

A photograph of two women hiking in a field of tall grasses at sunset. The woman on the left is wearing a dark cap and a red shirt, and the woman on the right is wearing glasses and a green jacket. They are both smiling and looking at each other. The background is a warm, golden sunset over a field.

Health and Wellbeing
SUFFOLK

Preparing for the Future

Joint Local Health and Wellbeing Strategy

2025 Mid Strategy Review



Foreword

Welcome to the mid-strategy update of the Suffolk Health and Wellbeing Board's Joint Local Health and Wellbeing Strategy - 'Preparing for the Future' (2022 - 2027).

This refresh was outlined in the original strategy in order to ensure that Suffolk's priorities are reviewed regularly to identify and tackle the needs of the population. This refresh provides an overview of the updated priorities of the strategy, board membership, and how the developments have been made.

Words from the Chair:

“As Health and Wellbeing Board Chair, I’m pleased to present this refresh of our strategic plan. Regular reviews ensure Suffolk’s priorities remain aligned with the evolving needs of our population. We’ve sharpened our focus, updated our key priorities, and strengthened our board membership with fresh perspectives and expertise. Crucially, we’ve detailed the rigorous process through which these developments were made, thus ensuring transparency and collaboration. This refresh highlights our ongoing commitment to delivering a responsive and effective strategy for Suffolk.”



Councillor Steve Wiles

Chairman of Suffolk Health
and Wellbeing Board



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Preparing for the Future - Joint Local Health and Wellbeing Strategy 2025 Mid Strategy Review

Suffolk's Joint Local Health and Wellbeing Strategy: 2025 update

Our Approach

- Focus on the wider determinants of health
- Use asset-based approaches
- Work with and through others
- Listen and engage with local voices - **NEW for 2025**

Priorities

- Public mental health
- Good work and health
- Wellbeing of children and young people
- Ageing Well - **NEW for 2025**

Vision

"To work with our communities and partners to make Suffolk a place where everyone can lead a longer, healthier and happier life"

Key Challenges

- Stalled life expectancy and healthy life expectancy
- Significant health inequalities
- Children and young people not always having the best start
- Mental and emotional wellbeing
- Social mobility cold spots
- Economic challenges

Cross-Cutting Themes

- Prevention: stabilising need and demand
- Reducing inequalities
- Greater collaboration and system working
- Connected, resilient and thriving communities



About

The Suffolk Health and Wellbeing Board was established in 2013 and is responsible for improving and protecting the health and wellbeing of all people in Suffolk. It brings together system leaders from across the county who work together to ensure not only that health and care services meet the needs of our residents, but to also promote wellbeing and prevent ill health at the source.

The Board members have an individual and collective responsibility to champion the changes required to achieve the Strategy's priorities. This means the Strategy is jointly owned by members of the Board, and any references to 'we' in this document refers to the Suffolk Health and Wellbeing Board.



Current membership of the Health and Wellbeing Board is:

- **Cllr Steve Wiles**, Chair, Cabinet Member for Public Health and Public Protection
- **Dr Ed Garratt**, Vice Chair, CEO, ICB, NHS Suffolk and North East Essex and Interim CEO ICB, NHS Norfolk & Waveney
- **Prof. William Pope**, Chair, ICB NHS Suffolk and North East Essex and Interim Chair, ICB, NHS Norfolk & Waveney
- **Stuart Keeble**, Suffolk County Council Director of Public Health & Communities
- **Gareth Everton**, Suffolk County Council Executive Director of Adult Social Care
- **Sarah-Jane Smedmor**, Suffolk County Council Executive Director of Children and Young People's Services
- **Cllr Bobby Bennett**, Cabinet Member for Children and Young People's Services
- **Cllr Philip Faircloth-Mutton**, Cabinet Member for Equality and Communities
- **Cllr Beccy Hopfensperger**, Cabinet Member for Adult Care
- **Cllr Jan Candy**, East Suffolk Council
- **Cllr John Cook**, Ipswich Borough Council
- **Cllr Rowena Lindberg**, West Suffolk Council
- **Cllr Laura Smith**, Babergh District Council
- **Cllr Tim Weller**, Mid Suffolk District Council
- **Arthur Charvonia**, Suffolk Chief Officers Leadership Team
- **John Dugmore**, Suffolk Chamber of Commerce
- **Carol Eagles**, Voluntary, Community and Social Enterprise Health and Wellbeing Network
- **Prof Valerie Gladwell**, University of Suffolk
- **Wendy Herber**, HealthWatch Suffolk
- **Rachel Kearton**, Suffolk Chief Constable
- **Tim Passmore**, Suffolk Police and Crime Commissioner
- **Henry Griffiths**, Suffolk Probation Service
- **Hannah Reid**, Collaborative Communities Board

*Accurate as of 02/05/2025



The purpose of this strategy is to:

- Provide a context, vision, and overall focus for improving the health and wellbeing of local people and reducing inequalities in the period 2022-2027.
- Identify agreed shared priorities and outcomes for improving local wellbeing and health inequalities.
- Support effective partnership working that delivers health improvements.
- Provide a framework to support innovative approaches required to enable necessary change.

How we developed the original 2022 strategy

The original strategy was created following two stakeholder workshops that were held in Autumn 2021 influenced by the Suffolk Joint Strategic Needs Assessment (JSNA). These were set up to explore the findings of a report brought to the Board in July 2021, which reviewed the purpose of the HWB in the context of wider system changes.

Participants agreed that the Board should focus its efforts to:

- Use its influence to help to alleviate poverty and inequalities
- Encourage action by the entire system
- Improve the engagement and hearing the voices from our communities, especially the disadvantaged and seldom heard
- Mitigate the post-pandemic crisis in mental health
- Look to the future and work with partners to improve the wellbeing of children and young people.
- Work in a practical way, ensuring it advocates for place based working and community led approaches

Changes since the 2022 strategy:

Our aim is to update the strategy to reflect Suffolk's population and promote inclusivity across our priorities and approach.

Movement of 'listening and engaging with local voices' and why

Voice and engagement should underpin the development, delivery and evaluation of all our priorities which is why 'Listening and engaging with local voices' has become part of 'Our Approach'.

By embedding this as an approach rather than a standalone priority, the strategy ensures that community insights continuously inform decisions across all areas, fostering inclusivity and responsiveness. This approach recognises that meaningful engagement is not a singular objective but a foundational process essential for achieving equitable and sustainable health outcomes.

Removal of ageing population as a challenge and why

While the 2024 Annual Public Health Report on Ageing Well was being compiled, it was noted that the 2022-2027 Strategy had framed Suffolk's growing older population as a challenge. This framing was seen to risk portraying older adults as a burden, rather than recognising their value and contributions. To support a more inclusive and opportunity-focused approach, 'Ageing Well' has been made a priority in this refresh.

This complements the Suffolk and North East Essex (SNEE) Joint Forward Plan where 'Age well' is a priority area and the Norfolk and Waveney (N&W) Joint Forward Plan.



Over the past three years, significant strides have been made in public health initiatives across several key areas. This included a £2.5 million investment in Public Mental Health funded by the COVID Outbreak Management Funding (COMF) which was allocated to efforts focused on enhancing awareness of support and improving emotional literacy through the development of a range of evidence based resources, alongside the implementation of emotional literacy training. Suicide prevention has been embedded across systems, with strengthened partnerships and the development of an approach to reduce self-harm. Good Work and Health has seen the establishment of Public Health & Communities (PH&C) priorities in Health at Work and effective management of the Get Set Contract.

Ageing Well initiatives have progressed with comprehensive NHS Health Checks, increased awareness of Feel Good Suffolk among health partners, and coordinated pathways for healthy weight. Plans are also underway from 2024 Annual Public Health Report recommendations and establishing PH&C priorities in frailty and falls prevention, alongside improving dementia risk awareness and education.

For Children's Healthy Weight, a comprehensive strategy focusing on "Eat Well, Sleep Well, Move Well, and the World Around Us" has been developed. This period has also seen increased breastfeeding rates due to promotion and UNICEF accreditation support, delivery of oral health promotion through supervised toothbrushing and mobile assessment services, and the rollout of trauma-informed training.

Furthermore, a new website offering health and wellbeing information for children and families is set to launch in September 2025, complementing various health promotion campaigns and efforts to increase community parent & toddler groups. Finally, the RSHE Portal has been developed to provide schools with resources for effective curriculum delivery.

Statement of Opinion:

Suffolk and North-East Essex (SNEE) and Norfolk and Waveney (N&W) ICBs endorse the recent refresh of the Suffolk Health & Wellbeing Strategy.

Moving 'listening and engaging with local voices' into the 'Our Approach' section is a positive step that reflects the importance of embedding meaningful engagement throughout the strategy. By building in community voice as a foundation for all priorities rather than a standalone item, the refreshed strategy reinforces a commitment to inclusive, responsive, and co-produced health and care services, which is an approach echoed across SNEE and N&W.

Similarly, the reframing of ageing in the strategy is a welcome development. Rather than focusing solely on the challenges of a growing, older population, the shift towards 'Ageing Well' highlights the strengths, contributions and potential of older adults. This more inclusive perspective is in line with the SNEE and N&W Joint Forward Plan's (JFP's) emphasis on helping people to age well and transforming care in later life. With access to the right support and services our population can live longer, healthier, happier and more fulfilling lives.

Overall, these changes strengthen alignment between local and regional ambitions, while supporting a more inclusive and future-focused approach to population health and wellbeing.

It is anticipated that JFP's will need to be refreshed once the NHS 10-Year plan is received later this year, and we will continue to work closely with the Health and Wellbeing Board in Suffolk to align the priorities for our local population.



Ed Garratt

Interim Chief Executive, Norfolk and Waveney ICB

Chief Executive, Suffolk and North East Essex ICB

Our revised priorities



Public mental health



Good work and health



Ageing Well



Wellbeing of children and young people



Public Mental Health

Good mental health is vital for overall wellbeing, reducing mortality and morbidity risks. Prioritising public mental health in Suffolk will help to improve health behaviours, prevent physical illness, and lessen the burden of mental ill-health.

In Suffolk, we will work with partners to ensure that support is rooted in the needs and strengths of each community. Our aim is for people across Suffolk to understand what influences their mental wellbeing, feel confident seeking help, and have timely access to culturally appropriate services. We are committed to enabling communities to thrive—ensuring they are well-resourced, inclusive, and able to offer meaningful opportunities for connection and support. Through strong partnerships with the VCFSE sector and a focus on prevention and recovery, people will be supported to take positive steps to improve their mental health, sustain wellbeing, and feel satisfied with the services they receive in their local place.

We will undertake work to better understand and take action on the higher rates of hospital admissions among young people due to self-harm in Suffolk.

We are also committed to making suicide prevention everyone's business. This means embedding suicide prevention across all systems, services, and communities in Suffolk. We will upskill our population, so individuals, professionals, and community members are equipped to recognise and respond to signs of suicide risk. By strengthening partnerships and improving coordination across system pathways, we will build a more connected and responsive approach to prevention.

Good Work and Health

Work has a significant influence on health. Unemployment, poor-quality jobs, and income deprivation are linked to higher rates of illness, poor mental health, and harmful health behaviours.

In Suffolk, around 19% of the working-age population—approximately 84,500 people—are economically inactive.

The Suffolk Health and Wellbeing Board will support delivery of the Get Suffolk Working plan, due for publication in September 2025. This plan will focus on improving opportunities for people facing barriers to employment, including an estimated 24,000 individuals with long-term health conditions, 14,000 with caring responsibilities, and 10,500 whose reasons for unemployment are unclear.

We will also support employers across Suffolk to proactively look after the health and wellbeing of their workforce. This includes promoting healthy lifestyles, offering employee health checks, and embedding good practice that supports both employee health, reduces sickness absence and boosts business growth.



Ageing Well in Suffolk

Health disparities lead to vast differences in healthy life expectancy. While some people in their eighties can run marathons, others in their fifties struggle with everyday tasks.

We will therefore build on the recommendations of the 2024 Annual Public Health Report on Ageing Well, which focuses on supporting and enabling age friendly communities across Suffolk and ensuring that our services and community offers not only support to our ageing population but actively empowers people to age well. A key focus will be raising awareness and taking action on major risk factors for age-related diseases, including cardiovascular disease and dementia, especially to those at greatest risk.

We will work collectively to prevent frailty and preserve independence for as long as possible. To do this we aim to keep people more physically and mentally active into later life. This will be supported by embedding approaches to promote social connections and active involvement in community life.



Wellbeing of children and young people

Ensuring that our children have the best possible start in life is paramount. We want all children and young people in Suffolk to lead happy, healthy, and fulfilled lives in safe communities. We'll achieve this by working with families, children, young people to strengthen protective factors, identify health and wellbeing concerns as early as possible and work to mitigate the impact of factors such as poverty and trauma.

There are already many services and initiatives across the Suffolk system which contribute to these goals including the health visiting service, the Mental Health in Schools teams, the Childrens Healthy Living Service, HomeStart. However, there is more we can do collaboratively:

We will work together as a partnership to support the implementation of the Children's Healthy Weight Strategy. This is a good example of a whole system approach to promoting children's health and wellbeing.

We will collaborate to promote trauma informed practice and raise awareness of the impact of adversity during childhood by offering training and development opportunities. This contributes to promoting good mental health and emotional wellbeing in families.

As a partnership we will work together to support improvement in School readiness of children in Suffolk achieving the government target of 75% of all children school ready by 2028.

We will work together through partnerships such as the Collaborative Community Board to support residents to be more financially independent through maximising income and benefits thereby combating the effects of poverty on families and children.





For further information
www.healthysuffolk.org.uk

