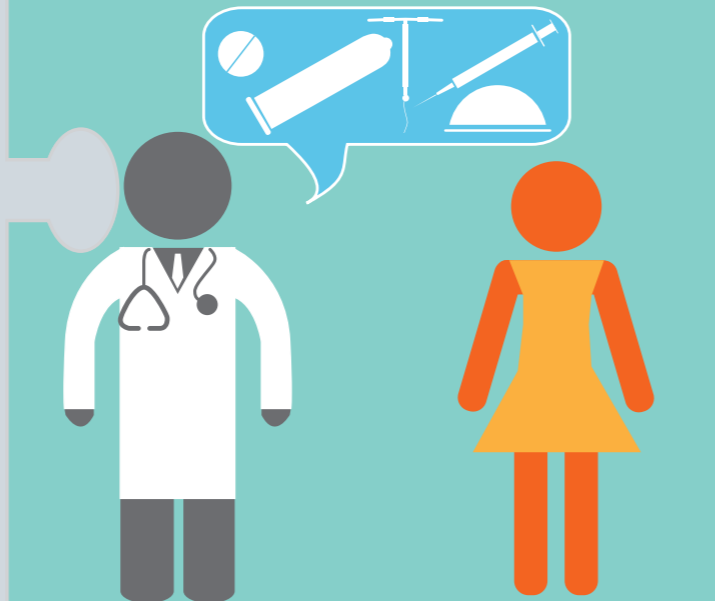


Smoking cessation



Reducing teenage pregnancy



Active travel - cycling and scootering



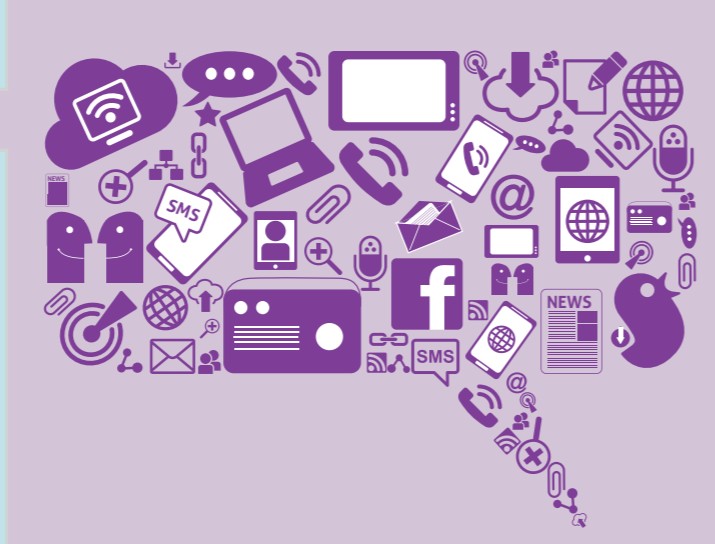
Working together



Active travel - walking



Spreading the message



The annual report of the Director of Public Health

for Stoke-on-Trent, 2014



I was thrilled during 2014 to come to Stoke-on-Trent and join such a committed Public Health Team. The public's health is a vital part of the future success of our city and I am pleased to report that progress is being made in a number of areas – rates of sexually transmitted infections are lower than the average level for England, a focus on Healthy Urban Planning is reaping benefits and we hosted an excellent series of 'Big Debates' which attracted large numbers of local residents to discuss key issues such as obesity and alcohol. There is still much to do, however. In the coming year there needs to be an increased focus on tackling smoking, more work to reduce the number of young women under the age of 18 who get pregnant, a focus on promoting walking and cycling, more opportunities for young people and even better spreading of messages on how to stay healthy.

Dr Lesley Mountford, Director of Public Health

Health in context

Stoke-on-Trent is steeped in history and tradition and its legacy of the pottery, coal and steel industries can still be seen across the six towns which make up this great city. During 2014 the Wedgwood collection – one of the most important industrial archives in the world and a unique record of 250 years of British art – was saved for future generations of local people. The modern ceramics industry is thriving and Stoke-on-Trent has been reported as 4th out of 64 UK cities for job creation over the last year, with a 3.1% increase in jobs since 2012.

The improving economic and social environment of the Potteries is very encouraging, but deep health inequalities still exist locally. Male life expectancy, at birth, is 76.5 years which is significantly below the national average of 79.4 years, and the gap is increasing. For women, average life expectancy at birth is 80.6 years which is significantly below the average of 83.1 years in England.

Working together

To improve the health and wellbeing of the 250,000 people who call Stoke-on-Trent their home, and the thousands of people who commute to work in the city everyday, requires the cooperation and commitment of many individuals and organisations. Stoke-on-Trent's Health and Wellbeing Board is now well established with its membership drawn from the council, Stoke-on-Trent Clinical Commissioning Group, the voluntary sector and our three large local NHS providers: The Royal Stoke University Hospital, North Staffordshire Combined Healthcare (which provides services for mental health issues) and the Staffordshire and Stoke-on-Trent Partnership NHS Trust, which provides community services.



The Dudson Centre in Hanley, home of Voluntary Action Stoke-on-Trent (VAST) a charity providing services and support to voluntary and community groups, charities and social enterprises in Staffordshire

The strength of local partnership working was evident during the Local Government Association's peer challenge process into childhood obesity. This was an opportunity to look in detail at this important issue in an open, honest and innovative way. Locally, one in ten 4-5 year olds are obese by the time they reach primary school and by the time they are 10-11 years old this figure has doubled to one in five. Obesity can lead to serious medical conditions, including diabetes, and also increases the risk of heart disease, stroke and cancer. The Lifestyle Service, co-ordinated by the voluntary sector, supports individuals to make sustainable healthy choices around weight, diet and exercise. Nearly 3,000 residents took advantage of this service during 2014.

Starting out (0-5)

A child's health and wellbeing is strongly influenced by what happens before birth and in the first five years of life. Therefore, the early years are critical in giving every child the best start in life.

Currently, around 3,500 babies are born in Stoke-on-Trent every year. Around 26% (13,220) of local children aged under 16 are living in poverty, compared to 19.7% in England. Infant mortality (deaths among infants during the first year of life) is a very important indicator of the population's health. Tragically, infant mortality rates are worse than the England average, at 6.9 compared to 4.1 per 1,000 live births.

Secure attachment with strong emotional bonds between a parent and their baby are built during the early postnatal period and through breastfeeding. Evidence shows that, if not breastfed, babies are five times more likely to be admitted to hospital with diarrhoea and vomiting and are more likely to be overweight or obese in later life. Locally, both breastfeeding initiation rates (62.8%) and prevalence rates at 6-8 weeks (34.1%) remain significantly below the England average of 73.9% and 47.2% respectively (2012/13).

Smoking during pregnancy is very harmful to the unborn child. In Stoke-on-Trent 19.2% of pregnant women smoke at the time of delivery compared to the England average of 12%. This is a major concern and will be a focus of action during 2015 - in particular, we will be looking at an incentive scheme to stop women smoking.

Growing up

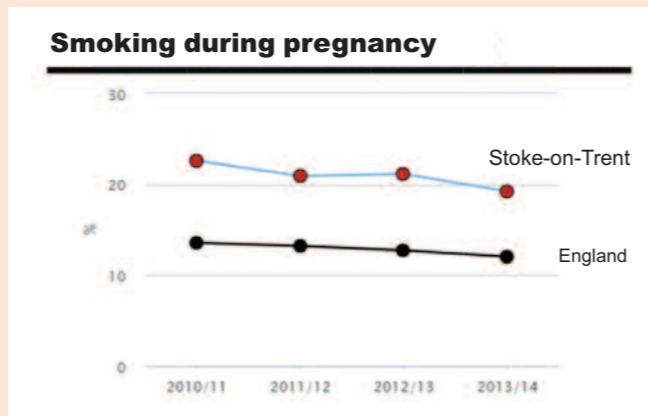
The building blocks for success must be sustained through the years of education. 'School readiness' is an important measure of the percentage of children achieving a good level of development at the end of the reception year. In Stoke-on-Trent 54.6% of reception children reach this level compared with 60.4% across England.

The behaviour of a child's peers becomes a growing source of influence during adolescence. The DECIPHER-ASSIST programme, which aims to reduce youth smoking rates by training influential Year 8 students in school to work as 'peer supporters', has been run for a third successful year. The role involves talking to other students about the risks of smoking and the benefits of being SmokeFree. To date, around 80% of secondary schools in the city have taken part in the programme, with more than 300 pupils being trained as 'peer supporters'.

Protecting young women against Human Papilloma Virus is also important. The immunisation can prevent cervical cancer. In Stoke-on-Trent 95.4% of young women aged twelve to thirteen receive two doses of the HPV vaccination compared to 89.8% in England.

Children born in the UK should receive a comprehensive schedule of immunisations to prevent infections which are serious and potentially fatal. It is therefore reassuring to report that vaccination rates of local infants are better than in other areas. Stoke-on-Trent's MMR vaccination coverage (1 dose by 2 years) is 96.8% which is above the regional (95.5%) and national average (94.1%). And, for the combined Haemophilus influenzae type b and Meningitis C vaccination local coverage by 2 years is 97.6% compared with the regional average of 93.0% and the national average of 91.9% (2013/14).

October 2015 will see the transfer of children's public health commissioning responsibilities for 0-5 year-olds from NHS England to the council. This includes the commissioning of Health Visiting and the Family Nurse Partnership and will present a great opportunity to build on the work done by the council on services for 5-19 year-olds.



Chlamydia is the most common bacterial sexually transmitted infection amongst young people. It often has no symptoms but can have serious health consequences. Opportunistic screening, and early treatment, for young people aged 15-24 as part of the National Chlamydia Screening Programme is a key element of Stoke-on-Trent's sexual health strategy. The most recent data shows Stoke-on-Trent performing better than the West Midlands and England.

Teenage pregnancy and early motherhood is associated with poor educational achievement, poor physical and mental health, social isolation and poverty. A number of initiatives across the city are currently underway to reduce the number of young women under 18 getting pregnant. These include: the early identification of young people who are at risk of pregnancy; the provision of one-to-one and small group support to reduce risk factors and increase self-esteem and confidence; the delivery of coordinated relationships and sex education within young people's settings; the offer of a highly accessible sexual health service including the full range of contraception; a holistic package of individual support for young mothers under 19 to help reduce second pregnancies, and support to young parents to optimise their educational

Protecting and improving health

Stoke-on-Trent performs well at protecting health. Recently, Stoke-on-Trent became the first city in the UK to be classified as disaster-resilient by the United Nations. This means that the council has in place excellent civil contingency plans to protect the city from for example, transport disasters and flu pandemics.

An area of continued concern is the high levels of unhealthy lifestyles across the city. In Stoke-on-Trent the majority of the adult population are overweight or obese and do not eat a healthy diet or take enough regular exercise. Smoking rates are also high. Around 53,000 or 28% of the local adult population smoke, compared to 19% nationally. This means people are more likely to suffer heart disease, strokes and cancer.

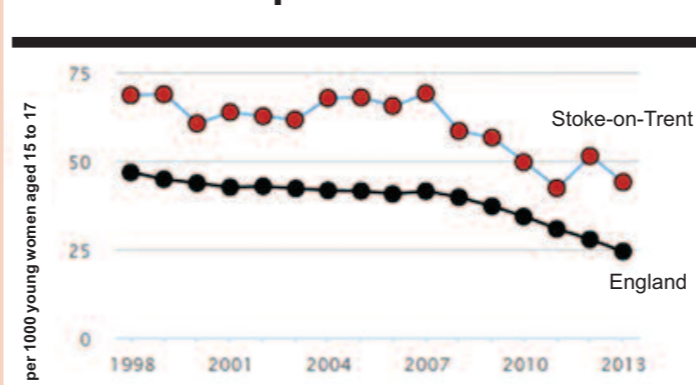
Harm relating to alcohol is significantly worse compared with England. The prevalence of opiate and crack cocaine users is higher in Stoke-on-Trent than in the West Midlands and England as a whole. There are also poorer outcomes relating to successful completion of treatment for drug and alcohol misuse.

Despite the emergence in growing electronic cigarette use, 3,519 people accessed the Public Health commissioned, high quality, free Stop Smoking Service with 2,529 of these still being quit 4 weeks later.

Cancer is Stoke-on-Trent's biggest killer. Seeing a GP at the earliest signs or symptoms of cancer greatly increases early detection and hence survival rates. However, in Stoke-on-Trent late presentation is a real issue. To address this the volunteer cancer awareness team, made up of around 20 local people, many of whom have been affected by cancer, work to raise awareness of early signs and symptoms of cancer. During 2013/14 the team spoke to over 9,975 residents at 244 events across the city.

attainment. Despite these activities, Stoke-on-Trent has the second highest rate of under 18 conceptions in England. In 2013, 37.5% of under 18 conceptions ended in a termination. Reducing under 18 conceptions will therefore remain a key public health priority in Stoke-on-Trent for 2015.

Under 18 conceptions rate



Also on a positive note, uptake of breast cancer screening in Stoke-on-Trent is higher than England.

Another service aimed at early detection is the NHS Health Checks programme, which aims to detect risk factors such as high blood pressure and high cholesterol early so that they can be treated. Stoke-on-Trent has a good reputation nationally as being a site of strong and innovative performance for NHS Health Checks. Seventy thousand local people aged 40-74 are eligible for a NHS Health Check over a five year period with over half of those people invited attending a check in the past year. This is above the regional and national average.

Building healthy communities for all

The place in which people live is an important determinant of health and wellbeing. The city council has a key role in shaping this through its many functions such as planning policy and development and regeneration.

Stoke-on-Trent is designated as a World Health Organisation (WHO) Healthy City. The WHO Healthy Cities project is a global movement. It engages local governments in health development through a process of political commitment, institutional change, capacity building, partnership-based planning and innovative projects. Being a part of the Healthy City movement has led to local work on health literacy, development of Supplementary Planning Documents for Healthy Urban Planning, work on healthy hot food takeaways and food growing. Being designated as a healthy city does not mean we are healthy yet, but that we aspire to be.

Another of our initiatives is our Age-Friendly programme. During 2014, 42 organisations were supported to tackle loneliness in their community, the EngAGE service ensured that the older person's voice was heard within health and social care decision-making, and local activists came together to begin work on a call for commitments for the city to be more Age-Friendly.

Older people can be at particular risk when living in cold conditions and this is a risk to their health. The Warm Homes Healthy People programme is designed to reduce the risk of death and ill-health through cold. Voluntary sector organisations supported 3,523 people through a programme of affordable warmth activity designed to help people stay warm in their home over the winter.

Also of importance in staying healthy are health literacy skills. These enable people to understand their own and their family's health needs, so poor health literacy has a negative impact on people's lives and their health. Almost half of Stoke-on-Trent's adult population (49%)

has limited health literacy. A broad range of stakeholders has now informed a city-wide strategy and action plan to tackle this issue.

Improving health literacy is one element of helping local residents to improve their health and wellbeing. Another great example is the My Community Matters programme. This initiative supports local people to harness the skills, talents and resources of the local communities to identify what they care about and to make improvements to health, wellbeing and quality of life. They have established neighbourhood partnerships in communities, reaching around 20,000 residents and supporting hundreds of people from minority groups such as black and minority ethnic communities and people with learning disabilities.

The workplace is a key setting for improving people's health and wellbeing. During 2014 we launched the national Workplace Wellbeing Charter locally. The charter provides an opportunity for employers to demonstrate their commitment to the health and wellbeing of their workforce. Eight local employers are currently working towards achieving the Workplace Wellbeing Charter and during 2015 twenty five more employers across the city will be supported to achieve its standards for health at work.



Pupils and teachers from Heron Cross Primary School taking part in a cooking demonstration

Mental health is described as a state of wellbeing in which a person can fulfil their potential, cope with the stresses of life and make a contribution within their community (WHO).

Data highlights the relatively low levels of wellbeing in Stoke-on-Trent. As part of our response, during 2013/14 workshops were delivered to over 500 people to improve their resilience, self-esteem and wellbeing, a suicide prevention campaign 'read between the lines' was launched and the development of a mental health improvement strategy began.

Public Health has also funded the expansion of provision of emergency food packages across the city and support for improving financial resilience for people experiencing or at risk of debt.

By bringing together a number of local priorities, including welfare reform and obesity, the successful Appetite for Change event held in early 2014 has led to the development of a comprehensive approach to healthy food. Although at an early stage of development, Stoke-on-Trent is on its way to becoming a Sustainable Food City (SFC). A SFC helps to build resilient communities, to support people to develop and achieve their own vision of a healthy food future and to access the land and other resources that will enable them to take more control of their food and health. A short film has been produced about SFC and can be viewed here: www.stoke.gov.uk/health

Call to action

As partners we need to:

- Tackle smoking, including smoking during pregnancy. This requires a broad tobacco control strategy and piloting of incentives to pregnant women to help them quit.
- Reduce the number of young women under 18 getting pregnant through stronger leadership, better sex and relationship education and excellent services for contraception.
- Promote walking, cycling and scootering as modes of transport in order to tackle obesity, improve air quality and increase the chance of people spending money in local businesses.
- Further engage with our local communities to enable them to improve their health and wellbeing.
- Spread our messages even more effectively and understandably on how to stay healthy.

Staying Healthy: Top 10 Tips

1. Quit smoking. If you want help to quit, call **0800 085 0928** or visit: www.stoke.gov.uk/smokefree
Protect your family from secondhand smoke - make your home and car smokefree.
2. Eat five portions of fruit and vegetables every day. This includes frozen vegetables and dried fruit but not potatoes. If possible choose seasonal produce and shop locally, check: www.nhs.uk/Livewell/5ADAY/Pages/5ADAYhome.aspx
3. Get active. The best way to increase physical exercise is to incorporate walking and cycling into your daily routine. Or do something you really enjoy regularly, like dancing or gardening.
4. Practice safer sex. Use condoms to protect yourself and others from sexually transmitted infections. If you want to avoid pregnancy, use reliable long-term contraception methods which you can forget about once you have had them fitted. For more advice, see: www.staffordshireandstokeontrent.nhs.uk/Services/north-staffordshire-and-stoke-on-trent.htm
5. If you drink alcohol, take care how much you drink. The recommended maximum levels are 2-3 units per day for women and 3-4 units per day for men. Avoid drinking so much you get drunk or ill. To understand units go to: www.knowyourlimits.info
6. To improve your mental health make time for things you enjoy and get help if things become difficult. For more information visit: www.fivewaystowellbeing.org
7. Get advice early when having a baby. See your GP or contact a midwife as early as possible to ensure your unborn child gets the best start in life.
8. Vaccinate your child. Vaccination is a simple and safe way of protecting your child against serious infectious diseases such as measles, mumps, diphtheria, tetanus and whooping cough. Ask your health visitor for advice.
9. Get checked for cancer. Local breast, cervical and bowel cancer screening programmes are opportunities to detect and treat cancer early. Ask your GP for advice.
10. Get checked for risk of heart disease and stroke. If you are between 40-74 years old, you may be eligible for a free health check to identify how you can lead a healthier lifestyle. If you receive an invitation to attend your health check, call and make an appointment to see your practice nurse.



Young people learning about gardening and growing their own food