



An insight into adult physical activity behaviour in St. Helens



May 2025

Active Lives Adults Survey 2022-23

Sport England's National headline

Active Lives Adults Survey 2022-23

“ Long-term increase in activity levels positive but further action needed to tackle inequalities* ”

In a nutshell, there are “two million more adults getting active on a regular basis through sport and physical activity than in 2016*”



But the news isn't so positive for some demographic groups where inequalities continue to widen



Inequalities in our area

Social status



Inactivity in the **least affluent households** remains high (NS SeC 6-8)

Gender



The gender inequality gap continues to fluctuate

Limiting illness



Adults with a **limiting illness or disability** are twice as likely to be inactive

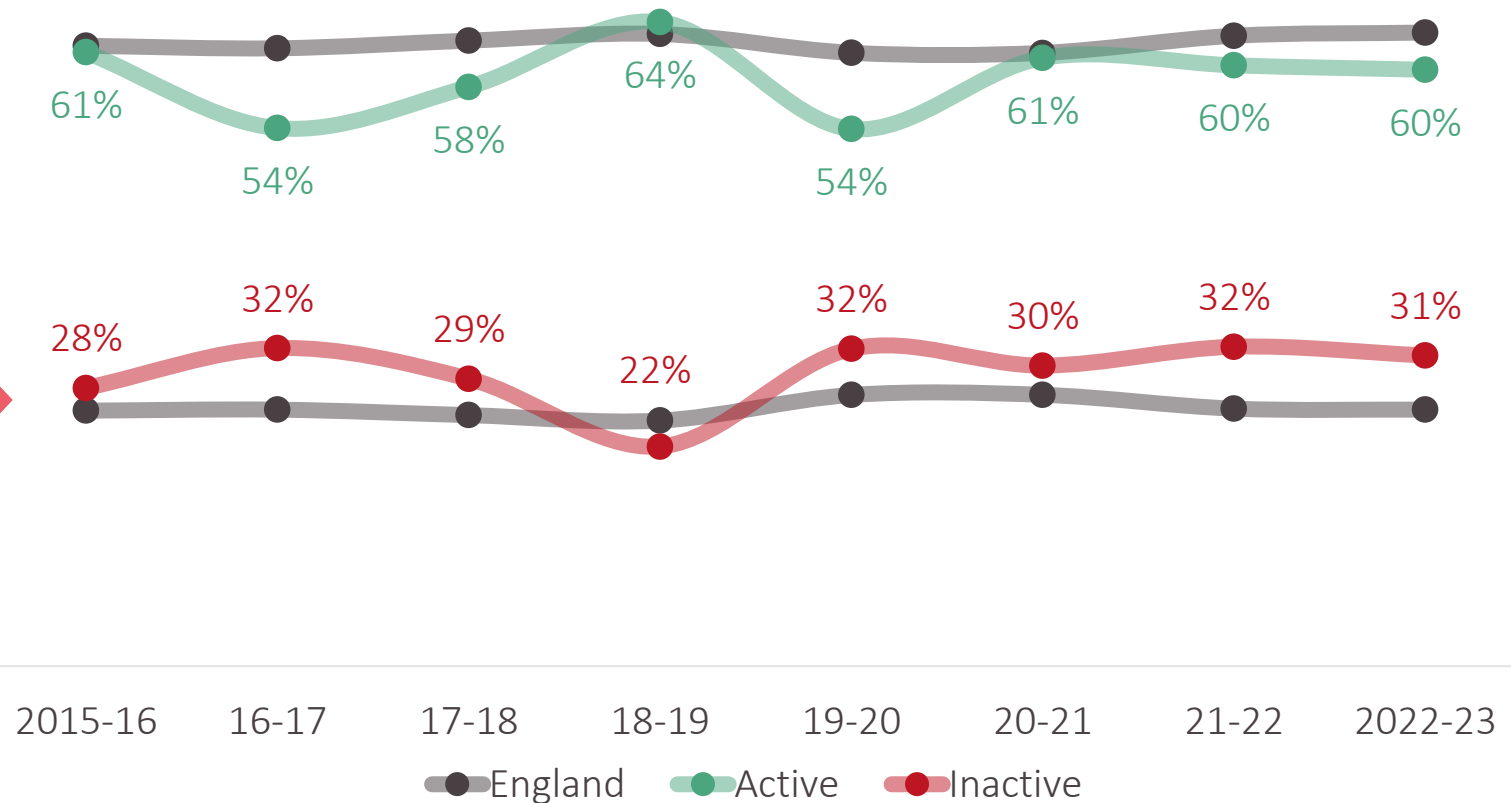


The infographic features a background of teal-colored human icons, some of which are holding canes, arranged in a grid-like pattern. A large red arrow points from the left towards a central white circle with a red border. The text is presented in a clean, sans-serif font, with percentages and specific numbers in a larger size for emphasis.

Currently, 31%
of adults are inactive

That's
46,000
people

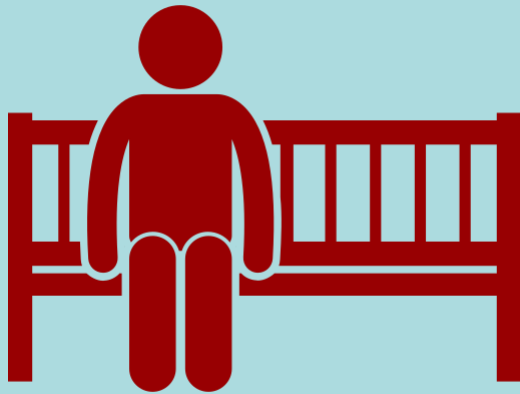
Over 3 in 10 of our community are inactive



33,000
adults do
no activity at all
(22%)



But not all inactive
adults do nothing



There are **10,000**
people missing the intensity
(7%)



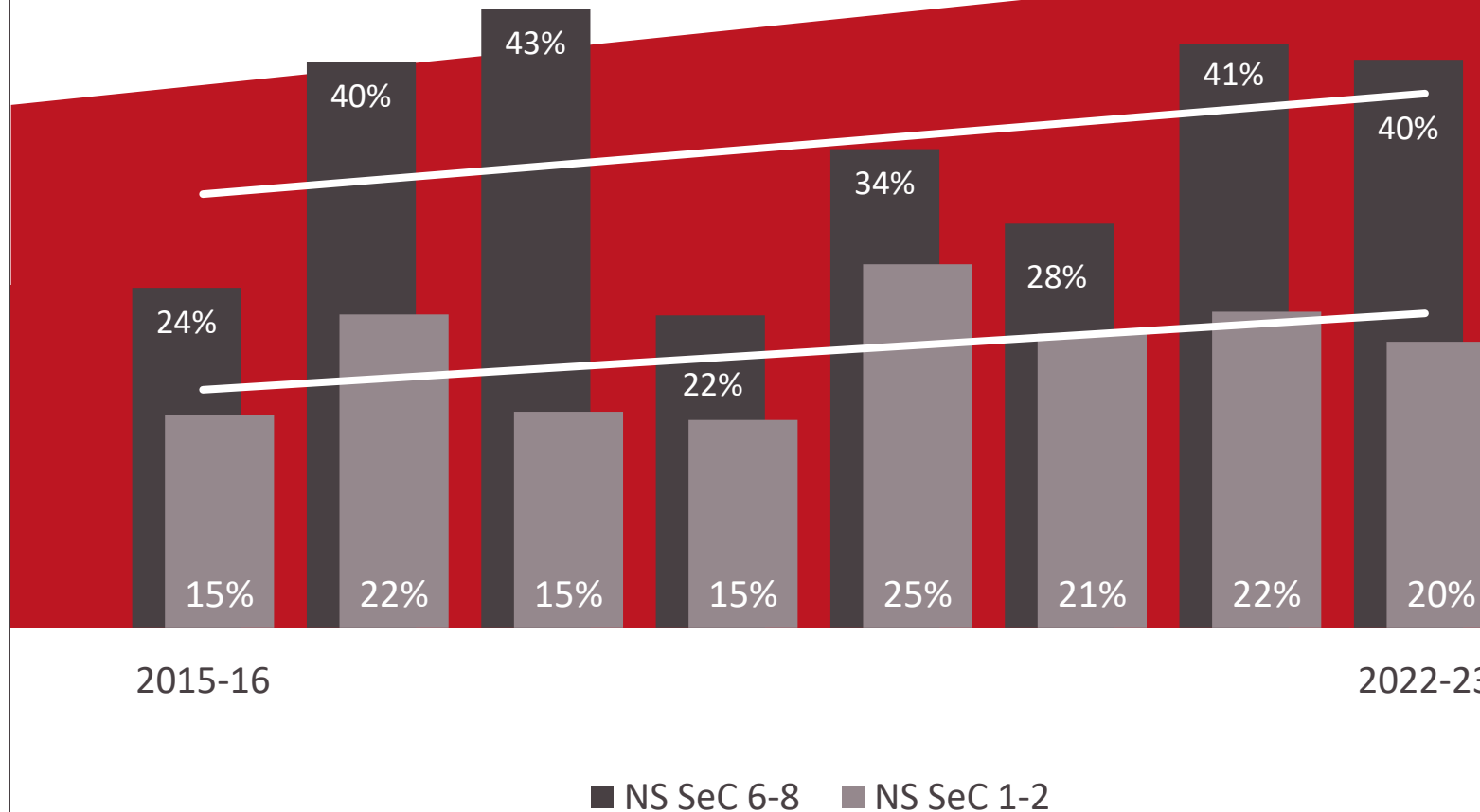
There are **3,000**
people not active for long enough
(2%)



Our **least affluent** households
are twice as likely to be inactive
(NS SeC 6-8)

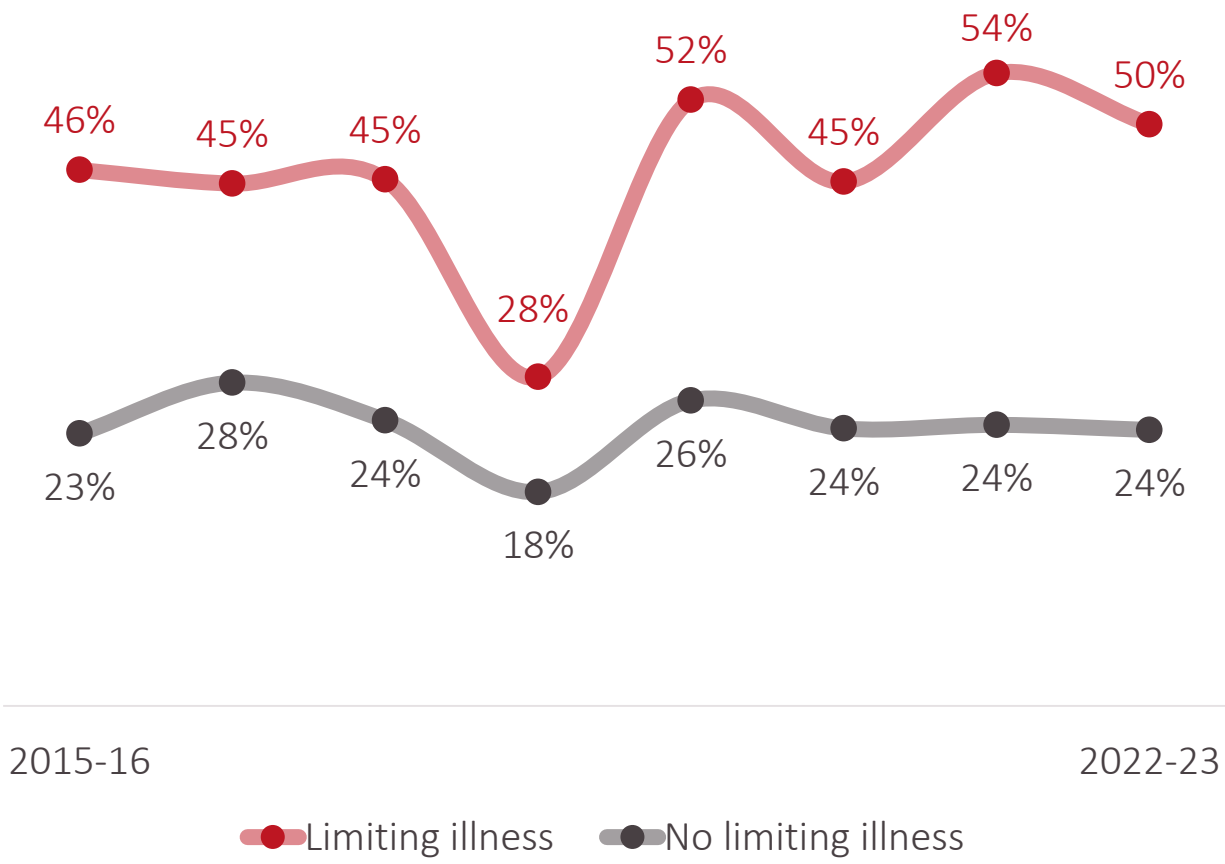


There is a clear
inequality gap between
our least and most
affluent households



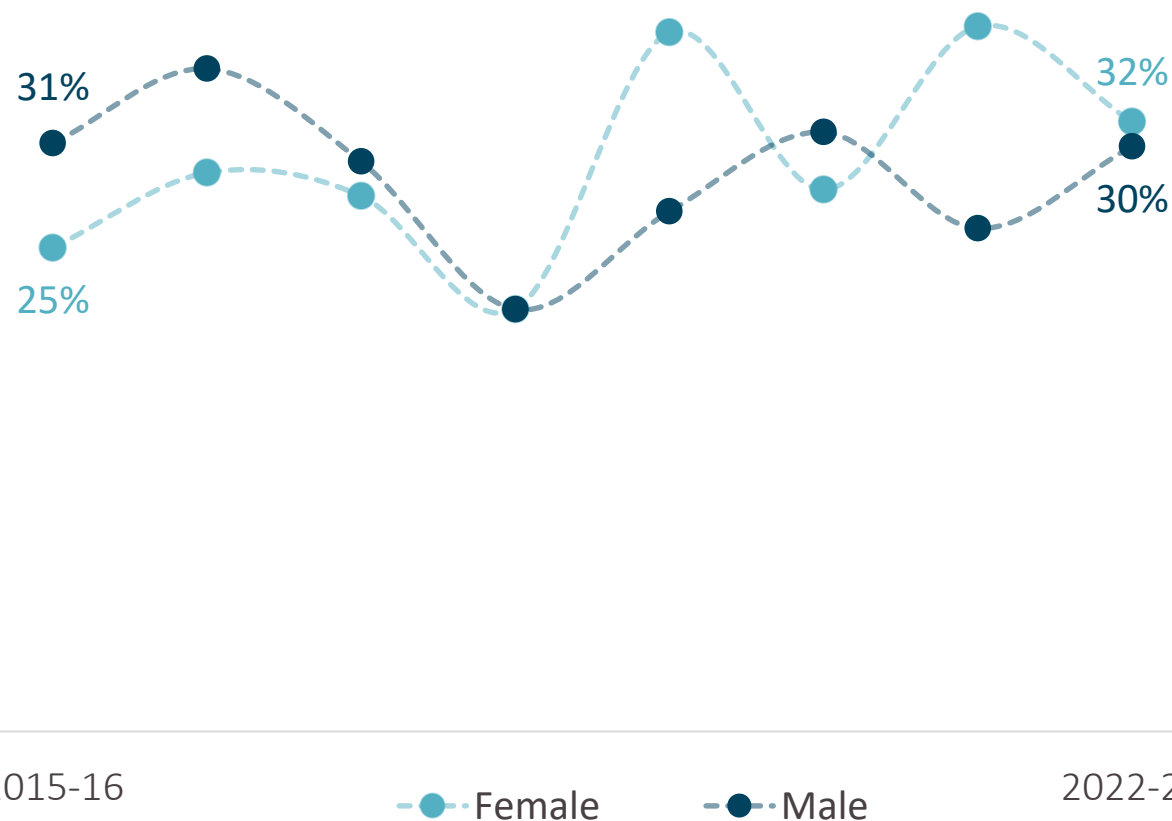
Adults with a **limiting illness or disability** are **twice as likely to be inactive**

The inequality gap persists



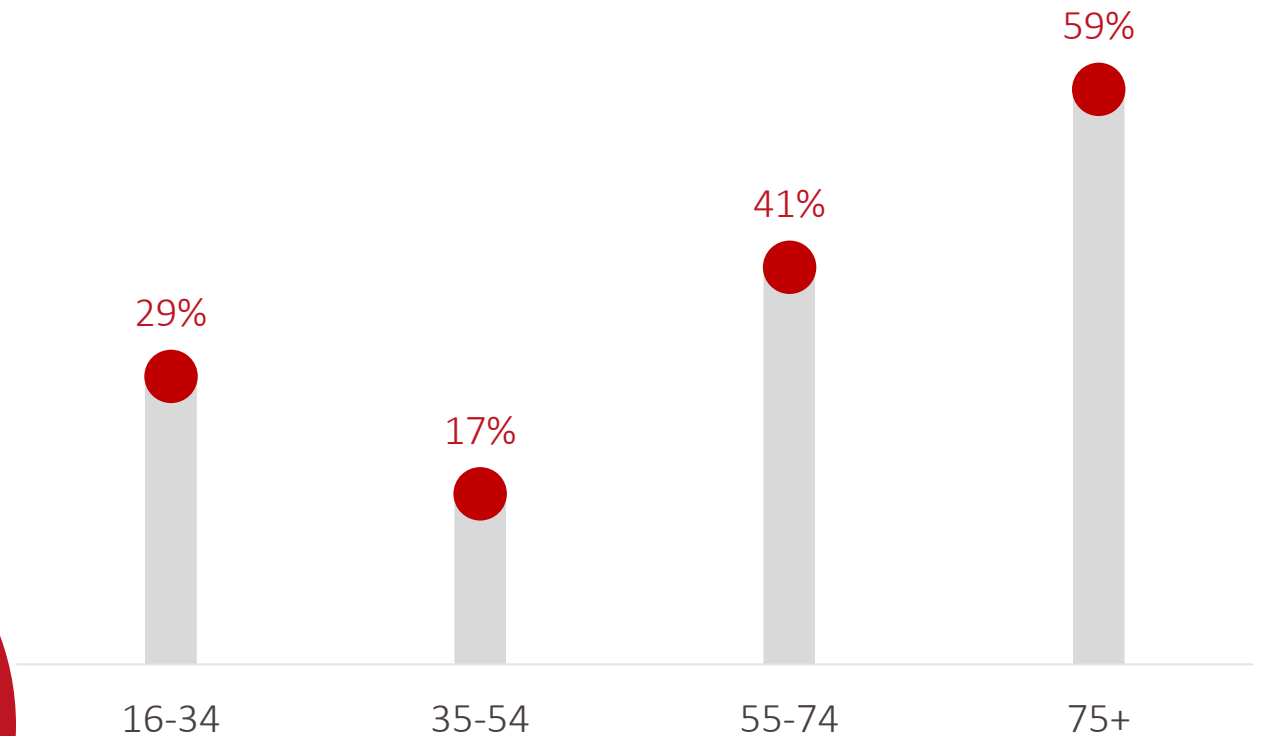
Inactivity rates have fluctuated for both men and women over time

The gender inequality gap is near its lowest



Inactivity increases sharply after the age of 75

Inactivity is higher than national for younger adults (16-34)

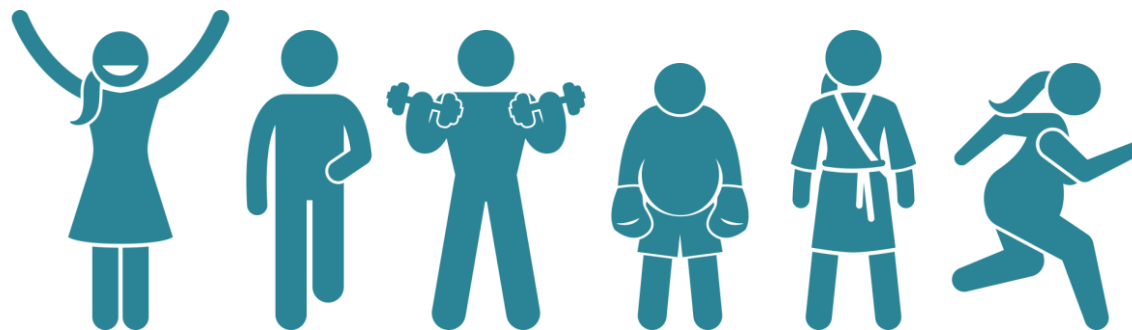




Nearly **4 in 10** adults living in the **most deprived** neighbourhoods are inactive (39%)



Compared to **2 in 10** adults living in the **least deprived** neighbourhoods (21%)



How do we measure activity?

We report on the number of **moderate intensity minutes** completed in the last week, based on activity type



Light

Light intensity minutes are excluded



Moderate

Moderate intensity equivalent (MIE) minutes means each 'moderate' minute counts as one minute



Vigorous

Any vigorous activity counts for double, so each vigorous minute counts as two moderate minutes

Please note: For some activities, intensity was assumed and not asked. Activities done by those aged 65 and over were assumed to be at least moderate



What activities do we measure?*



Gardening

Gardening is included in this section

*Only activity of at least 10 continuous minutes are counted



Walking for travel

Includes walking as a way to get from one place to another, such as the shops work or visiting friends*



Walking for leisure

Includes all other types of walking, dog walking, rambling and Nordic walking or just going for a stroll*



Cycling

Includes leisure and travel, track, road and mountain biking or racing, exercise bike or cycle class



Traditional sport

Includes team, water, combat and winter sports, swimming, athletics, golf, horse riding and gymnastics



Fitness activities

Includes gym activities (fitness machines and classes), weights, boxing and interval sessions



Dance

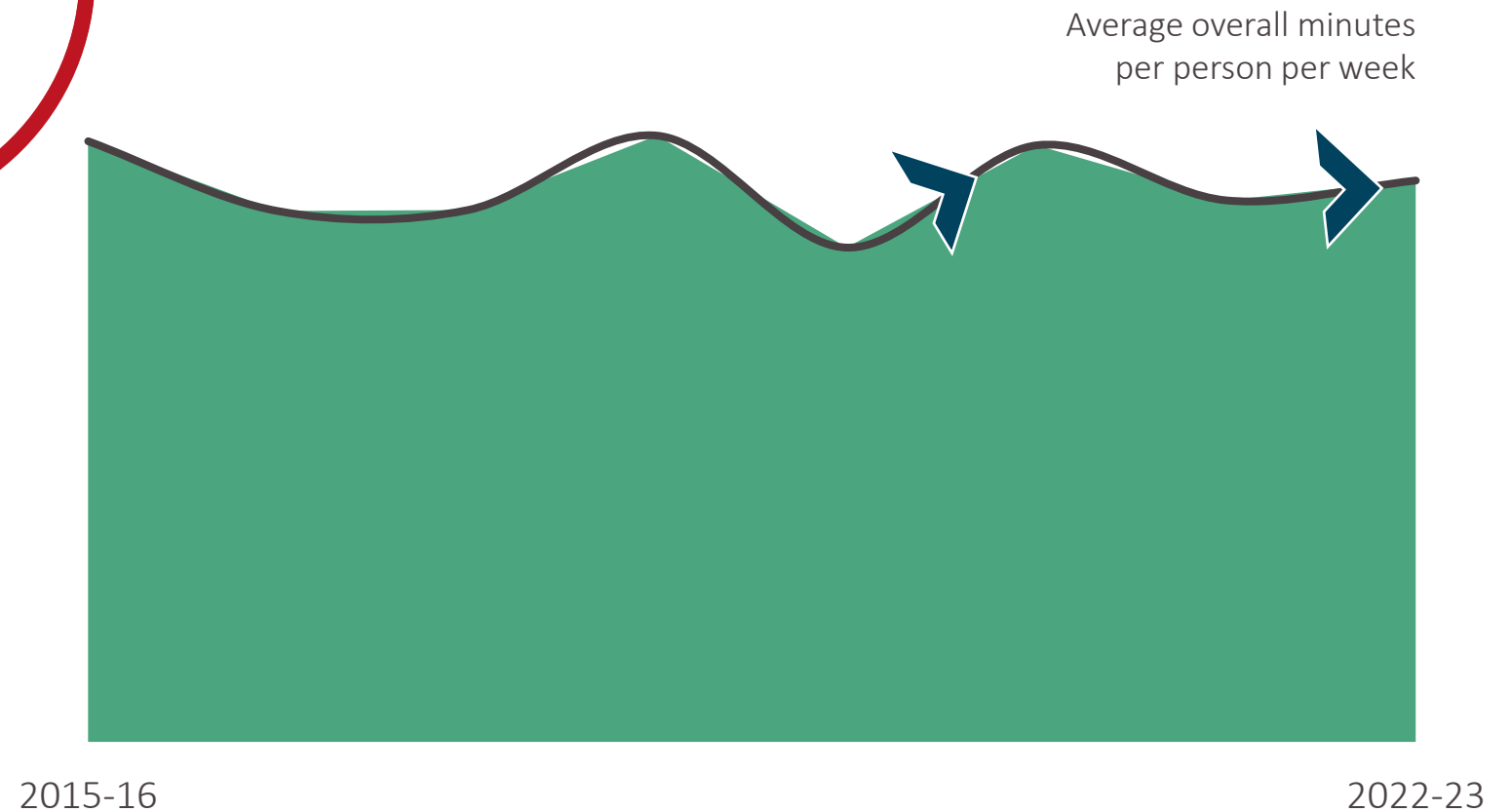
Covers all types of dance including artistic and creative dance (ballroom, ballet, contemporary etc)

*walking around shops is excluded

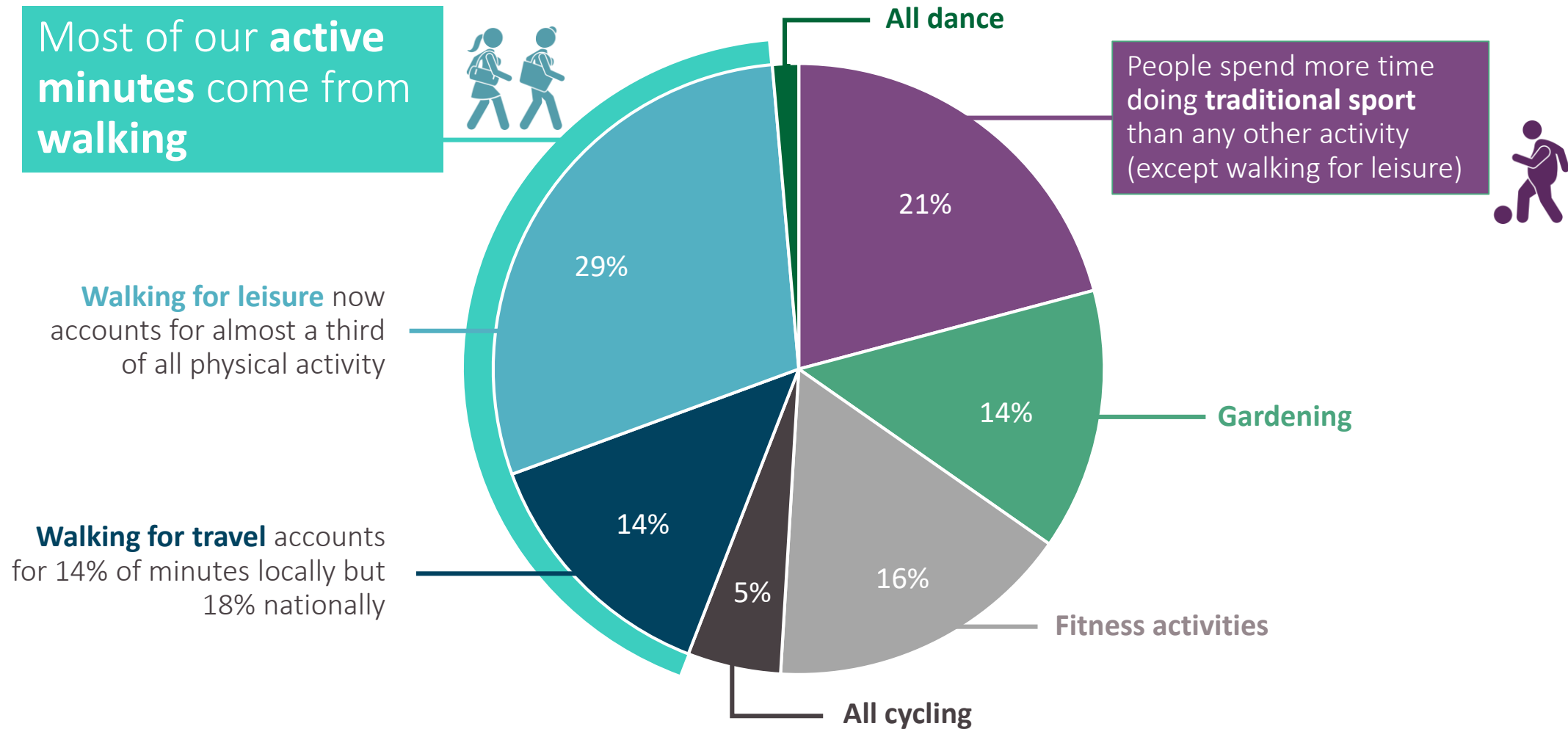




Activity minutes have fluctuated over time



What does activity look like where we live?



Appendix



Sample size

Active Lives Adult

	15-16	16-17	17-18	18-19	19-20	20-21	21-22	22-23
All adults (aged 16+)	510	497	490	492	495	486	494	491
NS SEC 1-2	216	222	219	220	229	220	238	227
NS SEC 3-5	132	123	131	118	114	113	101	94
NS SEC 6-8	76	85	57	71	90	73	72	93
16-34	90	85	81	100	91	81	94	88
35-54	162	166	160	160	172	130	156	152
55-74	203	201	187	186	193	213	185	201
75+	52	42	56	43	36	61	58	49
Male	230	234	239	215	224	222	212	234
Female	280	263	251	277	269	259	281	252
No limiting illness	380	369	352	351	354	353	355	339
Limiting illness	98	107	116	118	106	110	114	120
Working full or part time	256	255	245	263	281	247	259	259
Unemployed	14	19	12	16	18	12	18	19
Not working	204	187	199	161	156	200	178	182
Student full or part time	12	12	12	17	12	5	6	11
White Other	7	7	8	12	9	13	14	12
Asian	3	1	4	5	4	3	2	7
Black	0	1	0	2	3	2	3	4
Mixed	2	3	3	0	3	4	6	2
Other ethnic group	0	0	2	1	2	3	0	3
White British	489	467	463	462	461	447	455	450
Minority ethnic group	12	12	17	20	21	25	25	28



Adult population breakdown

Census provides an **insight into the demographic makeup** in our area compared to England

	St Helens	England
No limiting illness	74.7%	80.2%
Limiting illness	25.3%	19.8%
16-34 years	22.1%	24.2%
35-54 years	26.0%	26.4%
55-74 years	24.7%	22.4%
75+ years	9.4%	8.6%
NS SeC 1-2	28.3%	33.2%
NS SeC 3-5	26.6%	27.4%
NS SeC 6-8	40.1%	31.8%
Asian	1.3%	9.0%
Black	0.4%	3.9%
Mixed	0.7%	2.0%
White British	94.0%	75.1%
White Other	3.0%	7.9%
Working full or part time	54.5%	57.0%
Not working	39.1%	34.3%



Our population is **growing**, **ageing** and becoming **more diverse**

All adults (16+)



5%
increase*

Older adults (55+)



14%
increase

Minority ethnic groups



93%
increase



How much physical activity should adults be doing?

The Chief Medical Officer's (CMO) guidelines recommend adults (aged 16+) engage in at least 150 minutes of moderate intensity activity each week (or 75 minutes of vigorous intensity)

Activity levels in this pack are presented as:

Active

Those that are doing 150+ minutes of physical activity a week

Inactive

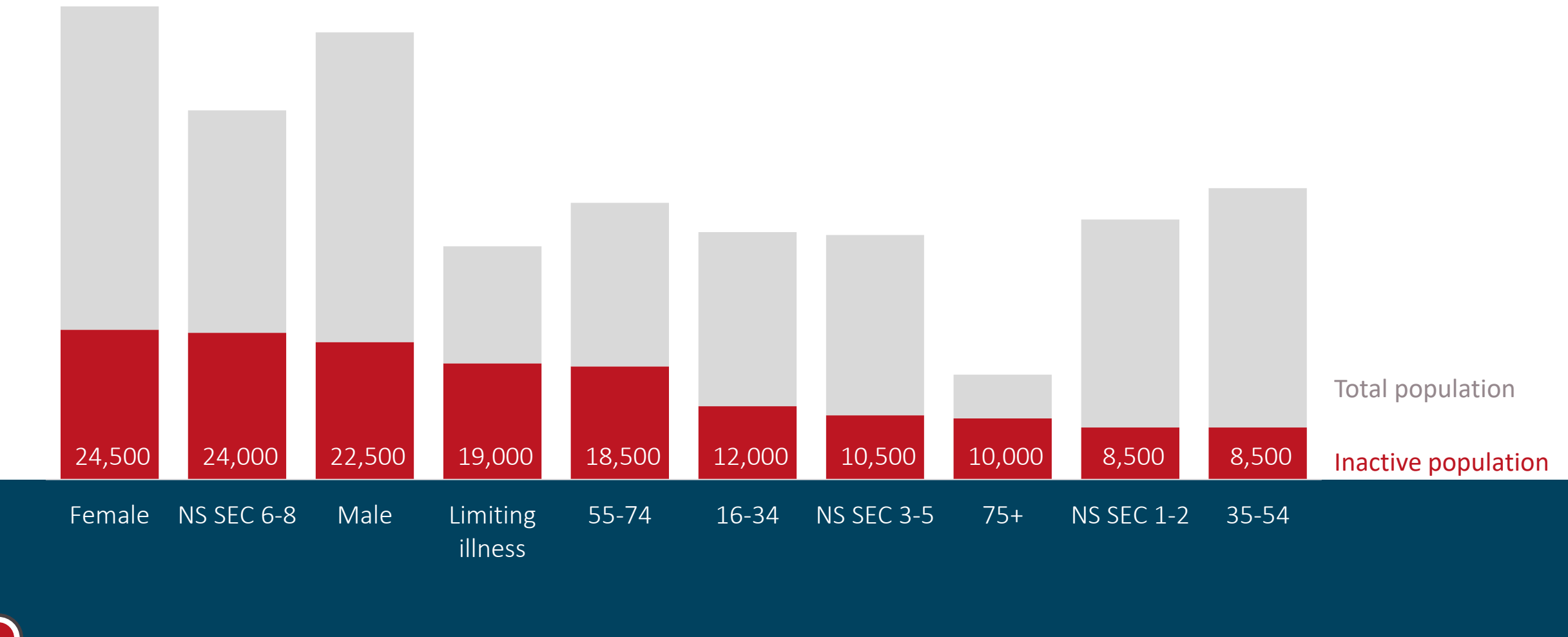
Those that are doing less than 30 minutes of physical activity a week



Please note: The majority of the data in this data pack will focus on the 'inactive' levels unless otherwise stated



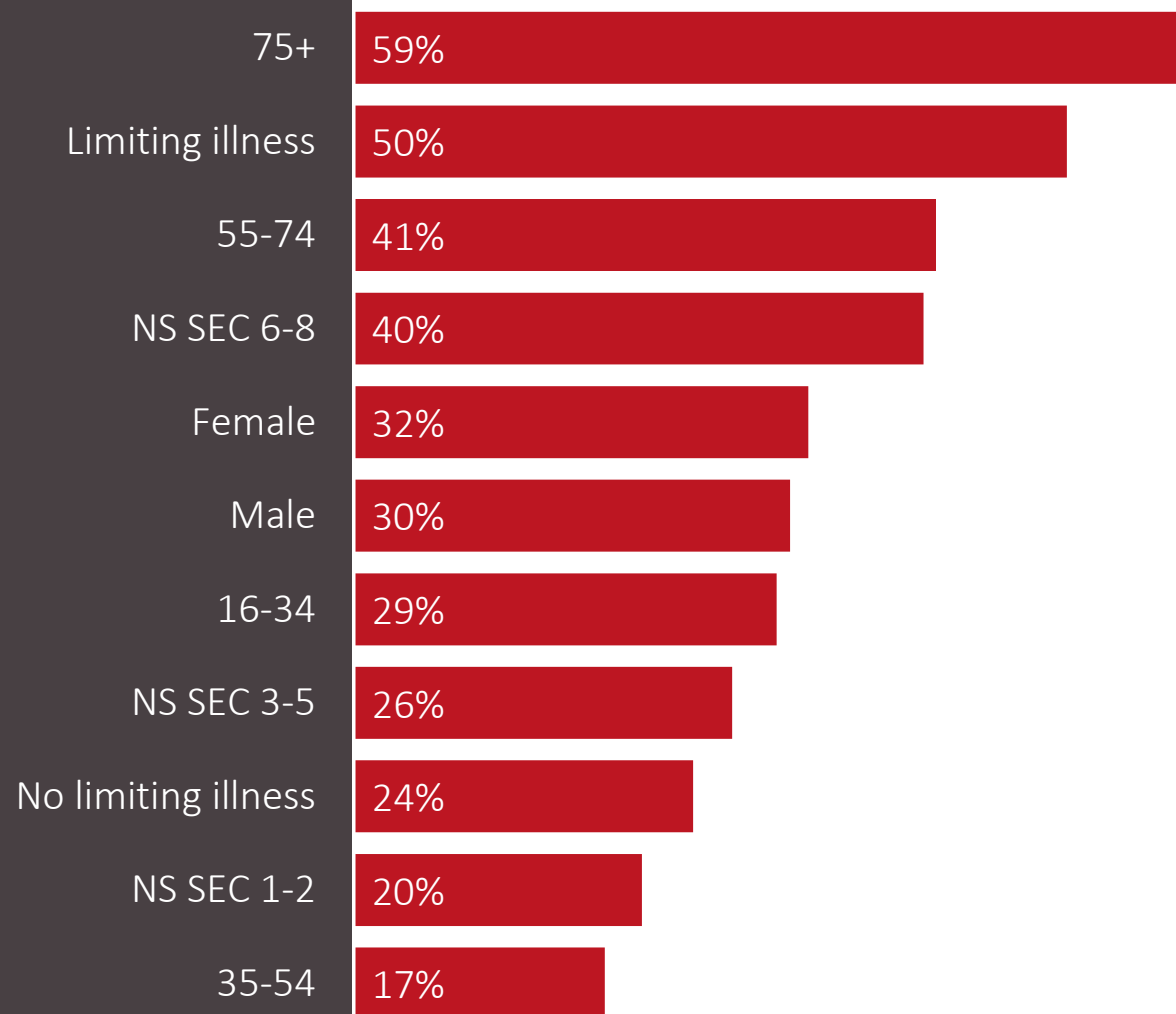
Our **inactive population** in the context of the size of the demographic group



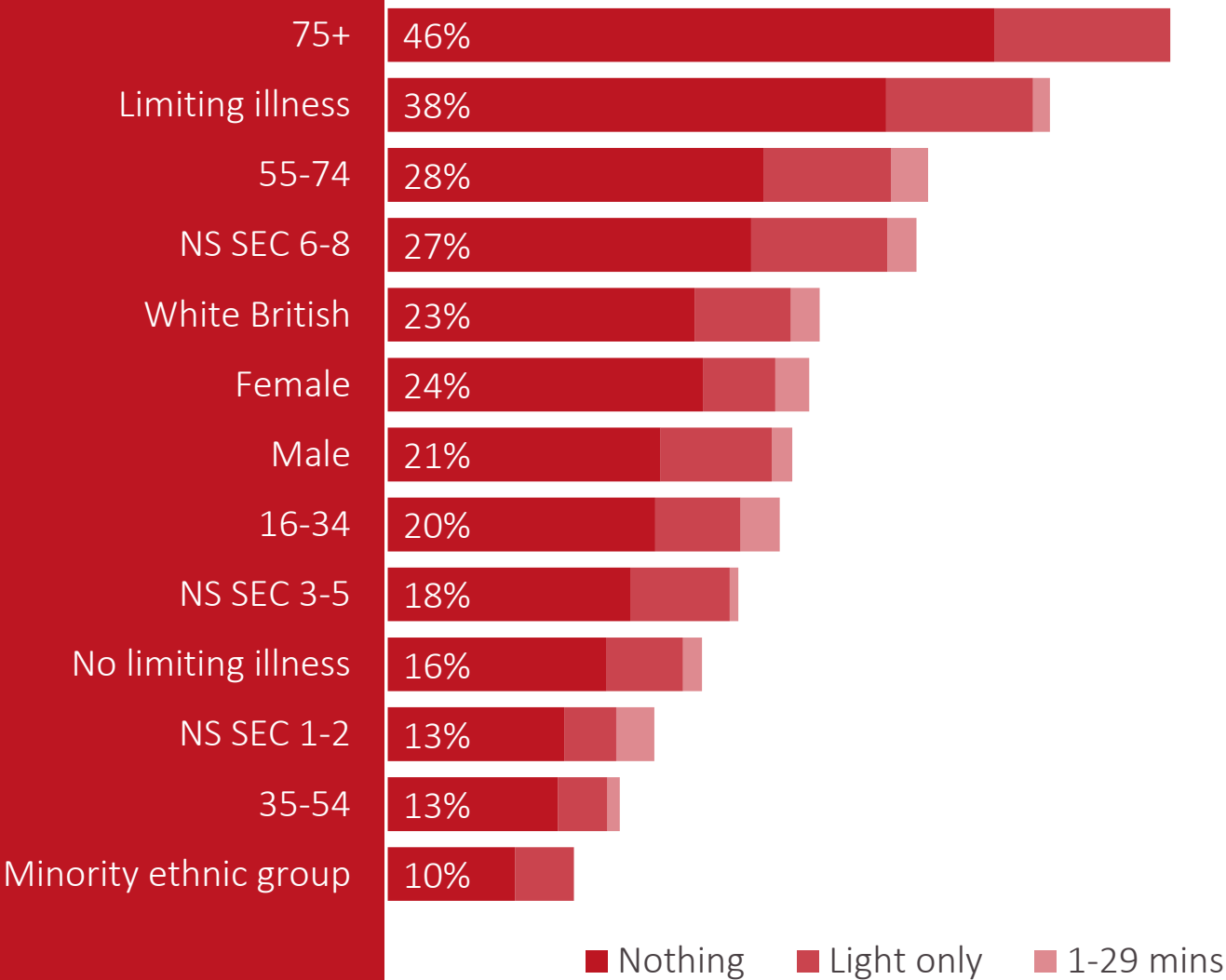
Data is for: St Helens

Source: Sport England Active Lives Survey 2022-23 (16+)
Measure: Physical activity levels (excluding gardening)

There are some
stark inequalities
in inactivity rates
amongst our
population



Most inactive people do no physical activity at all (nothing)



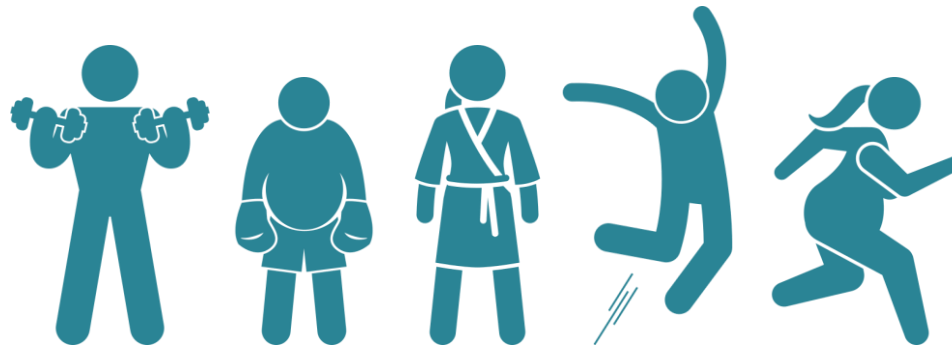
National update

There are **two million more adults getting active on a regular basis** through sport and physical activity than in 2016, despite the impacts of the coronavirus (Covid-19) pandemic and increased cost-of-living pressures.



The figures in the latest Active Lives Adult Survey report, show that between November 2022 and November 2023, 63.4% of the adult population met the Chief Medical Officers' guidelines of doing 150 minutes, or more, of moderate intensity physical activity a week. That's equivalent to 29.5m adults in England playing sport or taking part in physical activity every week.

This figure is largely unchanged from 12 months ago when 63.1% were active but means that, compared to when we first ran the survey between November 2015 and November 2016, there are two million more active adults – an increase of 1.3%.



National demographics

- Over the longer term, growth has been similar for both **men and women**, with 914,000 (1.4%) more active men and 831,000 (1.3%) more active women compared to November 2015-16. Despite this, neither men nor women have seen activity levels change compared to 12 months ago
- **Adults aged 75+** continue to drive the growth in activity levels. The increase of just over 100,000 (1.6%) adults aged 75+ who are active, compared to 12 months ago, is part of a long-term increase of just under 700,000 (9.4%) compared to seven years ago (Nov 15-16). Those aged 55-74 also have a long-term upward trend in the active proportion. For both age groups the latest result represents the highest result recorded over the last seven years.
- Activity levels remain unchanged compared to 12 months ago for those with a **disability or long-term health condition**. Before the pandemic, activity levels were increasing and we continue to see 4.2% more active adults with a disability or long-term health condition compared to seven years ago (Nov 15-16). This long-term growth is greater than for those without a disability or long-term health condition, where the proportion active is up by 1.9% over the same period.
- No **Black, Asian or minority ethnic group** is showing a reportable difference in the proportion who are active compared to November 2015-16. As a result, inequalities continue to widen as White British adults have seen activity levels increase over the same period (up 2.1%).
- There have been no reportable changes in activity levels by **social grade** compared to 12 months ago. Given this stability, we expect no further pandemic recovery for the least affluent (NS SEC 6-8) and the longer term trend of an increased gap in activity levels between the most and least affluent to continue. The most affluent (NS-SEC 1-2) have seen long-term growth, with those who are active increasing by 1.6% compared to seven years ago (Nov 15-16). In contrast, the least affluent (NS-SEC 6-8) have seen the proportion active drop by 2.2% over the same period.



Acknowledgements

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The AI-generated content has been carefully reviewed and curated by our team

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