speak (to reduce social isolation) as well as helping build, maintain and re-establish meaningful relationships to combat loneliness.

Again, this priority aligns with the Surrey Health and Wellbeing Strategy which states, in relation to its priority of mental health and emotional wellbeing, that it will be focusing on "preventing isolation and enabling support for those who do feel isolated". Social isolation and loneliness also emerged as themes in the staff workshops.

We have identified **older people** as a focus group because there is strong evidence that many adults aged 50 and over are socially isolated or lonely in ways that put their health at risk. Within this focus group, we will consider interventions that target specific cohorts as we understand these interventions can be more successful<sup>19</sup> and have heard from staff that there are some gaps in existing services.

*"We are short of ways of engaging with certain people, for example, single men or father-only families."*

*(WBC staff member)*

We have also noted the emerging evidence of the impact this pandemic and lockdowns have had on social isolation and loneliness in other groups (for example, males living alone where we have seen a significant increase in social prescribing referrals). However, we propose that as part of the strategy review (see Governance chapter) we consider the longer term impacts of the pandemic before determining whether we need to include any additional focus groups within this priority.

Our objective is to reduce the number of people experiencing social isolation and loneliness in Woking. This will include identifying people in Woking who are socially isolated or lonely so that they can be supported.

*"We need to join up more with partners to find those who are isolated and get the community back on board."*

*(WBC staff member)*

### 3. We will reduce obesity rates in Woking.

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<sup>18</sup> <https://www.ageuk.org.uk/our-impact/policy-research/loneliness-research-and-resources/loneliness-isolation-understanding-the-difference-why-it-matters/>

<sup>19</sup> See 'key considerations linked to the known evidence base' at <https://www.calderdale.gov.uk/v2/residents/health-and-social-care/joint-strategic-needs-assessment/older-people/loneliness-and-social#key-considerations>

Obesity is a significant issue in Woking. We will tackle it by focusing on the main causes of obesity – poor diet and low levels of physical activity. This is aligned with the Surrey Health and Wellbeing Strategy which has as one of its three priorities “helping people in Surrey to lead healthy lives” stating that it will focus on “working to reduce obesity and excess weight rates and physical inactivity.” The white paper published in February 2021 also references the importance of active lives.

We have identified **children** as a focus group. Children who are overweight or living with obesity are much more likely to become adults living with obesity and have a higher risk of morbidity, disability and premature mortality in adulthood. We will also focus on **pregnant women and parents** as influencers of children and young people.

**Canalside, Goldsworth Park and Hoe Valley** are outliers in relation to the proportion of overweight and obese children and adults and inactive adults compared to the rest of the borough. We have therefore identified them as focus wards.

Our objective is to increase the proportion of children who have a healthy weight and are active.

#### **4. We will empower residents to live independent lives.**

We will provide services that support people to live as independently as possible, do so, ideally in their own homes. This is aligned with the Surrey Health and Wellbeing Strategy which states, in relation to its priority of healthy lives, that it will focus on “helping people to live independently for as long as possible and to die well.” The white paper published in February 2021 sets out a vision for helping people live more independent lives for longer.

We have identified **older people (65+)** as a focus group because this is the largest group most at risk of a decline in their independence (due to ageing). It is also a growing group.

Our objective is to support residents to live independently, whilst retaining connection to their communities, for as long as possible.

#### **5. We will support the wellbeing of carers.**

We will support carers in a way that enables them to continue their important caring responsibilities and minimises the impact of these duties on their own physical and mental health. Carers are under-recognised, yet the value of unpaid care in the UK is roughly equivalent to the annual budget of the NHS.

This priority is aligned with the Surrey Health and Wellbeing Strategy which identifies young and adult carers as a specific target group.

We will support **all carers, including young carers**, with the objective of improving their wellbeing.

We have developed a plan which sets out the key actions for 2021/22 against each of the priorities, see Appendix A. In developing this plan we have been mindful of the following principles:

- **Supporting diversity and inclusion** – we have sought to identify actions which will be accessible to the different communities across our borough;
- **Partnership working** – we recognise that we cannot address the wider determinants of health alone and will build on our collaborative work with public sector partners, (including the voluntary, community and faith sectors) to harness the skills, expertise, assets and goodwill of local communities. Staff workshops highlighted an appetite for more effective partnership working and our action plan includes key opportunities we have identified to collaborate with partners in delivering this strategy;
- **Resident engagement** – engaging with our residents in a meaningful way will be critical to the success of this strategy and we have set out our planned approach in the Engagement chapter;
- **Building on our strengths** – in staff workshops we heard how valued our holistic, person-centred approach is by our residents. We also know we have assets, such as our Centres for the Community, which could be better utilised to support health and wellbeing and have considered this in developing our action plan; and
- **Utilising digital approaches where appropriate** – in developing our action plan we have considered opportunities to provide digital services to our residents to improve their health and wellbeing. This will be supported by the council's Digital Transformation Strategy which will include a Connected Citizens programme to ensure that all residents, businesses and visitors of Woking have access to the internet and council-operated digital services. In developing any digital support for health and wellbeing we will consider design, awareness, staff capability and capacity and digital inclusion initiatives such as access through alternative channels (telephone, face to face) and help from others to use online services.

We have identified effective internal communications as a key enabler in delivery of this strategy. Staff workshops identified that not all staff were aware of all the ways in which the council can support the health and wellbeing of its residents and as a result signposting opportunities can be missed. The action plan recognises that internal communications are the responsibility of everyone working for the council and includes activities to strengthen internal communications to support delivery of this strategy.

## Metrics

For each of our priorities we have identified the key metrics we will track to understand the impact of our strategy.

Priority	Focus groups / areas	Metric	Source	Baseline data (period)	Frequency of data release (next data release due)
Mental health	Whole population	Self-reported measure of anxiety where 0 is 'not at all anxious' and 10 is 'completely anxious'.	Office for National Statistics Annual Population Survey <sup>20</sup>	3.61 (2019/20)	Annual (To be announced – 2019/20 data was released in July 2020)
	Children and young adults	% of secondary school pupils responding that they worry about at least one of the issues listed 'quite a lot' or 'a lot'.	Health Related Behaviour Questionnaire <sup>21</sup>	The sample sizes historically have not been large enough to breakdown at a district / borough level	Every two years (data will next be collected in September 2021 and is expected to be published in January 2022)
Social isolation and loneliness	Older people	% of older people reporting that they feel lonely 'often' or 'always'.	National dataset <sup>22</sup> is a small sample (140 people in Woking), cannot be broken down by age group at a local authority level and is not currently intended to be collected regularly. It is therefore proposed that we utilise the Residents' Panel to collect data on loneliness in Woking.	To be collected in Q3 2021/22	Annual
Obesity	Children and young people, pregnant women and parents	Rate of childhood obesity in Year R (aged 4 to 5)	National Child Measurement Programme <sup>23</sup>	Woking: 7.3% (2019/20) (ward level data not available)	Note: the programme has been paused since April 2020 and no data will be available for 2020/21. The programme is restarting in May 2021 but the sample sizes may not be large
		Rate of childhood obesity in Year 6 (aged 10 to 11)		Woking: 15.9% Canalside: 20.6% Goldsworth Park: 19.4% Hoe Valley: 17.1% (2019/20)	

Priority	Focus groups / areas	Metric	Source	Baseline data (period)	Frequency of data release (next data release due)
	Canalside, Goldsworth Park and Hoe Valley				enough to breakdown at a local authority level and therefore data for Woking may not be available until 2022/23.
		% of inactive children	Active Lives children and young people survey <sup>24</sup>	Woking: 28.8% (2017/18) (ward level data not available)	Annual (released in December). 2017/18 is the most recent dataset with a large enough sample size to be broken down at a district/borough level. Active Surrey is working with schools to maximise the number running the survey with their pupils and hopes to increase sample sizes so that data can once again be broken down at a district/borough level in the future.
		% of inactive adults	Active Lives adult survey <sup>25</sup>	Woking: 28.0% (data gathered mid-November 2019 to mid-November 2020)	Twice a year (May data released the following October and November)

<sup>20</sup> <https://www.ons.gov.uk/peoplepopulationandcommunity/wellbeing/datasets/headlineestimatesofpersonalwellbeing>

<sup>21</sup> Surrey data can be found at <https://www.surreyi.gov.uk/dataset/23k5j/health-related-behaviour-questionnaire>. Breakdown for schools in Woking obtained from SCC. Issues listed in the survey: school, your health, your career, relationships with friends, relationships between parents/carers in your family, relationships between children and parents/carers in your family, relationships with boyfriends/girlfriends, the way you look, HIV/AIDs, puberty and growing up, thinking you are gay/lesbian/bisexual, crime and being bullied.

<sup>22</sup> ONS Opinions and Lifestyle Survey <https://www.ons.gov.uk/peoplepopulationandcommunity/wellbeing/datasets/lonelinessratesandwellbeingindicatorsbylocalauthority>

<sup>23</sup> <https://fingertips.phe.org.uk/profile/national-child-measurement-programme>

<sup>24</sup> [https://www.sportengland.org/know-your-audience/data/active-lives/active-lives-data-tables?section=children\\_and\\_young\\_people\\_surveys](https://www.sportengland.org/know-your-audience/data/active-lives/active-lives-data-tables?section=children_and_young_people_surveys)

<sup>25</sup> <https://www.sportengland.org/know-your-audience/data/active-lives/active-lives-data-tables>

Priority	Focus groups / areas	Metric	Source	Baseline data (period)	Frequency of data release (next data release due)
				(ward level data for Nov 19/20 not yet available)	data released the following April)
Independence	Older people (65+)	To be confirmed by end September 2021			
Carers	All carers, including young carers	<p>Number of adult carers supported by WBC</p> <p>Number of carers prescriptions</p> <p>Number of young carers participating in Woking Young Carers project or being supported by WBC Youth Development Officer</p>	WBC internal records	<p>Adult carers: not currently captured</p> <p>Number of carer prescriptions: 13 (Q4 2020/21)</p> <p>Young carers: 15 (as at 27 April 2021)</p>	<p>N/A - records held on an ongoing basis but will be reported quarterly.</p> <p>This metric is an output, rather than outcome, measure. It is proposed to review this metric at the end of Year 1 and consider if the Residents' Panel could be utilised to collect data on carers' outcomes (including consideration of the use of the NICE Adult Carers Support Quality Statements published in March 2021<sup>26</sup>).</p>

<sup>26</sup> <https://www.nice.org.uk/guidance/qs200/chapter/Quality-statements>

## Engagement

### *Engagement in developing strategy*

This strategy has been developed during the third wave of the pandemic and a national lockdown. As a result there was limited opportunity to directly engage with residents in a meaningful way. We have been very conscious of the pressures both council staff and our residents have been under during this time, but did not want to delay the development of the strategy given the impact of the pandemic on health and wellbeing.

However, we have scrutinised the results of other engagement exercises and taken this into account when determining the five priorities described in the previous chapter and formulating our action plan (see Appendix A). These included:

- The **Surrey Health and Wellbeing Strategy** which was informed by residents' views gathered through formal surveys and feedback provided on a draft version of the Strategy. As described in the previous chapter, there is a strong alignment between our priorities and those of the Surrey Health and Wellbeing Strategy;
- The Woking **Redeeming Our Communities** conversation<sup>27</sup> which held a well-attended engagement event in March 2020 and identified provision of activities for youth, social isolation and mental health as the top three community issues. Again, this aligns with our priorities. We will continue to work closely with Woking ROC to ensure our approach is shaped by the views of residents, including review of the results of the ROC Loneliness and isolation survey which are expected to be available in June 2021; and
- Surrey County Council's **Day Opportunities Survey** which was an online survey that closed in February 2021 and had nearly 600 respondents aged 60+ from across the county (including 59 from Woking). The survey found that 'walking, gardening and accessing nature' was the most popular activity (valued by 89% of respondents) followed by 'exercise' (58%). The survey also found that after the internet, the most popular way (utilised by almost 50% of respondents) of finding out about local activities was through friends and families.

In addition we have engaged with council staff who directly interact with residents on a day-to-day basis across a wide range of services. In a series of workshops attended by more than 90 members of staff in December 2020 and January 2021, we explored what we do well (assets to build on) and opportunities to improve the health and wellbeing of our residents. A strong theme from these workshops was the necessity of resident engagement. We tested our emerging priorities in two further sessions with staff in February 2021 and feedback from these sessions informed the focus groups for each priority.

We have also tested and shared our priorities with key partners including Surrey County Council, neighbouring districts and boroughs, Surrey Heartlands CCG, NWS ICP, Woking Mind, Royal Horticultural Society, Catalyst, Action for Carers Surrey and Active Surrey, drawing on their expertise and experiences working with people in Woking to inform our plans. We will continue to work closely with these and other partners in implementing our strategy.

### *Planned engagement approach*

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<sup>27</sup> <https://roc.uk.com/woking/>

Resident engagement is at the heart of how we want to work. Our recently published Corporate Plan 2021/22<sup>28</sup> describes the **Big Conversation** and a process of continuous dialogue with residents to help inform our decision making and incorporate ongoing feedback into our plans.

This includes a relaunch of the Woking Residents' Panel which will act as a sounding board for new initiatives and creation of an online civic space that will enable us to share plans for the future and provide a safe space for residents to feedback and share their views. We will use these new initiatives explore how best to engage and involve residents in this strategy.

We also plan to launch local community stakeholder groups in the Centres for the Community which will meet quarterly. They will review current use and opportunities for the centres, focussing on the needs of residents in the local area. These have been included in our action plan against the social isolation and loneliness priority but are also a key part of our future engagement approach.

We are committed to engaging in a way that values diversity, recognising the contribution made by our diverse communities to the borough's economic, social and cultural wellbeing, as described in our Diversity Policy<sup>29</sup>.

Wherever possible, we will seek to co-design solutions with residents, and build on existing approaches, such as those developed by the Resident Engagement Team within Housing Services where relevant. For example, our action plan includes the identification of tenant representatives in sheltered accommodation units and Brockhill to participate in projects to re-open common rooms. We also intend to relaunch Woking Youth Council later this year and engage with this forum to shape the planned activities for the mental health and obesity priorities.

Engagement can take a number of forms, including digital. We recognise that this form may act as a barrier to access for some people. The action plan therefore includes a digital inclusion project which, as well as increasing opportunities for residents to access digital services, will equip residents to engage with the council digitally, for example via the online civic space.

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<sup>28</sup> <https://moderngov.woking.gov.uk/mgConvert2PDF.aspx?ID=17045>

<sup>29</sup> <https://www.woking.gov.uk/sites/default/files/documents/Jobs/bevdp.pdf>



## **Governance**

The council set up a Health and Wellbeing Task Group (originally known as the Health and Wellbeing Board) in 2014. The Task Group has met on a regular basis (currently every two months) and has been chaired by one of the four Borough and County Councillors, appointed to it annually. The work of the Task Group included monitoring the delivery of the health and wellbeing action plan, which encompassed a wide range of activities across the council.

Following the elections in May 2021 the council will ensure there are appropriate arrangements in place to drive delivery of the strategy. This will include oversight of delivery of the strategic action plan (see Appendix A) on a quarterly basis and monitoring of the impact of the strategy through annual review of the metrics described in the Priorities chapter.

The council is committed to the five identified priorities for the duration of this strategy (ten years) and recognises that a long-term approach will be required for the desired impact on health and wellbeing. However, changes to the geographic areas and population cohorts of focus for each priority may be necessary, particularly as the long-term effects of the pandemic become clearer. It is therefore proposed that on an annual basis the Task Group should review the available evidence and specifically consider whether any refinements are needed to the focus groups or wards of the priorities.

A senior manager has been identified as a sponsor for each priority. Sponsors will ensure:

- The action plan is updated in advance of each Task Group meeting to reflect progress made and incorporate new actions that have been identified;
- The action plan includes actions to deliver the strategic objective for the priority and focuses on any specific groups or wards identified for that priority; and
- The action plan reflects the principles described in the Priorities chapter (supporting diversity and inclusion, partnership working, resident engagement, building on our strengths and utilising digital approaches where appropriate).

The council recognises that the health and wellbeing of the Woking population is impacted by a huge number of other organisations and will continue to work collaboratively and actively participate in partnership forums, including, for example, Woking Joint Mental Health Working Group, to ensure work programmes are aligned where relevant.

## Appendix A: Action Plan

This action plan captures the specific activities to deliver the borough's priorities as described in this strategy. It is not intended to capture all of the services or projects within the council that impact on people's health and wellbeing.

We recognise that many of these actions will impact upon more than one priority but to avoid duplication we have only captured each activity under one priority.

Actions planned for Year 1 (2021/22) are generally more detailed than those planned in Years 2 and 3. This action plan will be a live document updated over the life of the strategy (see Governance chapter).

Priority	Sponsor	Activities	Leading officer	Target date
Mental health	Julie Mémé, Health and Wellbeing Manager	<i>Focus group: Whole population</i>		
		Seek funding (from Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government) for an additional mental health worker in the housing team.	Catherine Butler, Housing Needs Manager	May 2021
		Promote and co-ordinate Dementia Action week (17-23 May 2021).	Michelle Chilcott, Independent Living and Extra Care Manager	May 2021
		Review Housing Assistance Policy to consider how clearance of hoarded properties on discharge from hospital can be funded.	Helen Kempshall, Homelink Manager	August 2021
		Identify mental health groups / organisations to apply for RHS community free ticketing scheme.	Jade Buckingham, Integrated Health Manager	May 2021 and September 2021
		Work with partners to co-design and co-produce the Green Social Prescribing 'Test and Learn' site (one of	Jade Buckingham, Integrated Health Manager	September 2021

Priority	Sponsor	Activities	Leading officer	Target date
		seven in England) with the aim of connecting people with nature-based interventions and activities.		
		Explore the benefits of using, and opportunities for funding, Elemental (a digital platform for social prescribing) across social prescribing, hospital discharge and other health and wellbeing teams.	Gary Cordery, Community Wellbeing Manager	September 2021
		Improve the advertisement of walking routes and introduce walking sessions.	Steve May, Leisure Services Manager	September 2021
		Restart Couch to 5k sessions at Woking Sportsbox.	Steve May, Leisure Services Manager	September 2021
		Develop specification for a community garden space in Woking for the Wisley School of Horticulture Design and Build Project in 2022.	Jade Buckingham, Integrated Health Manager	October 2021
		Explore making Surrey mental health services and dementia training mandatory for all frontline staff at WBC.	Julie Mémé, Health and Wellbeing Manager	November 2021
		Explore making it mandatory for all managers at WBC to complete training around mental health support for employees.	Jade Buckingham, Integrated Health Manager	December 2021
		Launch a parenting course run by Family Services to support families from local ethnic minority communities, in partnership with local faith and community groups.	Zafar Iqbal, Senior Policy Officer	December 2021

Priority	Sponsor	Activities	Leading officer	Target date
		Organise, and offer to the public, at least six Dementia Friends Awareness sessions per annum.	Michelle Chilcott, Independent Living and Extra Care Manager	March 2022
		Identify and assist with the creation of five new Local Dementia Action Alliances per alliance.	Michelle Chilcott, Independent Living and Extra Care Manager	March 2022
		Promote staff training around understanding suicide and attempted suicide and explore making this training mandatory for key frontline staff.	Camilla Edmiston, Community Safety Manager	March 2022
		Secure agreement on multi-agency Surrey-wide hoarding protocol (to include joined up database and panel meetings to discuss cases) and implement the protocol.	Julie Mémé, Health and Wellbeing Manager	April 2022
		Explore the opportunity for Surrey County Council to fund and support staff training on hoarding to improve understanding and awareness.	Julie Mémé, Health and Wellbeing Manager	April 2022
		Identify the organisations in Woking which offer bereavement support and provide appropriate staff with adequate training to offer assistance in bereavement situations including signposting to relevant services.	Julie Mémé, Health and Wellbeing Manager	April 2022
<i>Focus group: children and young adults</i>				

<b>Priority</b>	<b>Sponsor</b>	<b>Activities</b>	<b>Leading officer</b>	<b>Target date</b>
		Support and promote Domestic Abuse Awareness Week (14-18 June 2021), including staff awareness training provided by Your Sanctuary.	Camilla Edmiston, Community Safety Manager	June 2021
		Explore opportunities for pilots of children's mental health services in Woking as part of recommissioned CAMHS service, including the provision of services in community, family and other suitable public centres. Consider wider mental health provision in these locations.	Adam Thomas, Family and Community Services Manager	July 2021
		Provide accommodation for Catalyst in Moorcroft Centre for the Community to embed mental health services in the local community.	Adam Thomas, Family and Community Services Manager	July 2021
		Support promotion of RHS Green Plan It Challenge (teams of six Year 8 pupils supported by expert garden designers to design an open green space) to secondary schools.	Jade Buckingham, Integrated Health Manager	September 2021
		Partner with NHS maternity services to offer antenatal and postnatal parent support groups such as breastfeeding workshops and postnatal depression support groups in Centres for the Community. Explore the opportunity to partner with RHS to provide access to Wisley for these groups.	Nicola Norman, Family Services Manager	September 2021
		Promote the Woking Mind and Catalyst joint campaign regarding mental health awareness.	Jade Buckingham, Integrated Health Manager	September 2021

Priority	Sponsor	Activities	Leading officer	Target date
		Increase the number of open access youth clubs (Knaphill and Goldsworth Park), and attendance by working with Surrey Clubs for Young People to develop new arrangements following SCC consultation.	Sandie Bolger, Youth Development Officer	October 2021
		Explore partnership opportunities with the Lightbox and utilise the Centre for the Community facilities to host joint projects.	Rose Blackley, Arts Development Officer	October 2021
		Family Services to design after school weekly tea and activity sessions for primary aged children at Moorcroft Centre for the Community in partnership with Foodwise and other wellbeing providers.	Nicola Norman, Family Services Manager	December 2021
Social isolation and loneliness	Adam Thomas, Family and Community Services Manager	<i>Focus group: older people</i>		
		Support Freshstart CIC to launch outdoor projects.	Adam Thomas, Family and Community Services Manager	May 2021
		Work with Art in Transit to evaluate “Puppets Points of View” pilot project (a 10-week creative response project looking at the impact lockdown has had on mental health) which includes participants from youth groups.	Rose Blackley, Arts Development Officer	June 2021
		Review physical and cultural offer of the Centres for the Community (including relaunch of classes to maintain strength and balance as part of empowering independence priority).	Adam Thomas, Family and Community Services Manager	June 2021

Priority	Sponsor	Activities	Leading officer	Target date
		Identify tenant representatives in sheltered accommodation units and Brockhill to participate in projects to re-open common rooms.	Sean Lee, Independent Support Manager	July 2021
		Explore opportunities to support Men in Sheds projects to reduce social isolation and loneliness, including potential Holme Farm development in partnership with Runnymede Borough Council.	Jade Buckingham, Integrated Health Manager	September 2021
		Review findings of ROC loneliness and isolation survey (expected to be available June 2021) to inform future plans.	Julie Mémé, Health and Wellbeing Manager	September 2021
		Launch intergenerational activities in Byfleet, Westfield and Knaphill, linking the Centres with local primary schools for interactive activities.	Adam Thomas, Family and Community Services Manager	September 2021
		Launch local community stakeholder groups in the Centres for the Community. These will meet quarterly and review current use and opportunities for the Centres, focussing on the needs of residents in the local area.	Adam Thomas, Family and Community Services Manager	December 2021
		Promote and support bids from community groups for RHS Greening Great Britain which provides grants of up to £500 for small neighbourhood projects.	Jade Buckingham, Integrated Health Manager	April 2022
		Promote RHS 'Grow Social' and 'Great Soup Share' campaigns in Centres for the Community.	Jade Buckingham, Integrated Health Manager	April 2022

Priority	Sponsor	Activities	Leading officer	Target date
Obesity	Steve May, Leisure Services Manager	<i>Focus group: children, pregnant women and parents</i> <i>Focus wards: Canalside, Goldsworth Park and Hoe Valley</i>		
		Re-launch Friday Night Project (subsidised sports youth provision) at Woking Leisure Centre and extend to Sheerwater Leisure Centre when it opens.	Abby Woodhouse, Woking Active Communities Manager, Freedom Leisure	June 2021 (dependent on easing of lockdown restrictions)
		Support the Be Your Best programme through leisure centre staff attendance of the last two programme sessions and offer of free services.	Steve May, Leisure Services Manager	Fully operational from end June 2021
		Re-launch weekly junior and adult Park Run events (including advertising sessions through social media and website) and investigate the potential to introduce an event at Brookwood Country Park.	Jack Gallop, Sports Development Officer	June 2021
		Deliver healthy eating workshops, including cooking, at each of the youth centres with access to a kitchen.	Sandie Bolger, Youth Development Officer	July 2021
		Progress Club 4 bid with Active Surrey for holiday, activity and food programme in summer 2021.	Steve May, Leisure Services Manager	July 2021
		Deliver Surrey Youth Games alternative project (for adults and children) with a focus on BAME females.	Jack Gallop, Sports Development Officer	September 2021
		Improve cycling provision, both instructed and free access through the launch of British Cycling 'Ride Out' programme (a turn up and enjoy social session),	Steve May, Leisure Services Manager	September 2021



Priority	Sponsor	Activities	Leading officer	Target date
		bicycle hire scheme, and development of a venue to teach bike maintenance (targeting fathers and children with the intention of improving social networks for fathers).		
		Consider opportunities to better promote the community and concession pricing structure at gyms, including how it can be promoted to families and pregnant mothers.	Steve May, Leisure Services Manager	September 2021
		Link Central Surrey Health, Health Link Worker Jabeen Quereshi with wider family and maternity services in Sheerwater at Parkview to develop engagement with healthy lifestyle activities targeted at women from the Asian community.	Adam Thomas, Family and Community Services Manager	September 2021
		Collaborate on Homestart bid with Active Surrey for Whole System Approach to Obesity.	Nicola Norman, Family Services Manager	September 2021
		Support Foodwise to run healthy cooking classes for vulnerable families and healthy cooking support for care leavers at the Centres for the Community.	Adam Thomas, Family and Community Services Manager	September 2021
		Open Eastwood Leisure Centre in Sheerwater.	Steve May, Leisure Services Manager	September 2021
		Develop an enhanced cycling facility at Goldsworth Park (with Sport Cycling funding).	Steve May, Leisure Services Manager	Q3 2021/22

Priority	Sponsor	Activities	Leading officer	Target date
		Enhance the relationship between PCNs and Social Prescribing to increase referrals into weight management programmes.	Gary Cordery, Community Wellbeing Manager	December 2021
		Launch healthy eating workshops for Woking ethnic minority communities, working with local faith leaders and health link workers.	Zafar Iqbal, Senior Policy Officer	December 2021
		Explore the potential to add a category to Woking in Bloom 2022 with a link to obesity (e.g. vegetable garden category).	Jade Buckingham, Integrated Health Manager	Q4 2021/22
		Re-launch Surrey Youth Games in 2022 and increase participation.	Jack Gallop, Sports Development Officer	June 2022
Empowering independence	Julie Mémé Health and Wellbeing Manager	<i>Focus group: older people (65+)</i>		
		Support the Active Surrey targeted falls prevention programme pilot by exploring how social prescribers can refer into the programme, promoting the programme to care homes and providing facilities as required.	Jade Buckingham, Integrated Health Manager	July 2021
		Increase the provision of extra care accommodation through the opening of Hale End Court which will include 12 units with extra care.	Julie Mémé, Health and Wellbeing Manager	September 2021
		Confirm metric for empowering independence which will be used to report strategy progress.	Jade Buckingham, Integrated Health Manager	September 2021

<b>Priority</b>	<b>Sponsor</b>	<b>Activities</b>	<b>Leading officer</b>	<b>Target date</b>
		Launch 'Working Together for Woking' event to enable community support charities and groups to promote their work and network. This will be hosted in the town centre in partnership between WBC and local community networks.	Adam Thomas, Family and Community Services Manager	January 2022
		Explore the extension of the falls responder service beyond Careline clients with NWS ICP.	Julie Mémé, Health and Wellbeing Manager	April 2022
		Explore with other partners (e.g. SECamb and reablement) how their services can benefit from Homesafe Plus services with callers diverted to Falls Responder Service where appropriate.	Jade Buckingham Integrated health Manager	April 2022
		Promote the Shop Mobility scheme.	Jade Buckingham Integrated Health Manager	April 2022
		Work with partners to increase utilisation of the Woking Independent Show Home.	Julie Mémé, Health and Wellbeing Manager	April 2022
		Update Living Well leaflets to include all services available to Woking residents which can support independent living.	Julie Mémé, Health and Wellbeing Manager	April 2022
		Develop a digital inclusion project, working with library services, Surrey Coalition and Woking ROC, including the exploration of utilising Centres for the Community for training.	Pino Mastromarco, Home Independence Manager	May 2022

Priority	Sponsor	Activities	Leading officer	Target date
Carers	Camilla Edmiston, Community Safety Manager	<i>Focus group: carers</i>		
		Launch 'Dance for Parkinsons' for those living with Parkinsons and their carers at St Mary's Centre for the Community. Then link these sessions with a local primary school to make this an intergenerational project.	Rose Blackley, Arts Development Officer	May 2021 (for launch – link with primary school will be later)
		Relaunch the community choir that encourages carer attendance at Moorcroft Centre for the Community.	Adam Thomas, Family and Community Services Manager	June 2021
		Relaunch creative lunches at St Mary's Centre for the Community.	Adam Thomas, Family and Community Services Manager	September 2021
		Introduce the use of Carers Prescription by Borough Discharge Support Officers at acute and community hospitals to identify and support carers.	Gary Cordery, Community Wellbeing Manager	September 2021
		Explore with Crossroads the provision of carers respite at Centres for the Community.	Julie Mémé, Health and Wellbeing Manager	September 2021
		Actively participate in discussions regarding the future of commissioned care services across NWS ICP (including attendance of the briefing event in June 2021).	Julie Mémé, Health and Wellbeing Manager	April 2022

Priority	Sponsor	Activities	Leading officer	Target date
		Add 'Carers' leaflet to 'Living Well' pack.	Julie Mémé, Health and Wellbeing Manager	April 2022
		Establish links with care co-ordinators in PCNs.	Gary Cordery, Community Wellbeing Manager	April 2022
		Explore making carers training (including young carers) mandatory for council staff, to increase awareness amongst council employees and improve their ability to signpost.	Julie Mémé, Health and Wellbeing Manager	April 2022
		Explore WBC gaining accreditation as a Carer Confident Employer.	Jade Buckingham Integrated Health Manager	April 2022
		Approach young carers groups in schools to see if there is any interest in the RHS Campaign for School Gardening.	Jade Buckingham, Integrated Health Manager	April 2022
Enablers	N/A	Arrange Communities Team workshops to share developments internally.	Julie Mémé, Health and Wellbeing Manager / Adam Thomas, Family and Community Services Manager / Steve May, Leisure Services Manager / Camilla Edmiston, Community Safety Manager	June 2021 and quarterly thereafter

Priority	Sponsor	Activities	Leading officer	Target date
		Update team meeting agendas to include 'comms messages' as a standing item, to generate more content for internal and external communications. Appoint a named team member responsible for sharing these messages with the Communications Team.	Julie Mémé, Health and Wellbeing Manager / Adam Thomas, Family and Community Services Manager / Steve May, Leisure Services Manager / Camilla Edmiston, Community Safety Manager	July 2021
		Consider the use of corporate communications email to allow updates received from teams (see action above) to be made quickly by any member of the communications team.	Andy Denner, Marketing Communications Manager	July 2021
		Each team across People directorate to update their area on WBC intranet.	Julie Mémé, Health and Wellbeing Manager / Adam Thomas, Family and Community Services Manager / Steve May, Leisure Services Manager / Camilla Edmiston, Community Safety Manager	By end September 2021 and quarterly thereafter

<b>Priority</b>	<b>Sponsor</b>	<b>Activities</b>	<b>Leading officer</b>	<b>Target date</b>
		Promote 'Woking Works' to voluntary and community organisations that deliver health and wellbeing services.	Chris Norrington, Business Liaison Manager	September 2021
		Explore how the 'Woking Works' offer could be expanded to include advice on supporting the health and wellbeing of employees.	Chris Norrington, Business Liaison Manager	September 2021
		Relaunch Woking Youth Council, ensuring it is representative, and utilise it as a forum to engage on proposed activities for mental health and obesity priorities.	Sandie Bolger, Youth Development Officer	November 2021

## Appendix B: Detailed analysis of wider determinants of health in Woking

### Health behaviours

#### SMOKING

The smoking rate in Woking has more than halved in the last ten years. 7.6% of adults in Woking smoke, this is lower than both the South East region (12.2%) and England (13.9%). Smoking prevalence in pregnant women is also lower (7.4%) than both the South East region (9.7%) and England (10.4%).

One You Surrey (<https://oneyousurrey.org.uk/>) is commissioned by Surrey County Council and the NHS to provide smoking cessation services support throughout the county.

The council's environmental health team is responsible for enforcing the smoke free law. The council is a tobacco-free site and smoking (including any tobacco products) and use of e-cigarettes are not permitted in any council workplace, building or vehicle.

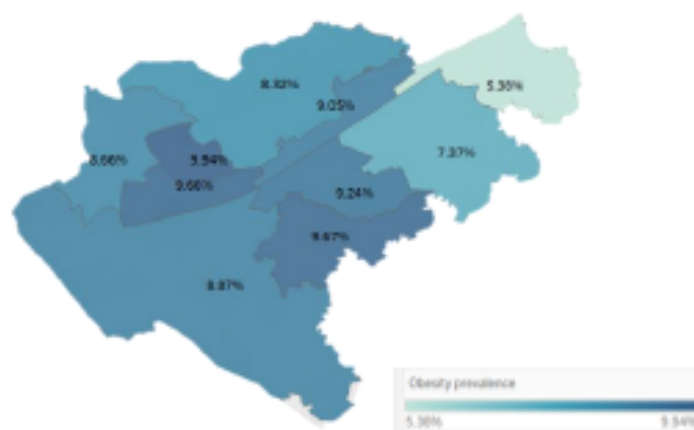
#### DIET

60.2% of adults in Woking are classified as overweight or obese compared to 62.3% in England and 57.6% in the South East region. 8.5% of adults (8,500 people) in Woking are registered by their GP with obesity as a health condition. Again, although this is lower than the national average of 9.8%, it is higher than the Surrey rate of 6% and Woking ranks highest of the 11 boroughs and districts in Surrey.

Obesity is the single greatest risk factor for developing Type 2 diabetes and adults who are overweight or living with obesity are at an increased risk of serious Covid-19 complications and death.

The map below shows that though prevalence of obesity is highest in the centre of the borough it is largely similar throughout.

Figure: Shows the estimated percentage of Obesity prevalence.  
Source: GP registers in 2017/18, NHS Digital



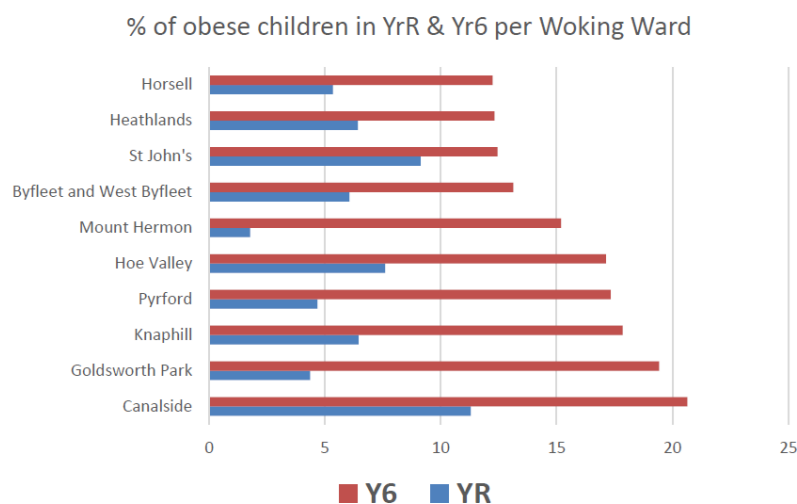
Goldsworth Park has the greatest obesity prevalence at 9.9%, followed by Hoe Valley and St. John's (both at 9.6%). These three wards are the highest ranked wards in Surrey. Six of the top ten wards in Surrey for obesity prevalence are in Woking. All Woking wards apart from Byfleet and West Byfleet are above the Surrey average.



Childhood obesity statistics present a similar picture. This is a particular concern as children who are overweight or living with obesity are much more likely to become adults who are overweight or living with obesity.

Childhood obesity rates in Year R (ages 4-5) and Year 6 (ages 10-11) in Woking are 6.4% and 15.9% respectively, lower than the averages for England (9.6% and 20% respectively) but higher than the Surrey averages (6.2% and 14% respectively).

Per Ward, the breakdown is as follows:



Canalside has the highest percentage of obesity in both Year R (11.2%) and Year 6 (20.6% - one in five children of this age) and is above the national average for both age groups.

In 2018 the government announced a range of measures to halve the number of obese children by 2030. However, emerging data<sup>30</sup> suggests that lockdowns as a result of the pandemic have impacted children's lifestyles and increased their risk of being overweight or living with obesity. The Government's White Paper **Working Together to Improve Health and Social Care For All**, published in February 2021, signals the Department of Health and Social Care's intention to bring forward measures to help tackle obesity, including the introduction of further restrictions on the advertisement of high fat, salt and sugar foods.

In Woking there are a range of services aimed at improving the diet of residents, including:

- Be Your Best programme - Surrey's weight management programme, aimed at parents of children aged 0-11. This programme has been provided virtually during the pandemic and has supported nine families in Woking in 2021 to date;
- [Foodwise](#) – a Christian-based charity delivering food provision, training and education from community centres. During the pandemic, the focus of Foodwise has been on food provision to families and individuals deemed at risk of food insecurity. Foodwise has put freezers in four Woking primary schools so that schools can directly provide frozen meals (prepared by Foodwise – 100 meals provided at each school each fortnight) to families in need. In addition, Foodwise delivers to over 30 families each week (290 meals), more than double the number of families supported prior to the pandemic. Meals are prepared at Moorcroft Centre for the Community. Training and education has been suspended since March 2020 due to the pandemic but Foodwise is in the process of planning an offer in conjunction with the council's

<sup>30</sup> A study looking at the impact of Covid-19 confinement at home in a small cohort of Italian children found evidence of increased consumption of high calorie and sugar foods and decreased time spent in sport activities.

Family Services for holiday hunger schemes, “Cooking on a Budget” courses, and employing local apprentices to work in the kitchens and café at the Centre for the Community; and

- Foodbanks – Woking Foodbank was set up eight years ago and provides short-term emergency food to people in crisis (there is also South Woking Foodbank which can provide longer term support and Bisley Primary School set up a foodbank during lockdown to support its children and their families). The majority of referrals to the Foodbank are from Citizens Advice, the council (various departments including Family Services and Housing Services) and schools and family centres. The Foodbank is primarily accessed by residents in Canalside (30% of Woking residents supported in 2020 were from this ward), Knaphill (15%), Goldsworth Park (12%) and Hoe Valley (12%). The Foodbank is supporting more people each year with a 48% increase in 2019 compared to the prior year and a further 36% in 2020, and is continuing to see increases month-on-month as a result of the pandemic. In January 2021 the Foodbank supported 740 people, a 126% increase compared to the same month the previous year. In 2020 the council supported the Foodbank with an Emergency Assistance Grant.

## EXERCISE

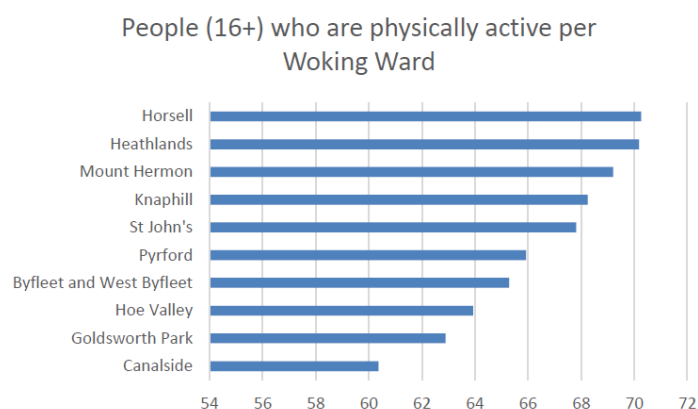
Just behind smoking, high blood pressure and obesity, the fourth biggest cause of disease in our population is lack of physical activity. As well as preventing physical ill health, exercise can also have a positive impact on mental wellbeing. In a recent survey undertaken by Active Surrey c. 75% of Woking residents surveyed reported that sport and exercise made them most happy and c. 70% reported that they do sport or exercise to manage their worries.

28.0% of people (aged 16+) in Woking are classed as inactive which means they do less than 30 minutes of moderate intensity physical activity a week. This compares to 23.2% in Surrey and 27.1% in England<sup>31</sup> and Woking is the most inactive district or borough in Surrey. The figure for Woking has significantly increased over the past six months from 24.2%.

61.6% of people in Woking are classed as physically active, as they do at least 150 minutes of moderate physical activity a week (Surrey: 65.4%, England: 61.4%).

This most recent data is not yet available at a ward level, but the breakdown by ward for the May 2019/20 data is as follows:

The breakdown by ward is as follows:



<sup>31</sup> Source: <https://activelives.sportengland.org/Home/AdultData>

Canalside has the lowest percentage of physically active people (16+) at 63.5% and has the third highest percentage of inactive adults of all the wards in Surrey.

The most recent physical activity data<sup>32</sup> for children and young people at a borough level is from 2017/18 which showed that almost a third (28.8%) of children did less than 30 minutes of activity each day. This was the third lowest compared to other Surrey boroughs and districts and lower than the Surrey average (30.9%).

Sport England has reported on the impact of the pandemic on activity levels. The proportion of the adult population classed as inactive increased by 7.4% during the first few weeks of full lockdown between mid-March and mid-May 2020<sup>33</sup>. Sport England also found that the proportion of children and young people reporting they were active during mid-May to late-July 2020 fell by 2.3% compared to the same period 12 months earlier.<sup>34</sup> Sporting activities saw a large decrease in the numbers taking part, however, significant increases in walking, cycling and fitness activities limited the negative impact on overall activity levels.

The council recognises the importance of physical activity, as demonstrated by its endorsement of the Physical Activity Strategy for Surrey in 2019. The council provides leisure facilities (operated by Freedom Leisure) at Woking Leisure Centre, Woking Sportsbox and Pool in the Park. In 2019/20 Freedom Leisure provided almost 90,000 swimming lessons as part of a mixed programme of leisure, sport, recreation and competition activities, catering to a variety of groups and needs. The programme includes learning disability swimming lessons, walking football, dementia friendly swimming sessions, ladies football, ladies youth boxing and disability badminton courses. The facilities offer tiered pricing on both a pay as you go and monthly/annual basis, including reduced rates for those in full time education, receiving means tested benefits, disabled users and carers.

The council also operates a large number of sports pitches (football, cricket and rugby) and pavilions over 18 local greenspaces. In addition, there are a number of private providers running facilities across the borough.

The council has a Sports Development Officer who liaises with the wide range of sports clubs (over 75 in total) to ensure best use is made of the available facilities. Some clubs boast over 500 members ranging from elite participants to grassroots level. The council has a range of tennis courts and a community membership package at the newly refurbished courts in Woking Park which is hugely popular (775 active members and 77% court utilisation in 2020) and very accessible at £39 a year for up to six hours of tennis a week. The council also participates in annual events such as Surrey Youth Games and hosts the Woking Sports Awards to encourage more residents to be active.

Physical activity can be a form of travel such as walking or cycling everyday journeys. In England, 56% of car journeys are under five miles<sup>35</sup> and transport accounts for a third (34%)

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<sup>32</sup> Source: [https://www.sportengland.org/know-your-audience/data/active-lives/active-lives-data-tables?section=children\\_and\\_young\\_people\\_surveys](https://www.sportengland.org/know-your-audience/data/active-lives/active-lives-data-tables?section=children_and_young_people_surveys)

<sup>33</sup> [https://sportengland-production-files.s3.eu-west-2.amazonaws.com/s3fs-public/2020-10/Active%20Lives%20Adult%20May%2019-20%20Coronavirus%20Report.pdf?2L6TBVV5UvCGXb\\_VxZcWHcfFX0\\_wRaI7](https://sportengland-production-files.s3.eu-west-2.amazonaws.com/s3fs-public/2020-10/Active%20Lives%20Adult%20May%2019-20%20Coronavirus%20Report.pdf?2L6TBVV5UvCGXb_VxZcWHcfFX0_wRaI7)

<sup>34</sup> [https://sportengland-production-files.s3.eu-west-2.amazonaws.com/s3fs-public/2021-01/Active%20Lives%20Children%20Survey%20Academic%20Year%2019-20%20Coronavirus%20report.pdf?2yHCzeG\\_iDUxK.qegt1GQdOmLiQcgThJPowerPoint Presentation \(sportengland-production-files.s3.eu-west-2.amazonaws.com\)](https://sportengland-production-files.s3.eu-west-2.amazonaws.com/s3fs-public/2021-01/Active%20Lives%20Children%20Survey%20Academic%20Year%2019-20%20Coronavirus%20report.pdf?2yHCzeG_iDUxK.qegt1GQdOmLiQcgThJPowerPoint Presentation (sportengland-production-files.s3.eu-west-2.amazonaws.com))

<sup>35</sup>

Department for Transport, Walking & cycling statistics (2018). [https:// assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/ file/674503/walking-and-cycling-statistics-england-2016.pdf](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/674503/walking-and-cycling-statistics-england-2016.pdf)

of all carbon dioxide emissions<sup>36</sup>, the majority arising from road travel. Increasing active travel (walking and cycling) can therefore improve health through both reduced emissions and increased exercise as well as having a positive climate impact.

In 2008, Woking was awarded cycle demonstration town status and received £1.8m in government funding to develop a three-year infrastructure enhancement programme. Woking Borough Council delivered the Cycle Woking programme in partnership with Surrey County Council to help increase take up of walking and cycling, particularly for shorter journeys within the borough.

Just over 26km of new off-road cycle routes were constructed, 13km of which run along the Basingstoke Canal. The enhanced cycle network provided a 60% increase in dedicated cycle facilities and transformed the old fragmented network by improving connectivity to key places including the town centre and railway station.

The network was named the 'Planet Trails' giving a nod to local connections with HG Wells and the War of the Worlds, which was written and based in Woking.

Other infrastructure improvements have included new and improved signalised cycle crossings which allow safer access across busy roads, better signage and over a thousand new cycle parking spaces, including a dedicated secure Cycle Hub at Woking Railway Station. Since the improvements, Woking Town Centre has played host to Britain's leading televised cycle race, the Tour Series, five times.

In August 2020, a [Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plan](#) (LCWIP) for Woking was published, one of the first in the UK. Development of the plan was funded by the Department of Transport, working with Surrey County Council and Woking Borough Council. This plan identifies cycling and walking infrastructure improvements for future investment to help further increase trips made on foot or by bicycle.

## ALCOHOL USE

Alcohol misuse is the biggest risk factor for death, ill health and disability among 15-49 year olds in the UK, and the fifth biggest risk factor across all ages. The rate for alcohol-related harm hospital admissions in Woking is 506 per 100,000, representing 479 admissions per year. The rate is lower than the averages for both the South East region (526) and England (664).

The rate for alcohol-specific hospital admissions among those under 18 in Woking is 21 per 100,000, representing 15 admissions per year. Again, this is lower than both the South East region (31.7) and England (31.6) rates.

The i-access drug and alcohol service, provided by Surrey and Borders Partnership NHS Foundation Trust, offers specialist advice, support and treatment to people in Surrey who want help with their drug and/or alcohol use. The council's Family Services team works in partnership with treatment providers where alcohol misuse is an issue for a family being supported and the Women's Support Centre actively supports women with substance misuse issues (including alcohol).

## SEXUAL HEALTH

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<sup>36</sup>

2019 UK greenhouse gas emissions, provisional figures [https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/875485/2019\\_UK\\_greenhouse\\_gas\\_emissions\\_provisional\\_figures\\_statistical\\_release.pdf](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/875485/2019_UK_greenhouse_gas_emissions_provisional_figures_statistical_release.pdf)

The rate of new sexually transmitted infections in Woking (529 per 100,000) is lower than the averages for the South East region (714) and England (900).

The Sexual Health Clinic at Woking Community Hospital is commissioned by Public Health and provides free confidential sexual health services, including contraception and genitourinary medicine (GUM) screening, treatment and follow-up.

### *Socio economic factors*

#### EDUCATION

A key measure of educational attainment is the 'average 8 attainment score'<sup>37</sup>. This is a measure of the average attainment of pupils in up to eight qualifications of GCSE and equivalent. Woking has an average 8 attainment score of 50.2, which is broadly in line with the Surrey average (50.3) and above England's (46.9). In addition, 81.9% of those aged 16-64 in Woking are qualified to Level 2 or higher, which is greater than the average for the South East (79.2%).

Surrey County Council is responsible for education. There are more than 30 primary schools in Woking, including five independent schools and two special schools (Freemantles, a school for children and young people with complex social communication needs, and Knowl Hill, a school for children with dyslexia and associated learning needs). There are ten secondary schools in Woking, including two independent schools and three special schools (Freemantles, Knowl Hill and Park School). There are four further education institutions in Woking for students aged 16 to 18 – Woking College, St John the Baptist Catholic Comprehensive School, Freemantles School and Hoe Valley School. All these institutions are rated outstanding by Ofsted apart from Woking College which is rated good.

#### EMPLOYMENT

In Woking, 51% of workers are in managerial, professional and technical occupations which is 10% above the average for the UK. The rate of employment (for those aged 16-64) is better in Woking (78.9%) than the England average (76.2%) but lower than the South East average (79.6%). However, this data is from 2019/20 and the economic impacts of the pandemic are now starting to be felt.

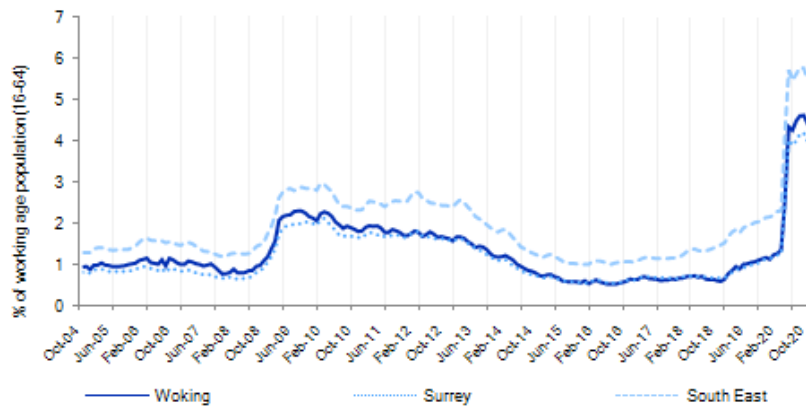
The chart below shows the month on month changes in the percentage of people claiming Jobseeker's Allowance (JSA) or Universal Credit (UC) across Woking and comparator areas. A clear and large spike can be seen in spring 2020 as a result of the Covid-19 outbreak.

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37

[https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/561021/Progress\\_8\\_and\\_Attainment\\_8\\_how\\_measures\\_are\\_calculated.pdf](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/561021/Progress_8_and_Attainment_8_how_measures_are_calculated.pdf)

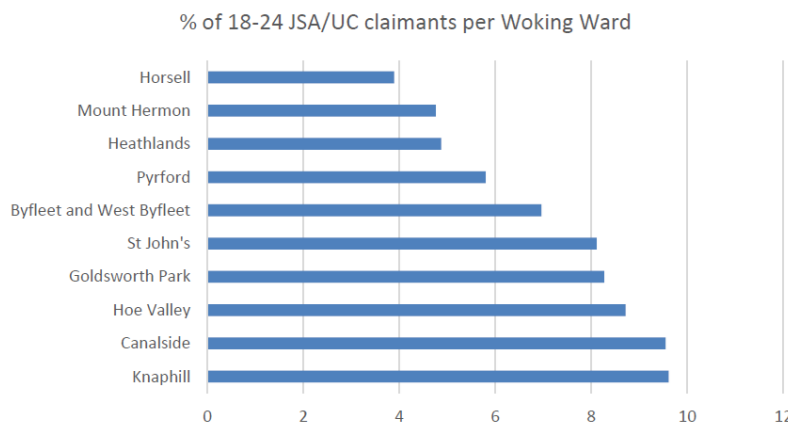
Figure: Unemployment benefit (Jobseekers Allowance/Universal Credit) claimants  
 Source: Department for Work and Pensions



In summer 2020 Surrey County Council undertook analysis of furlough data to identify at risk employees and Woking ranked seventh (out of eleven districts and boroughs) in Surrey for quantity of at risk employees. This analysis also looked at unemployment rates and identified that communities with the highest existing unemployment may also be hit hardest by future redundancies. Canalside and Hoe Valley appeared in the top two for both indicators.

Youth unemployment is a particular concern. 7.7% of 18-24 year olds in Woking claimed JSA or UC in March 2021 (South East: 7.9%, Great Britain: 9.1%)<sup>38</sup>. The number of claimants in this category in Woking has more than tripled in the year since March 2020.

Per Ward, the breakdown is as follows:



Hoe Valley (9.7%) and St Johns (9.2%) have the highest figures which are above the national (9.2%), countywide (6.1%) and local average (7.9%). All Woking wards apart from Horsell are above the Surrey average.

Youth unemployment has also been significantly impacted by the pandemic. In December 2020 there were 882 Woking residents aged 18-24 in receipt of UC. Prior to the pandemic there were approximately 250 recipients at any one time.

The council's [Economic Development Strategy](#) 2017-2022 has five themes:

- Economic Dynamism;
- Economic Strength;
- People Skills and Workforce;
- Transport and Infrastructure; and

<sup>38</sup> [https://www.nomisweb.co.uk/reports/lmp/la/1946157338/subreports/cca\\_time\\_series/report.aspx?](https://www.nomisweb.co.uk/reports/lmp/la/1946157338/subreports/cca_time_series/report.aspx?)

- Place Making.

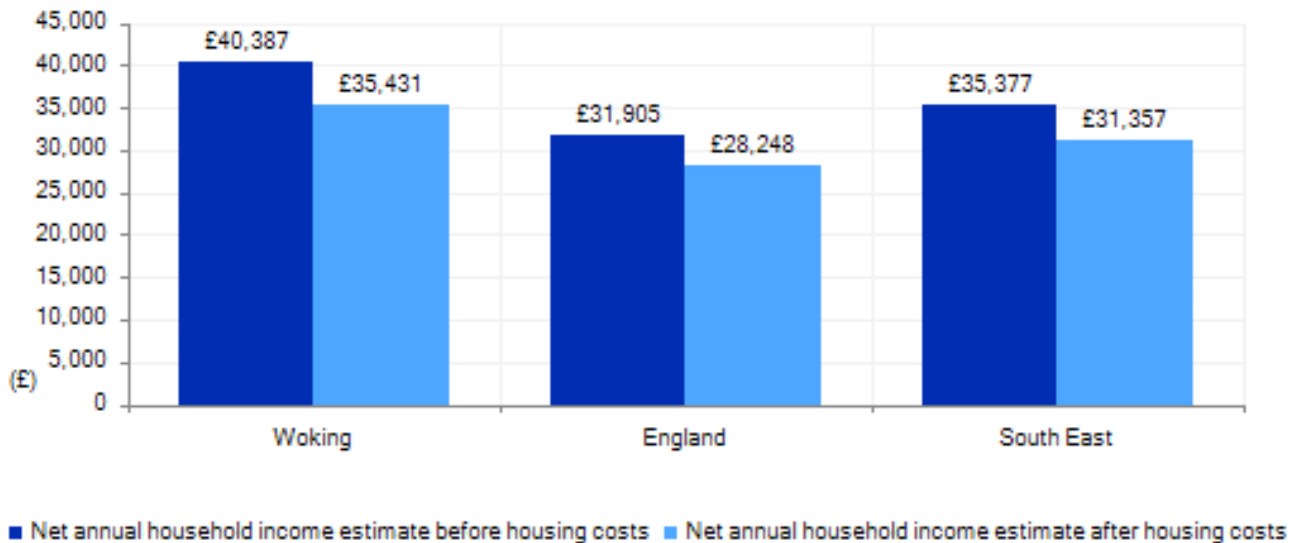
The priorities for action in the strategy include several designed to positively affect employment (and income) in Woking, including encouraging local recruitment.

The council has recently commissioned Surrey Care Trust to deliver a Youth Hub project to support 18-24 year olds in receipt of UC. This project launched in April 2021 based in Moorcroft Centre for the Community (which is in Westfield, Hoe Valley ward which has the highest level of UC/JSA claimants aged 18-24 in Woking) and also utilising centres in Byfleet and Knaphill. The project provides targeted support to help young people in Woking into employment through holistic support, links to business opportunities and the [Kickstart Scheme](#). In addition, within the community campus as part of the Sheerwater development (see case study on page [57]), the council will seek to incorporate support for young people in training and skills development.

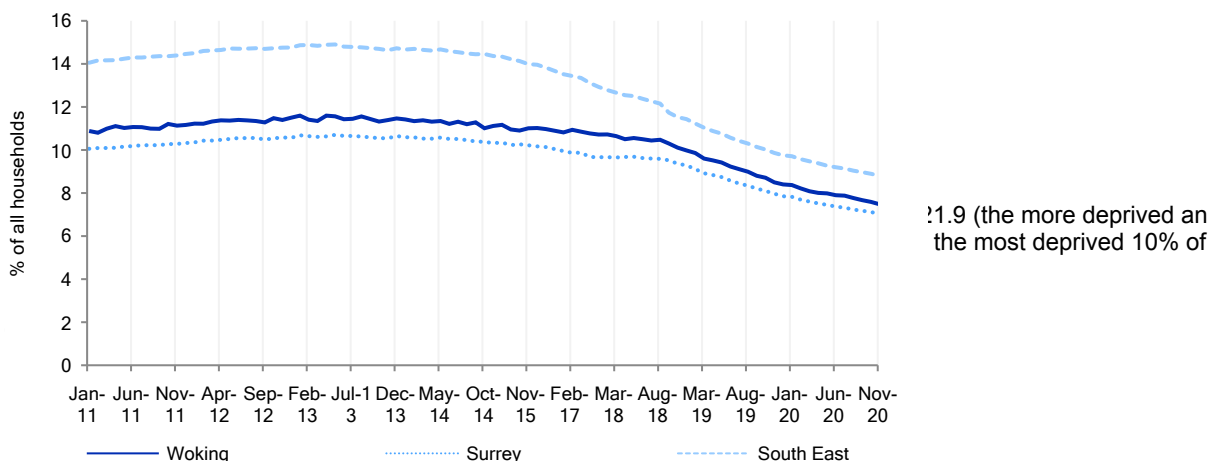
### INCOME

Woking is one of the 20% least deprived districts/unitary authorities in England<sup>39</sup>.

The chart below shows the estimated average annual household income (equivalised to consider variations in household size) across Woking and comparator areas before and after housing costs. It shows that Woking is more prosperous than the South East on average.

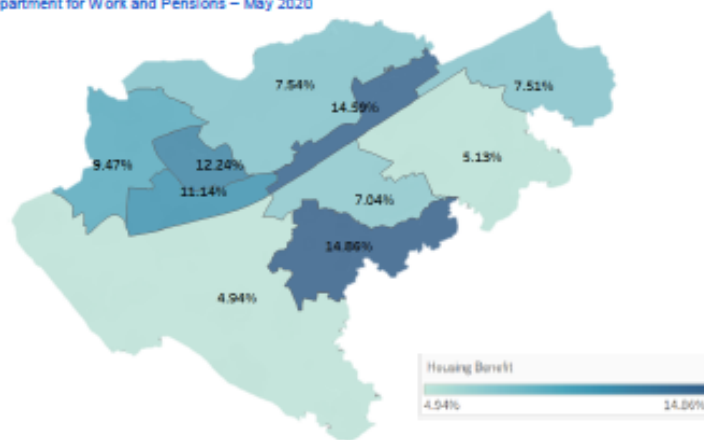


The chart below shows the trend for those claiming housing benefit. Woking ranks second highest in Surrey for housing benefit claimants, although Woking's housing benefit claimant numbers have been decreasing along with the national figures.



The map below shows the breakdown of housing benefit claimants by ward. Canalside and Hoe Valley have the largest numbers of claimants.

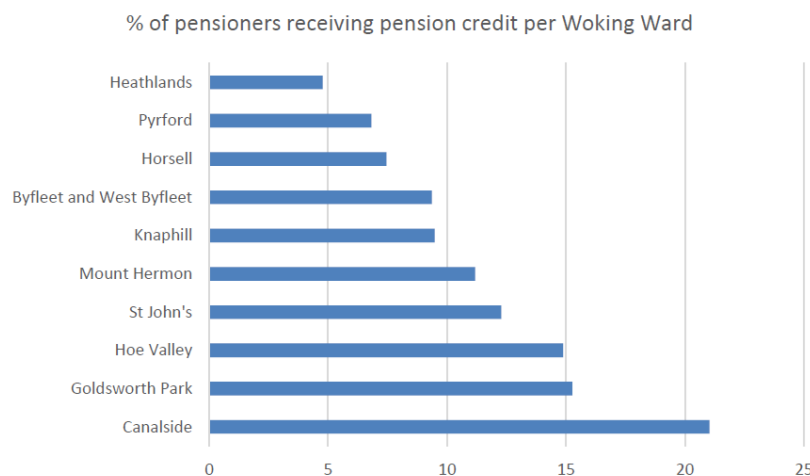
Figure: Shows the proportion of households receiving Housing Benefit (HB)  
Source: Department for Work and Pensions – May 2020



9.7% of children (under 16s) in Woking live in low income families, compared to 12.9% in the South East and 17.0% England.

Income is a particular issue for pensioners in Woking. 7.8% of pensioners in Woking receive pension credit, which equates to 1,345 pensioners. This is higher than the average across Surrey (6.8%) but lower than England (12.9%).

Per ward, the breakdown is as follows:



Of Woking wards, Canalside has the highest percentage (21%) of pensioners receiving pension credit and it is the second highest ward across the whole of Surrey. The percentage there is more than three times higher than the county average.

The impact of the Covid-19 pandemic can be measured by looking at the increase in claimants between March and April 2020, as well as estimates of the number of people furloughed. This impact is relatively evenly spread, though the centre of the borough has been affected less. Areas such as West Byfleet & Pyrford North, Old Woking & Westfield, and Sheerwater have been the most affected.



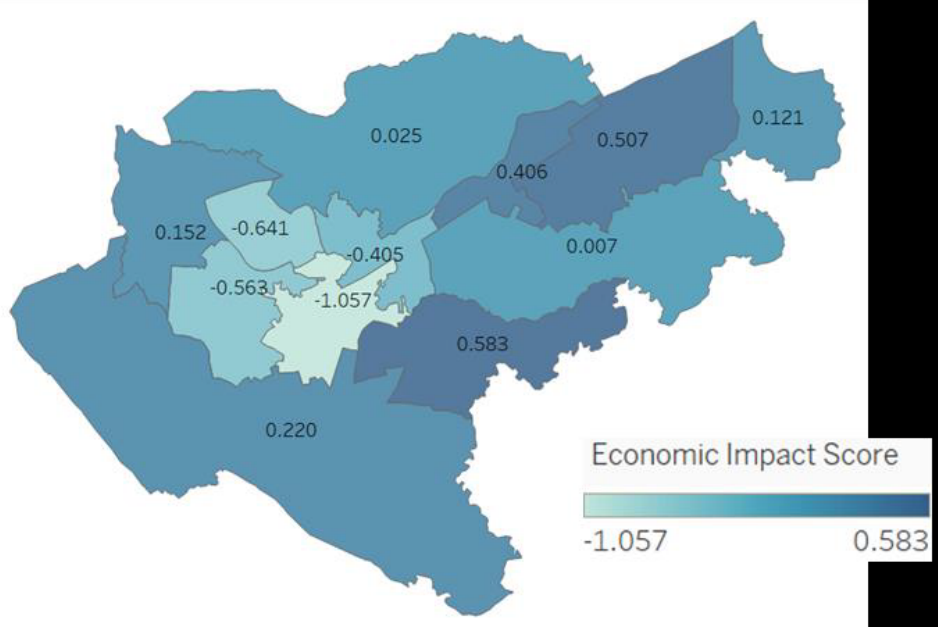


Figure 4: Shows the distribution of Covid-19 Economic Impact across MSOAs<sup>40</sup> in Woking (unemployment increases and people furloughed)

**FAMILY AND SOCIAL SUPPORT**

Family and social support are key determinants of health. They are particularly important for families (including single parent families) and people at risk of social isolation. There are over 14,000 single person households in Woking<sup>41</sup> and this is projected to continue increasing. There are over 1,800 lone parents with dependent families in Woking.

Woking’s planning strategy includes community facilities to support community cohesion and prevent isolation. The council seeks developer contributions to enable the provision of facilities or allocates land to enable the building of facilities.

The council also provides the following family and social support:

- Family Centres and Family Support Programme - these teams work with families and coordinate support across a range of areas including parenting, employment, education, physical and mental health, finances, healthy relationships, crime and anti-social behaviour. In the year to 9 March 2021, Family Centres received 168 referrals and supported a total of 297 children up to the age of 11. The main reasons for referrals were domestic abuse (32%), SEND (27%), and adult mental health including substance misuse (24%);
- Targeted youth work – the council runs targeted support jointly with Surrey County Council for; girls at risk of child exploitation, LGBT+ young people, children with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND), and young carers and looked after children. Approximately 50 young people are currently accessing services including mental health and wellbeing support, face-to-face sessions with youth workers, bereavement support, support with homework and Duke of Edinburgh Award programmes. Following a Surrey-wide consultation, the two Youth Centres in Woking (Sheerwater and WYAC) will be

<sup>40</sup> Middle Layer Super Output Areas (MSOAs) are a geographic hierarchy designed to improve the reporting of small area statistics in England and Wales.

<sup>41</sup> <https://www.ons.gov.uk/peoplepopulationandcommunity/birthsdeathsandmarriages/families/adhocs/11415singlepersonhouseholdsbyenglishandwelshlocalauthoritiesandscottishcouncilareas2012to2018>

leased to local voluntary organisations during 2021. The council is also using feedback from looked after children and care leavers to shape the services available in the Centres for the Community;

- Centres for the Community - four centres across the borough (Moorcroft, Parkview, St Mary's and The Vyne) provide meals and activities for older and vulnerable residents. The centres are also used by health visitors for baby clinics and parenting support and for hairdressing, chiropody, reflexology and assisted bathing services. Before the pandemic the centres received over 20,000 visits each month and in 2019/20 more than 13,000 meals were provided. The majority of services at these centres have been closed during the most recent lockdown but the council has plans to reopen them in line with government guidance;
- Volunteer management and charity support – the council supports volunteers to register for placements and charities to recruit volunteers. There are currently 1,000 volunteers registered and seeking placements. Many of these charities support families and people who are socially isolated, and volunteering can help volunteers to stay physically and mentally active while also reducing their own social isolation. Volunteer Woking also provides a range of other services including funding support, training, governance advice and information and knowledge sharing, to more than 450 charities and community groups in Woking;
- Social Prescribing– this service links people with social, emotional and practical needs to a range of local non-medical support provided in the community. This is one of the six components of the comprehensive model of personalised care described in the NHS Long Term Plan, and is designed to help improve an individual's health, wellbeing and resilience. Social prescribing looks at all aspects of the wider determinants of health and recognises that if an individual is able to improve one area of their life, it can have a positive impact on other factors. The team receives referrals from a range of sources including GP surgeries, district nurses, and social care workers. They signpost people to local services and activities, and attend sessions with individuals who do not feel comfortable doing so on their own. The service is being further developed by extending referrers to include the ambulance service, mental health trust and the Job Centre. There has been an increase in referrals from an average of 31 referrals per month in 2019/20 to an average of more than 50 per month in the first ten months of 2020/21 with a noticeable increase in referrals of males living alone (81 referrals from this demographic in 2019/20 increased to 133 in 2020/21 as at 19 March 2021); and
- Arts – Woking has a cinema, two theatres and a drama studio (Ypod). A new small theatre and studio, which will be used by the Italia Conti Academy of Theatre Arts, is being built as part of the Victoria Place town centre development. The council's Arts Officer liaises with a wide range of community drama, singing, dance and arts groups throughout the borough and sits on the Surrey Arts Partnership Board. Activities including the community choir have been run virtually during the pandemic.

In addition, Surrey County Council runs a number of participation groups for care leavers that are open to Woking residents. 'Care Council' exists for 13-25 year olds who are in care or have left care, 'Care Council Juniors' for 8-13 year olds in care, fostering or under special arrangements and 'Surrey Care Leavers' Forum' for care leavers aged 18+. There are currently approximately 41 care leavers in Woking who are supported by an allocated worker.

Carers provide vital, unpaid support to many people. A carer is anyone (child or adult) who cares, unpaid, for a family member, partner or friend who due to illness, disability, a mental

health problem or an addiction cannot cope without their support. There are almost 7,000 carers in Woking of which more than 2,000 are over the age of 65, and this figure is likely to be an under representation. Carers are twice as likely to suffer from ill health as non-carers and the council recognises the importance of supporting this group to enable them to continue in their caring roles.

Responding to the Carers UK's **State of Caring** 2018 survey, 72% of carers said they had suffered mental ill health and 61% said they had suffered physical ill health as a result of caring. 80% of people caring for loved ones said they had felt lonely or socially isolated. In March 2021, Public Health England published a report<sup>42</sup> stating that as there is evidence that carers experience worse health than non-carers, unpaid caring responsibilities should be considered a social determinant of health.

It is estimated that an additional 4.5 million people in the UK have taken on caring responsibilities during the pandemic and it has been widely reported that the pandemic has increased pressure on carers. For example, the Carers Trust found that 40% of young carers and 59% of young adult carers reported worsening mental health since Covid-19. They also reported that 70% of young carers are providing more care during the outbreak - 11% of young carers and 20% of young adult carers reported an increase of 30 hours or more in the amount of time they spend caring per week.<sup>43</sup>

Woking Council was the first district and borough in Surrey to sign up to the Together for Carers principles in March 2017, and the first to train staff to complete a carer's prescription which helps ensure that carers are provided with all available support. The council also signed up to the Young Carers Pledge in January 2020 to identify and support young carers living in the borough.

Over 1,400 adult carers in Woking are registered with Action for Carers Surrey, and approximately 1,100 of those are actively engaged, for example by attending social events or support events (currently provided virtually due to the pandemic). Action for Carers also supports over 300 young carers (aged 5-17) and 15 young adult carers (aged 18-24) in Woking. The council runs a Young Carers weekly club at Lakeview Centre for the Community and prior to the pandemic ran a Carers Choir and 'creative lunches' for people with dementia and their carers. In February 2021 Surrey Heartlands launched an end of life care website for carers - [Caring to the end](#). The council is promoting the website, which was co-produced with carers, to its residents.

## COMMUNITY SAFETY

Overall Woking is a safe place to live. However, the rate of violent crime (hospital admissions for violence) in Woking (34.9) is higher than the rate for the South East region (31.2) and is rising, as shown in the chart below, although it is lower than the England average (44.9).

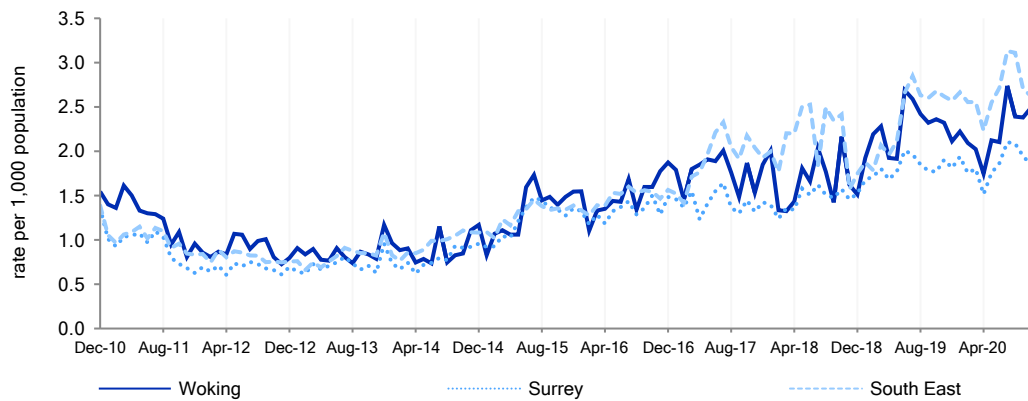
Figure 5: Violent crime offences

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<sup>42</sup> <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/caring-as-a-social-determinant-of-health-review-of-evidence>

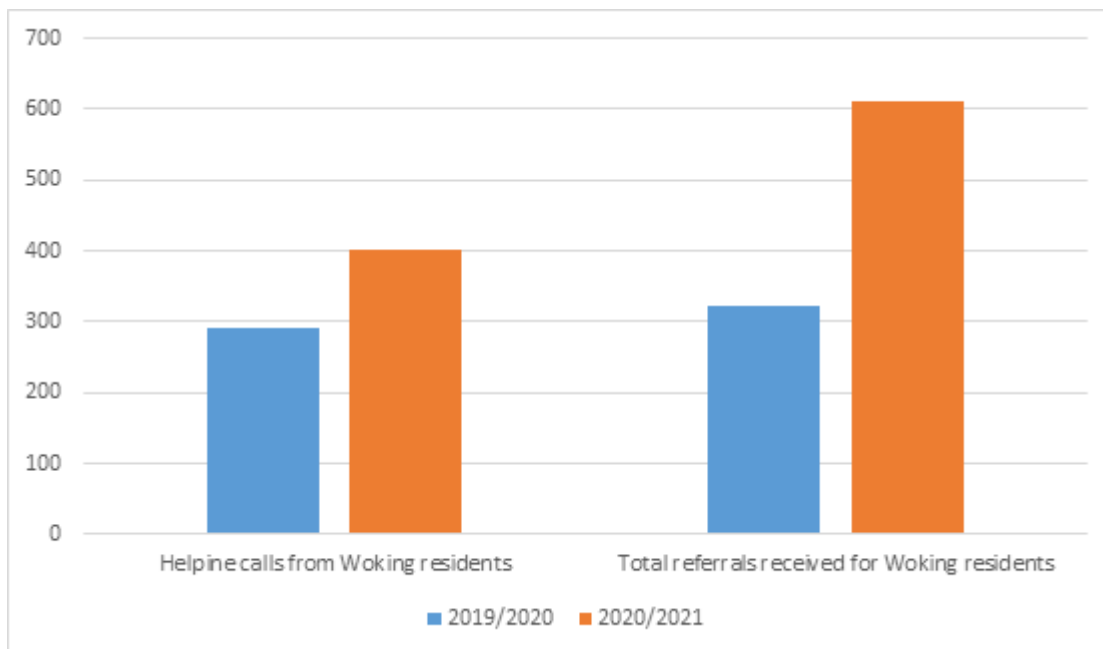
<sup>43</sup> <https://carers.org/downloads/what-we-do-section/my-future-my-feelings-my-family.pdf>

Source: <https://data.police.uk/>



Nationally one in three women and one in six men will experience an abusive relationship in their lifetime. Domestic abuse is considerably underreported but nevertheless there has been a year on year increase in the number of cases reported to Surrey Police now receiving an average of 1,000 reports each month across Surrey. There has been an 89% increase in Woking referrals to Your Sanctuary<sup>44</sup> in 2020/21 compared to the previous year, in line with the national picture. Your Sanctuary has heard from survivors that the lockdowns due to the pandemic have enabled perpetrators to increase levels of control and abuse (they do not believe that the lockdowns have made previously non-abusive people into perpetrators).

#### Your Sanctuary Domestic Violence Statistics 2019/20 and 2020/21

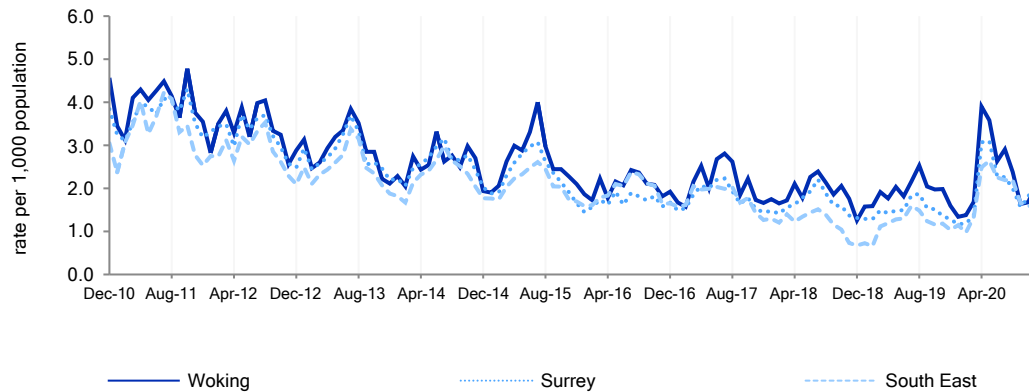


<sup>44</sup> Your Sanctuary provides specialist support services for survivors of domestic abuse, as well as their concerned families and friends, for further detail see page [54].

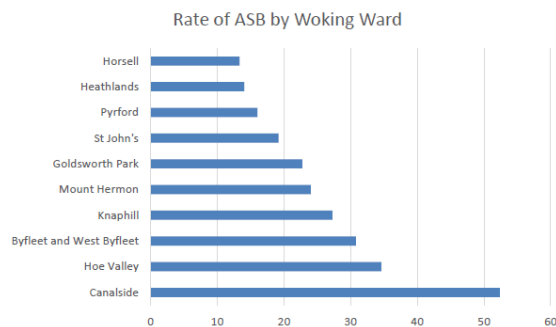
Woking's rate of anti-social behaviour (ASB) (29.3) is higher than the Surrey rate (27.1) but slightly lower than England (29.6). Woking's rate is the fourth highest in Surrey although it has been exhibiting a downward trend since 2010.

Figure 6: Anti-social behaviour offences

Source: <https://data.police.uk/>



Per ward, the breakdown is as follows:



Canalside has a significantly higher incidence of ASB than any other Woking ward, and with a rate of 52.8 it is ranked tenth compared to all wards in Surrey. It should be acknowledged that town centres are commonly the highest-ranking wards for this indicator. However, the Hoe Valley, Byfleet and West Byfleet, Goldsworth Park and Knaphill wards are all higher than the national, countywide and local rates for this indicator. It should be noted that this national dataset for ASB is based on police data and does not include ASB that has only been reported to the council.

Other types of crime, such as vehicle crime, criminal damage and burglary offences have remained reasonably static.

The Safer Woking Partnership was set up to help reduce crime in the area by promoting crime prevention initiatives and protecting the most vulnerable people in the community. As well as the council it includes representatives from Surrey County Council, Surrey Fire and Rescue Service, the NHS, Surrey Police and Kent Surrey and Sussex Community Rehabilitation Company. The [Safer Woking Partnership Plan](#) sets out the priorities, which include ASB. Due to the pandemic, the action plan for 2020/21 was not finalised as many of the planned engagement activities were not possible. The Partnership is in the process of developing its action plan for 2021/22.

[Woking Street Angels](#) are trained volunteers who, for the past ten years, have walked the streets of Woking town centre every Friday and Saturday night, from 10pm till 4am, to help

night-time visitors have a safe experience in the town. Typically, they help those who are intoxicated, lonely, sick, vulnerable, troubled or sleeping rough, working with police, door staff, CCTV, the council and medical services. The council has supported Woking Street Angels with grant funding.

[Your Sanctuary](#) provides specialist support services for survivors of domestic abuse, as well as their concerned families and friends, and is a source of advice for local professionals. The council provides an annual grant to Your Sanctuary and has collaborated with Your Sanctuary on campaigns to raise awareness.

## *Environment*

The built and natural environment refers to the physical environment. This includes: schools, workplaces, homes, communities, parks and recreation areas, green spaces (visible grass, trees and other vegetation) and blue spaces (visible water). The environment is a key factor which influences the health and wellbeing of local populations. For example, green infrastructure<sup>45</sup> can improve health through providing opportunities for physical exercise and boosting mental health by being in nature (termed 'biophilia') and the design of neighbourhoods can influence patterns of travel and social connectivity.

### ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY

15.9% of Woking is green space<sup>46</sup> which is higher than the averages for both Surrey (6.2%) and England (2.2%). However, public parks and gardens green space coverage is only 0.9% which is broadly in line with the average for England (0.8%) and lower than the Surrey average (1.8%).

The level of air pollutants (nitrogen dioxide, benzene, sulphur dioxide and particulates) in Woking is in line with the levels in Surrey and England. Levels for each of these pollutants do not exceed national standards for clean air.<sup>47</sup>

Woking 2050<sup>48</sup> is the council's current climate change strategy, adopted in 2015. It sets out a vision to create a sustainable borough by reducing our environmental impact. In 2019, the council declared a climate emergency and pledged to become zero carbon across its own estate and operations by 2030. A Climate Emergency Action Plan (CEAP) was put in place, building on ongoing work to deliver the objectives of Woking 2050.

A key tool the council is using to deliver the CEAP is Planet Woking. This aims to engage local residents, schools and businesses and enable them to play their part in enhancing the sustainability of the borough, and ultimately in achieving our aim of carbon neutrality. The website provides useful resources on what the council has been doing to tackle climate change locally as well as ideas and inspiration for what residents can do at home or work to

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<sup>45</sup> Green infrastructure includes parks, green spaces, playing fields, woodlands, street trees, allotments, private gardens, green roofs and walls, sustainable drainage systems and soils. It also includes rivers, streams, canals and other water bodies, sometimes called 'blue infrastructure'.

<sup>46</sup> Ordnance Survey data which includes allotments or community growing spaces, bowling greens, cemeteries, religious grounds, golf courses, other sports facilities, play spaces, playing fields, public parks or gardens and tennis courts.

<sup>47</sup> The council monitors air quality across the borough by monitoring nitrogen dioxide levels via diffusion tubes. Each year the data from this monitoring is analysed and forms the Annual Status Report which is submitted to DEFRA for approval. These reports can be found at <https://www.woking.gov.uk/environmental-services/pollution/air-quality>

<sup>48</sup> <https://www.woking.gov.uk/sites/default/files/documents/Nature/woking2050.pdf>

help lighten their environmental footprint. It also has a dedicated section for younger audiences, titled *Little Planet Woking*.

Natural Woking, the council's biodiversity and green infrastructure strategy, was adopted in 2016 and runs to 2050. It aims to promote and celebrate the borough's diverse countryside and urban environments, while enhancing accessibility to our natural habitats and wildlife. The Natural Woking strategy highlights the benefits that enjoying green spaces can bring including to health and wellbeing.

The council is a member of the Surrey Air Alliance, and works in partnership with Surrey District and Boroughs and Surrey County Council's Public Health and Highways Teams to improve air quality across the county. The council offers a free airAlert service which provides advance warning (by email, text message or voicemail) of high pollution levels to local residents who have respiratory problems such as asthma, COPD and emphysema. The council also participated in the School Air Quality programme which aimed to improve air quality by changing behaviours and encouraging more active travel. This involved raising awareness via theatre workshops for pupils, school travel planning and provision of cycle proficiency training.

## BUILT ENVIRONMENT

Housing is a key component of the built environment which impacts the health and wellbeing of residents. The predominant housing tenure in Woking is owner occupation (71%), in line with the national figure. Woking is a very expensive housing market area and house prices have increased significantly over the last five years. The latest Land Registry data shows that the average house price of all property types in Woking borough was £425,728 in November 2020. This is a 10.3% (+ £39,687) increase since November 2015. The average house price in Woking remains significantly higher than the national average of £249,633.

The private rental sector accounts for 14.6% and social housing for 10.9% of all housing locally. The average private rent in Woking (£1,863 per calendar month) is lower than across Surrey as a whole (£2,074 pcm). However, rents are significantly above the Local Housing Allowance (Housing Benefit) for the area, which creates challenges for many residents to secure good quality affordable private rental accommodation. The latest HomeLet Rental Index<sup>49</sup> shows that average rental values in the South East have increased by 2.8% when compared to September last year. The table below gives a breakdown of asking rents for privately rented homes as of February 2021, together with the applicable Local Housing Allowance (LHA) and the potential shortfall between these figures.

	<b>LHA month (pcm)</b>	<b>Average Asking Rent (pcm) February 2021</b>	<b>Potential Shortfall (pcm)</b>
1 Bed flat	£847.68	£976.00	£128.32
2 Bed flat	£1,096.98	£1,291.00	£194.02
2 Bed house	£1,096.98	£1,261.00	£164.02
3 Bed house	£1,371.24	£1,542.00	£170.76

<sup>49</sup> <https://homelet.co.uk/homelet-rental-index/south-east>

4 Bed house	£1,795.08	£2,042.00	£246.92
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The council operates a range of private sector access schemes to assist residents in securing private rented accommodation.

The Let's Rent service procures and supports tenancy sustainment for households that are homeless or threatened with homelessness. The service provides advice and support to tenants and landlords, and incentives for landlords. 365 tenancies were secured by the Let's Rent service between 1 April 2020 and 28 October 2020.

The council owns 3,361 properties (including temporary accommodation and shared ownership) in the borough. In addition, the council's housing provider partners (including ThamesWey Housing Limited<sup>50</sup> and housing associations) own approximately 2,200 in the borough (including shared ownership properties). In January 2021, there were 1,108 active households on the housing register.

The majority of housing register applicants need one and two bedroom properties (41% and 31% respectively), with three or more bedroom properties comprising the remaining 28% of current need.

The council's Core Strategy set a reasonable target of providing an additional 1,737 affordable dwellings for the period of the plan (2013 to 2027), equating to an annual target of

The **Sheerwater Regeneration programme** is a comprehensive programme on a 30 hectare site to deliver:

- 1,142 new homes (an increase of 570 with 619 open market and 523 affordable);
- Extensive new leisure facilities at Bishop David Brown School;
- New GP centre, dentist and pharmacy;
- New children's nursery;
- New community centre to replace the existing facilities at Parkview Centre for the Community ;
- Eight new retail spaces;
- c. 3 hectares of new open space and parkland; and
- c. 0.3 hectares of new play areas.

This is a phased six-year build programme. Work started on site in July 2020 with a target completion date of July 2025. The council's commitments to residents within the regeneration area are detailed in a document titled **The Community Charter for the Sheerwater Regeneration**. The council believes these commitments represent an enhanced package of measures beyond those required by statute. A dedicated Sheerwater Regeneration Housing Support Team has been based on site since November 2017 to provide help, support, information and advice to the local residents required to move from their homes for the development. An Independent Tenant Adviser has also been appointed to give secure council tenants independent advice. Compensation payments are being made to secure tenants and owner occupiers who are willing to move in advance of their property being required for the development. A regular newsletter produced by the council keeps the local residents up to date.

The council is committed to working with the community to make the programme a success. In December 2020 WellNorth Enterprises facilitated a workshop for people to share ideas and aspirations. Together, they discussed approaches to develop community spaces in Sheerwater and improve the health and wellbeing of Sheerwater residents. There were representatives from local schools, Muslim and Christian faith groups, maternity services, GPs, family services, charities, community interest companies, retail businesses and the council. Focus groups have been formed to develop shared ambitions and pursue opportunities including new leisure facilities, centre for the community and co-located family support and health services.



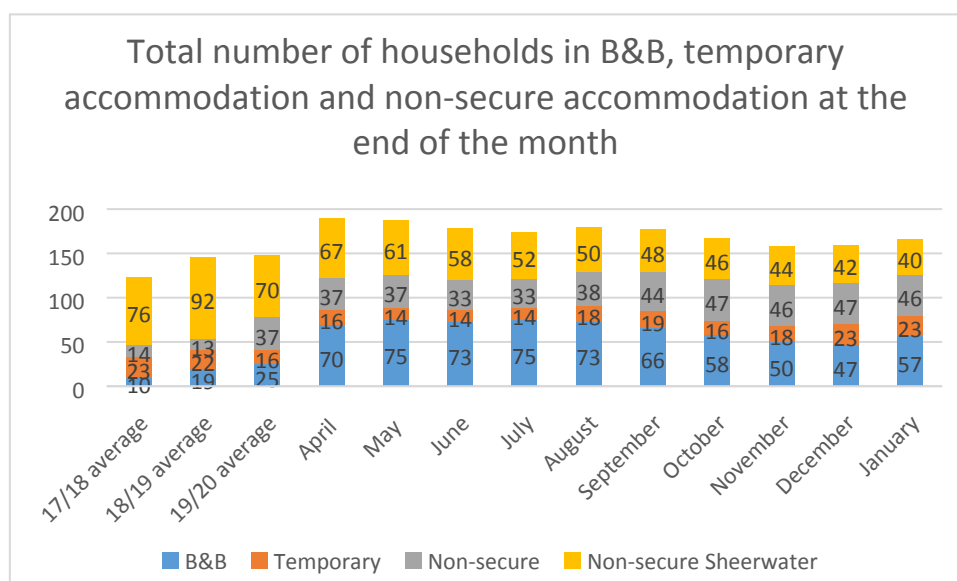
102 new affordable dwellings per annum. Of these, 70% of new affordable dwellings should be in the rented tenure (social and affordable) and 30% at intermediate level (including shared ownership). The council is committed to continuing to work with Registered Providers, Thamesway Housing Limited and private developers to facilitate the provision of 102 new affordable homes each year, as well as, identifying new-build opportunities on council-owned land. 581 affordable dwellings have been delivered to date comprising 316 affordable/social rent dwellings and 261 intermediate dwellings. There are a further 436 affordable homes planned for delivery by 2023/24, including 74 as part of the Sheerwater Regeneration programme.

Overcrowding is an issue affecting 4.79% of households in Woking. This is the highest level in Surrey (which has an average of 3.43%) and only slightly lower than the average for England (4.81%). There are links between overcrowding and both homelessness and mental health issues. Repeated lockdowns due to the pandemic have exacerbated the mental health consequences of overcrowding as people have spent more time at home.

The council is in the process of developing a housing strategy to cover the period 2021-2026 with the following priorities:

- Providing well designed high-quality homes that are affordable and meet local needs;
- Preventing homelessness and helping those in housing need;
- Helping people to achieve independence and wellbeing;
- Delivering an improved housing service to our tenants and leaseholders; and
- Enhancing choice, standards and quality within the private rental sector.

In recent years there has been a significant increase in the number of households who are homeless in Woking. This includes families, single people, young people and people who are sleeping rough. This trend is also reflected nationally, and the increase has been accelerated by the roll out of Universal Credit and the Homelessness Reduction Act 2017. At the end of October 2020, the council was accommodating 167 homeless households in some form of emergency accommodation. Typically, over the last 2 years, this number has been around 130 – 150. This increase reflects the additional numbers accommodated in hotels through the Covid-19 pandemic and the ‘Everyone In’ government initiative.



In the [Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy 2020-2024](#), the council sets out how it will work with partners to address homelessness in Woking and support residents in housing crisis. Actions will be targeted at delivering on the following four strategic priorities:

- Preventing homelessness and offering early help;
- Providing a range of accommodation options;
- Supporting vulnerable residents through partnership working; and
- Reducing rough sleeping.

Planning policy and guidance at a local and national level shapes the built environment. Surrey County Council has developed specific guidance, **Creating Healthier Built Environments**, to support and enable health and planning colleagues to share planning policy which addresses public health issues and embeds health and wellbeing into planning decisions.

Within Woking, the council undertakes a sustainability appraisal approach to any planning activity. This ensures that health and wellbeing are appropriately considered. The council's planning strategy includes the integration of open spaces into development, securing spaces for recreation and ensuring sustainable alternative natural spaces.

The council provides a range of services to support Woking residents in their own homes. Given the forecast ageing of the population, there is an increased focus on assisting people over the age of 65 to be independent in their own homes. Services include:

- Homesafe Plus Service (a joint venture with Runnymede, Spelthorne and Elmbridge Borough Councils) – enables a safe, co-ordinated approach to a person's discharge from hospital and provides support in the early weeks upon return home. These services may include community meals, handyman/home improvement services, social prescribing or informing the council of a housing need. The service receives approximately 250 referrals a year relating to Woking residents. In November 2020 NWS ICP approved further investment in this service (from Covid-19 contingency funds) providing a co-ordinator role;
- Independent Support Service – provides help with a wide variety of tasks (excluding personal care, domestic cleaning and gardening) to allow elderly and vulnerable people to remain independent and safe in their own homes for longer. This service provides support to anyone who needs it, for however long they need, regardless of their status as private renter, housing association tenant or owner occupier. The team supports approximately 450 Woking residents and works mainly with clients who have dementia, physical disability and mental health disorders, (including hoarding);
- Handyperson Service – supports quick hospital discharge and home independence. This free service (managed by Homelink) can action minor adaptations such as installing grab rails, undertake home security work including advice and installation of key safes, and undertake home safety checks to identify trip hazards and test smoke detectors. The service also offers a charged DIY service for minor repairs. The service received approximately 1,583 referrals for Woking residents in 2020/21 and completed an average of 132 jobs each month;
- Community Meals Service – provides cost effective, nutritionally balanced meals 365 days a year to enable people who find it difficult or impossible to prepare a meal to continue living at home. As a result of the pandemic there has been a more than 50% increase in demand for the community meals service compared to the previous year;
- Careline - supports people to continue living in their homes by installing community alarms, worn around the wrist or neck which summon assistance and provide confidence. There are approximately 1,800 Careline clients in Woking;
- Falls Responder Service - provides timely support to the 1,800 Careline customers in Woking in an emergency situation by sending a responder and specialist lifting

equipment to return a fallen customer to a comfortable upright position within 60 minutes of their sounding the alarm. Work is also underway to develop an integrated approach that ensures an individual can be assessed at home rapidly, to prevent hospital admission. This involves assessing what services and equipment might be needed to support this. Although the service has been suspended during the pandemic, proposals are being considered to extend it across North West Surrey due to its success;

- Independent Living Schemes – there are 48 self-contained flats and communal facilities at Brockhill. 20 of these are included in the Surrey County Council extra care contract. This unique housing scheme in Goldsworth Park was designed to meet the needs of elderly residents by providing round the clock care, so that those with additional support needs can remain as independent as possible. Brockhill residents can benefit from day facilities, activities, lunches, a hair salon, chiropody and access to a large dining room where meals can be purchased daily. Hale End Court in Old Woking will comprise of 48 units (12 with extra care) and is due to open in September 2021;
- Woking Independent Show Home (WISH) opened at Brockhill in December 2019 to allow people to experience different types of adaptations and assess the suitability of various aids and equipment that might enable them to live independently. WISH also showcases the latest smart technology allowing both carers and older people to see how they can benefit from, for example, voice activated heating and lighting, video doorbells and voice activated curtain rails. WISH is a multi-agency show room and the council works here with Adult Social Care and Sight for Surrey;
- Homelink - provides advice, support and assistance to elderly, disabled and vulnerable people in Woking who wish to improve or adapt their accommodation to continue living at home, or need assistance to carry out essential repairs. They work with those who own their properties or privately rent. This team also administers a selection of home improvement grants for disabled, elderly or vulnerable residents. The council's generous Housing Assistance Policy<sup>51</sup> aimed at prevention enables wet rooms and stair lifts to be provided free of charge without means testing. The council's Disabled Facility Grant is currently the largest in Surrey at c. £1.2m per annum. The team receives an average of 16 enquiries and completes an average of 9 jobs each month;
- Woking Safer Living and Independence Consultancy Clinic (SLICC) - based at Brockhill and run jointly with Surrey County Council Adult Social Care Occupational Therapists, this service supports up to 200 people each year. Woking residents are invited to discuss mobility issues by appointment and trial equipment with an OT to remain independent within their own homes. A store of equipment is maintained at the clinic so that clients can take home what they require; and
- Home2Home Service - a service designed to assist owner-occupiers to downsize into more appropriate accommodation. This frees up family homes and enables residents to remain independent longer in a safe and secure manageable environment. The service is available to homeowners within the borough who are elderly, disabled or vulnerable and are unable to move without support as they have no relatives/carers who could assist them and would otherwise remain in accommodation inappropriate for their needs. Properties are initially offered to Thamesway Housing Limited to enable a quick buyer option and solution where

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<https://woking.gov.uk/sites/default/files/documents/HousingDocs/Housing%20Assistance%20Policy%20April%202019%20final.pdf>

appropriate. This service was introduced in early 2020 but has been paused during the pandemic.

### *Clinical care*

The council has limited influence over the quality of clinical care. However, it can and does influence access to clinical care, for example through the provision of space for health services in the local community and ensuring that transport provides easy access to health services. In addition, the stigma surrounding mental health issues can prevent people from seeking help, and the council can play a role in reducing this.

The council does not provide any clinical physical health services, and these are primarily provided by the NHS. Social care services are provided by Surrey County Council. As of October 2020, Woking social care team was supporting 1,005 individuals and carers. This includes the provision of residential, nursing, home-based care, supported living and direct payment packages to older people aged 65+ and people with a physical and sensory disability.

The council works in partnership to support delivery of these services to Woking residents. For example, in November 2020 outpatient physiotherapy services were relocated from Ashford and St Peter's Hospital to five new physiotherapy rooms at the Leisure Centre to improve access, provide the opportunity to link recovery programmes with exercise at the gym and encourage local residents to access facilities and activities they may not have previously used<sup>52</sup>. NWS ICP will be reviewing how and where care services are accessed, including reviewing further opportunities for services to be delivered in the community, as well as remote and virtual services. All of these changes should enable and encourage people and communities to manage their own health and care.

[Woking Community Transport](#) (Bustler / WCT) is a not for profit organisation run for the benefit of the community. WCT provides accessible door-to-door transport to those who would otherwise be socially excluded because of poverty, vulnerability, disability or age, including operating community services on behalf of the council. WCT completes in excess of 100,000 journeys per year. Core services include dial-a-ride (e.g. for shopping, doctor and hospital appointments), transportation to Centres for the Community and NHS patient transport. WCT featured in the 2020 Parliamentary Review (a series of independent publications aiming to share best practice among policymakers and business leaders), the first community transport organisation to do so.

A range of organisations are involved in providing mental health services including; Surrey and Borders Partnership NHS Foundation Trust, other NHS providers such as the GP integrated mental health service (which has had more than 200 referrals since launching in Woking in August 2020), Surrey County Council, and the third sector, (e.g. Woking Mind). A Mental Health and Housing Support Worker from Woking Mind now works within the council's housing department to provide advice and support for staff and service users, and reduce the impact mental health difficulties have on maintaining a tenancy.

The council, in partnership with other districts and boroughs, Surrey County Council, the Fire Service and other relevant agencies, is leading on the development of a Surrey-wide hoarding protocol. The protocol sets out a framework for an outcome focused, solution-based model, offering clear guidance for staff working with hoarders. Approximately 40

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<sup>52</sup> 30% of Woking residents have never visited the Leisure Centre.

members of council staff received training on hoarding in autumn 2019. As part of the Sheerwater regeneration the council has identified a number of hoarding cases and is working with residents on a case-by-case basis to provide appropriate support.

In 2019, Woking was recognised by the Alzheimer's Society as the first Dementia Friendly Community in Surrey. A Dementia Friendly Community is a city, town or village where people with dementia are understood, respected, supported, and confident they can contribute to community life. Woking's Dementia Action Alliance (DAA) was established in autumn 2017 and has a broad range of members from statutory agencies, the council, voluntary organisations, community and faith groups, retailers, theatre and cinema complex businesses and banks. Since it was established, Woking's DAA has provided dementia awareness training for DAA partners, arranged a series of free dementia awareness sessions for members of the public, recruited six volunteer Dementia Champions and organised dementia friend sessions at Shah Jahan Mosque and local community groups.

The council has a range of services to specifically support residents with dementia including:

- Dementia Handyperson Scheme - installs assistance equipment to support people wishing to live independently at home free of charge, such as colour contrast grab rails and toilet seats;
- Palliative Grant Scheme (in partnership with Woking Hospice) - assists those nearing the end of their life to have emergency home adaptations enabling them to return to the comfort of their own home;
- 'Bright' brochure - promoting dementia services for residents living with the condition and their carers; and
- Dementia Action Week – a week-long annual programme of events and activities for people with dementia and their carers.

In addition, in 2017 the council became the first local authority in Surrey to pledge its support to carers looking after someone with dementia through the Carers Woking Together Memorandum of Understanding.