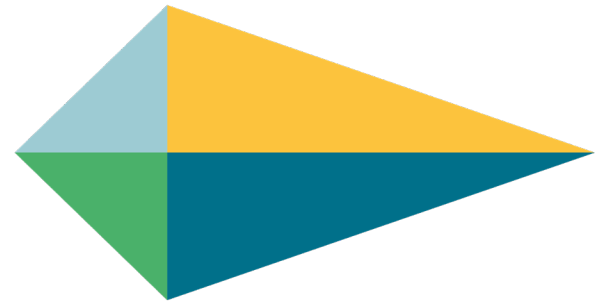


Reducing isolation
and improving
mental wellbeing
through community
leisure and sport





EASTSUFFOLK
COUNCIL

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**Active
Suffolk**



**Places
Leisure**

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Fit Villages

Fit Villages is a well-established and popular project that makes a real difference to local communities by bringing people together to socialise, have fun and become more active.

We support villages in rural locations to set up physical activity sessions for adults aged over 55 by using local facilities such as community centres, village halls, libraries and playing fields. We've helped many villages across Suffolk to set up lots of fun and exciting activities such as **Pilates, Yoga, Table Tennis, Nordic Walking, Zumba, Badminton, Keep Fit and Walking Football**, as well as many more!

After 8 weeks...

77% participants felt closer to the people in their community

62% participants made more regular use of their community building

89% participants had no problems doing their usual activities



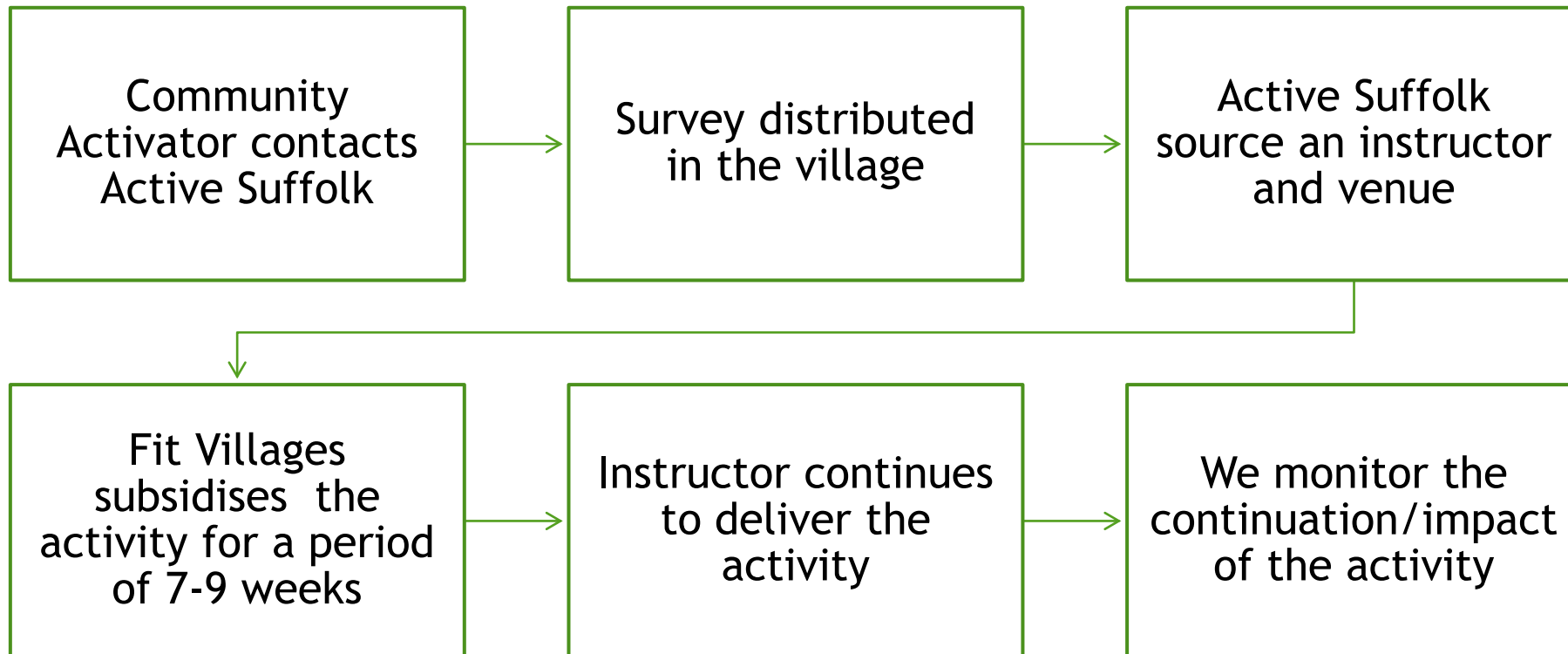
Active Suffolk celebrates after receiving over £220,000 of funding to continue their incredibly successful Fit Villages project

06 Dec 2023

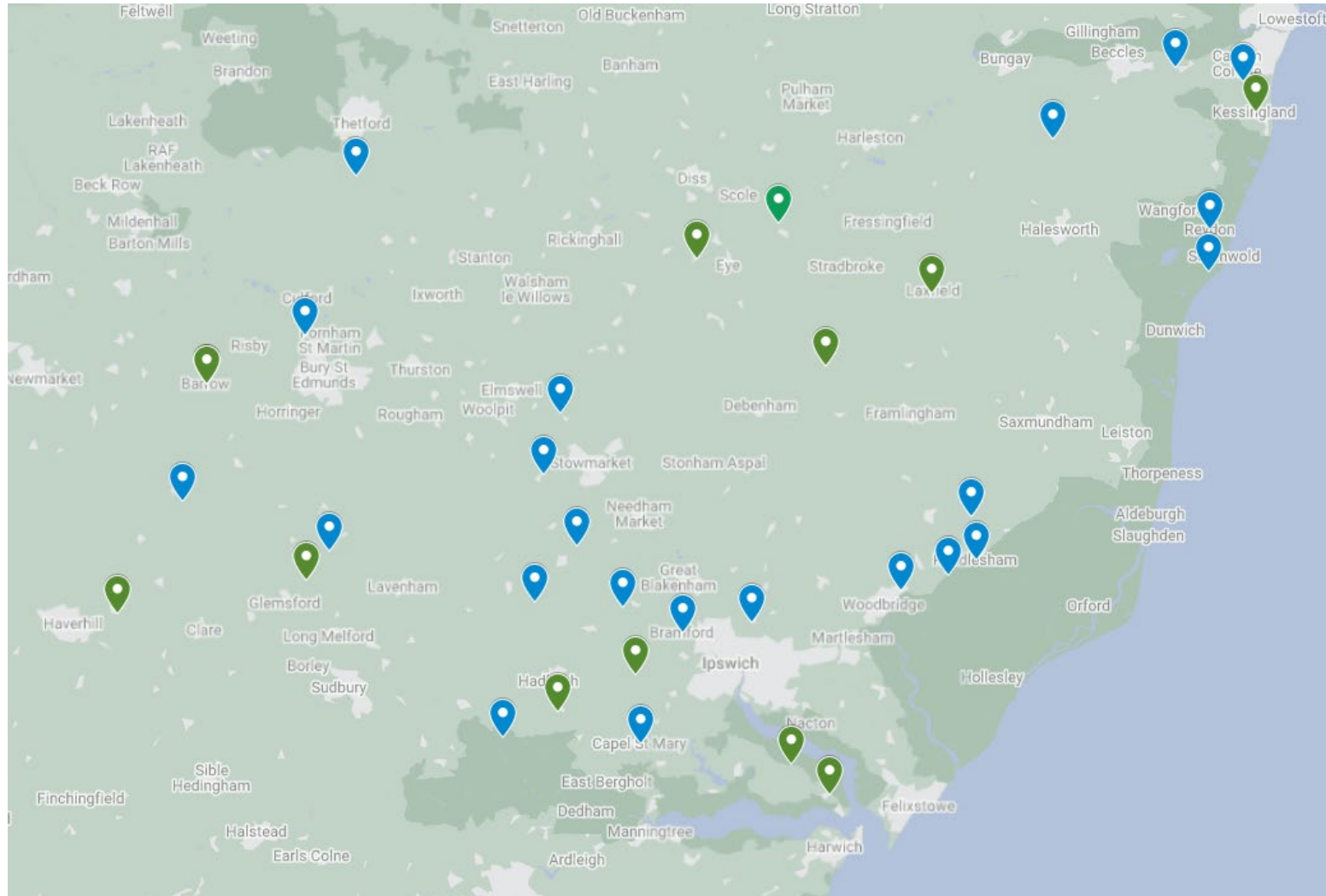
- Total of £220,000 secured from National Lottery Funding, Suffolk County Council, West Suffolk Alliance and West Suffolk Council.
- This will extend the delivery of Fit Villages across Suffolk for a further 2 years.
- This will fund an additional 60+ projects to be setup across Suffolk which will be split across the local authority areas.



The Fit Village Model



Fit Village Map



Strength and Balance



Commissioned by the Ipswich and East Suffolk Alliance. To undertake a joint programme providing a Strength and Balance service in Ipswich and East Suffolk.

District Councils involved.

- East Suffolk District Council
- Babergh Mid-Suffolk District Council
- Ipswich Borough Council

The programme (OTAGO) consists of a total of 12 sessions that focus on Strength and Balance exercises. It is designed to provide residents with a training programme to decrease the risk of falls by improving the following;

1. Gait
2. Balance
3. Coordination
4. Muscular Strength
5. Confidence

Aims and Deliverables

1

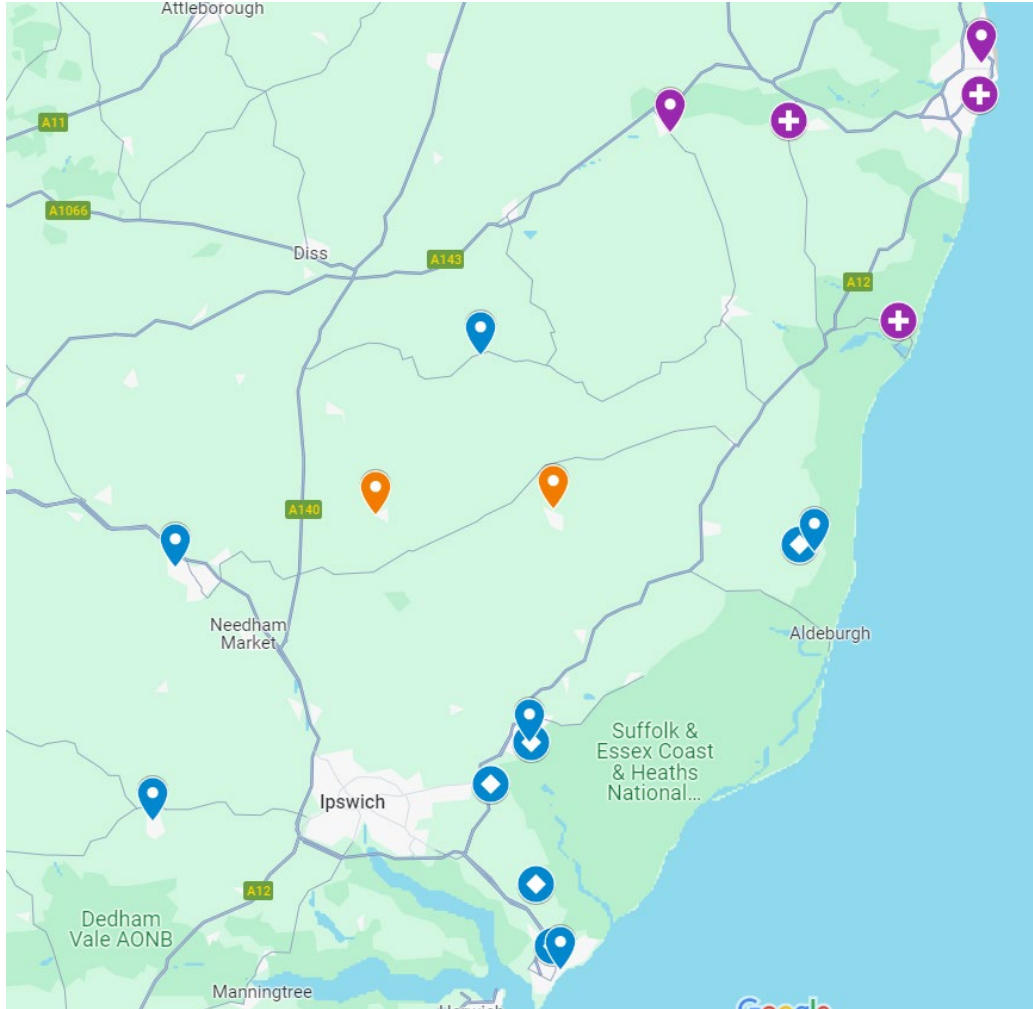
Counter the negative effects of aging and sedentary behaviours by implementing a successful Strength and Balance intervention, and therefore reduce the number of falls or subsequent falls in Suffolk.

2

Promote healthy independent living for those age 65+, by encouraging residents to stay active.

3

Save the NHS money and resources by helping in the reduction of demand on emergency services and reduce the likelihood of admissions to hospital due to falls.



Providers

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Changes Lives ●●●

Abbeycroft Leisure
INSPIRING A HEALTHIER YOU

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Waveney*

Although not funded by the Ipswich and East Suffolk Alliance. There are similar projects in place such as Escape Pain, Good Boost, and Chair-Based Exercise classes running out of community venues.

How many people over 65 fall each year? – *Studies show that one in three over 65s have at least one fall a year, however the risk of falls increases to one in two for people aged over 80.* - This means around six elderly people fall every minute in the UK, equating to around 8,500 falls a day.

Source : [Elderly Falls and NHS Healthcare Report | TakingCare](#)

What are the ambulance wait times? - “On average, the South West has the overall longest ambulance wait times in the UK with an average of over 14 hours. The East of England comes in close second with an average wait time of 14 hours.”

Source : [Elderly Falls and NHS Healthcare Report | TakingCare](#)

How much does it cost? - “According to the NHS, falls cost an estimated £2.3 billion in the UK every year and are one of the biggest reasons for elderly people to be taken into A&E, with more than 250,000 hospital admissions in the over 65s every year.”

Source : [Elderly Falls and NHS Healthcare Report | TakingCare](#)

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- Everyone is Family – affordable campaign during summer holidays to promote and sustain relationships/interactions through activities.
- East Suffolk Community Outreach Programmes – take activities to rurally isolated communities.
- Sporting Memories – Dementia specific session aimed at emotional connections through sport.
- Target cohorts – accessible leisure opportunities.
- Specific Sessions– Literacy & Numeracy. [Good Boost](#)
- Back on track- Group exercise classes designed and tailored for anyone with a cancer diagnosis at Brackenbury Sports Centre
- Sporting Memories- Dementia specific session aimed at emotional connections through sport. Felixstowe leisure Centre
- Falls Prevention classes- Otago based exercise classes to help reduce the risk of falls and frailty.
- Summer social value drive- Ran in summer 23 looking to run again in summer 24, free swimming for children on free school meals.



If you had an unlimited budget, what leisure and sport interventions would you like see in your community to help reduce isolation and improve mental wellbeing?

Free transport to and training to football clubs, rugby clubs, golf clubs etc

Cycle tracks

Increased funding for outreach services

Multi use games area in each village

Leisure bus to travel to remote areas that people can meet up on.

Free swimming, golf, Bowles walks, cycling rides

Social opportunities as part of the activity. Time to talk over a cuppa and build friendships.

Free sport for all and free access to good quality facilities in local communities. Free transport to and from

Crèches so that new mums can exercise/socialise. Facilities for Cared For so that unpaid Carers can participate in activities.

Even more activities available for all ages within East Suffolk.

Weekly free session for everyone including transport costs

A selection of activities for all ages and backgrounds

Green gyms

Free sports

Help to remove barriers by facilitating better transport services.

Easily discoverable walking groups

Resource for outreach delivery, upskilling and incentive for community champions, influence within the education system, dedicated posts within primary care

Activities which are fully funded to encourage people to attend and taken out to communities so people don't have to travel to urban areas.

A holistic sports centre, creating a hub for multiple activities to be undertaken by anyone from the community.

Older persons sports

Regular, reliable transport for those wanting to get out into nature

More leisure centres

Free swimming for all school children.

If you had NO budget, what leisure and sport interventions would you like to see delivered in your community to help reduce isolation and improve mental wellbeing

Make use of public spaces such as parks and beaches. Walking, swimming, cycling and gym trails.

Weekly chair based exercise class in the village hall

Make use of free public spaces such as parks and beaches

Online exercise classes

Buggy walk

Saving Green space, park run, partnership working with health systems, advocacy of sport and activity

Set up social walks that meet at a pub or a café

Park Run

Activities based around people's interests shared with a wider audience

Signposting to activities run by existing community groups e.g. running/athletics clubs

Organise cycle meets with safe routes.

Sensory walks set up on Strava app

Walking group

Running club

Health walks

Guided walks,

Walking group

Wellbeing walks

Self-guided walking routes

Free walking groups

Walks

Bowls on a green in centre of village

Walking groups

Thinking about the ideas that have been generated, are there any that could be implemented in your Town, Village and/or Parish?

Put up posters to advertise

Promote activities in parish magazines and news letter

Work with local community groups, pubs , libraries care homes to promote

Local info link champion's to check and share local activities with community communication hubs such as news letters

Walking groups, exercise classes at village halls, social meet-ups to do activities together

Using our green spaces and beaches.

Activity representation within health networks, business planning for sustainability, developing community hubs

Introduction of active village to the parishes North of Lowestoft.

Encouraging social meet ups at café and walking - buggy walk, doggie walks, etc

Promote what's out there already, lots to do but not everyone will be aware.

Create a community sports hub to link people to parkrun and sports clubs in the area.

Sensory walks accessible on apps

Thank you

Come and see us in the Market Place for more information about any of the initiatives that have been spoken about today or if you think we could help your community.

