



East Devon Public Health Strategy 2024 – 2027

Quick Read

**Improving health and wellbeing for
communities across East Devon**

1 Summary

We want to help improve the health and wellbeing of communities across East Devon. After emerging from the Covid-19 pandemic and entering a cost of living crisis, it is the right time for us to review and update our Public Health Strategy going forward into 2024-27.

2 What we mean by public health

Public health is the science and art of preventing disease, prolonging life and promoting health through the organised efforts of society. We use the term 'public health' to cover the physical, mental and social wellbeing of everyone in our district.

3 Why public health matters to us

Most people want to be in better health. Although people are living longer, many are often in poorer health. While there is no statutory need, we believe it is the right thing for us to consider health and wellbeing in all our council activities. Everything we do aims to ensure that East Devon is a place where people want to live, work, visit and enjoy life, focusing on where there is greatest need.

4 Where we want to be: our aims and priorities

We respect equality and diversity and would like everyone in East Devon to have an equal chance to lead a long, happy and healthy life. We aim to support:

1. Healthy People - focusing on health outcomes.
2. Healthy Lives - focusing on health-related behaviours and personal circumstances.
3. Healthy Places - focusing on wider determinants of health, environmental factors.

5 What priority activities will we focus on?

We will focus on local activities which we are most able to support or influence. Our priorities are:

- Cost of living crisis.
- Mental health.
- Unpaid carers.
- Loneliness and social isolation.
- Dementia.
- Homelessness, housing and indoor environment factors.

- Smoking.
- Alcohol and other drug use.
- Diet and nutrition.
- Physical activity.
- Pandemic preparedness.
- Health effects of climate and adverse weather events.

6 Which communities will we focus on?

We will work across the East Devon district, with particular focus on areas in most need, including deprived and isolated rural communities.

7 How we will get there

We will:

- Promote wellbeing and self-care.
- Encourage healthier behaviour so fewer people become ill.
- Tackle environmental and social conditions to promote good health.

To achieve our aims we will:

- As a major employer we will take seriously our responsibilities towards our staff and our opportunities to lead by example.
- Identify health and wellbeing priorities in each annual service plan.
- Seek and respond to new opportunities, continuing to build strong community partnerships and maximising partnership-working.
- Align our activities to support those of One Devon Integrated Care System and with Devon County Council as they deliver their statutory duties.
- Support East Devon's communities and residents in making it a healthier place.
- Plan for healthy communities in all developments.
- Aim to adopt a health-in-all-policies approach e.g. via health impact assessment.
- Ensure that our outstanding environment contributes to health and wellbeing.
- Ensure there are enough resources to improve health and wellbeing across the district.
- Embrace technologies such as web and social media to share health messages.
- Continue to monitor evidence to inform and update priorities.
- Monitor how we are doing, then report and publish progress annually.

We are lucky that our district has such special green spaces and beautiful coastlines, and we will play to these strengths. We also recognise that we cannot achieve everything alone. Our work requires close partnerships so we will continue to strengthen our partnership working.

Helen Wharam, Public Health Project Officer, Oct 2023 updated Feb 2024