

Healthy Weight in Southwark

Health and Wellbeing Board

Public Health Division

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Introduction

We are working to increase opportunities for residents to be healthy and tackle the obesogenic environment

The levels of obesity in Southwark are of concern; this has a significant impact on our residents' health and wellbeing, our economy and our community as a whole.

- Obesity is one of the five significant risk factors for premature death.
- Council and ICB strategies are focusing on addressing the '**Vital 5**' factors of healthy weight, smoking, harmful drinking, blood pressure and mental health and wellbeing.
- Addressing obesity requires focus not only on prevention and treatment services but also on improving the environments we work, study and grow up in.

Prevalence of excess weight in Southwark

Childhood obesity

Prevalence of overweight and obesity has remained high, but relatively stable in recent years

- In 2022/23, 21.7% of Reception children were classed as having excess weight (overweight or obese) , this rose to 42% for children in Year 6¹.
- Gender has little effect on weight status overall, however boys in Year 6 are more likely to be living with obesity compared to girls.
- Children from a black ethnic background are more likely to be living with obesity than those from a white ethnic background and this increases with age; children from Asian, mixed or other ethnic backgrounds fall in the middle.
- Children living in the most deprived areas are more likely to be overweight or obese compared to those living in the least deprived areas.

The number of Southwark children with excess weight is still higher than the national average

Year 6 children are twice as likely to be overweight or obese than children in Reception

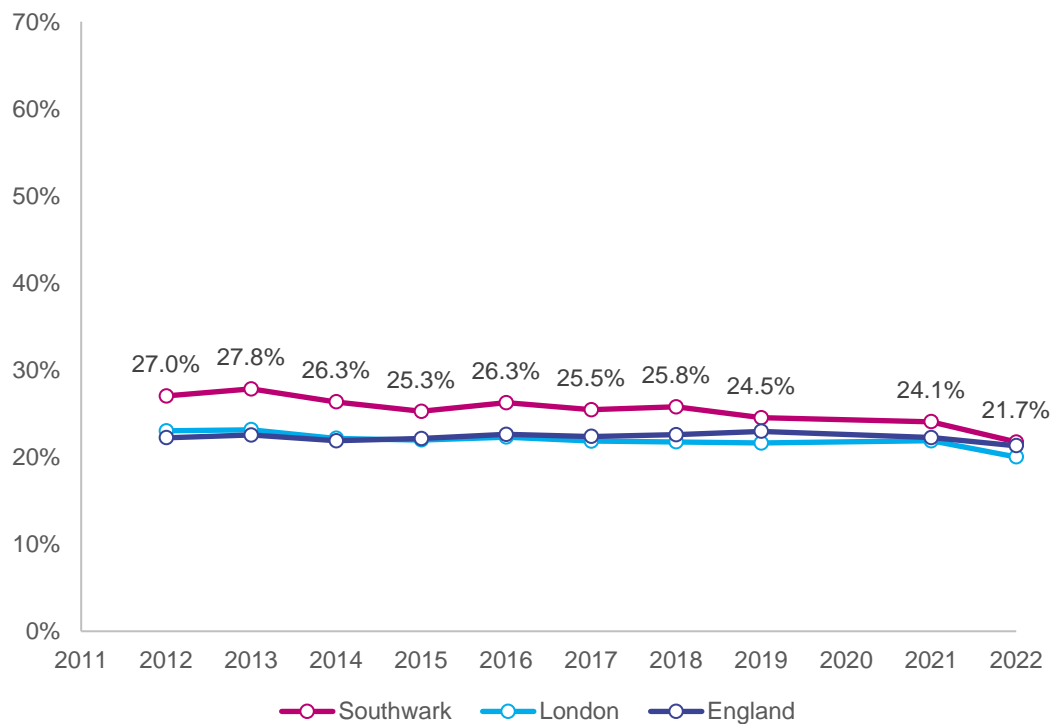


Figure 1: Trends in the excess weight of children in Reception (2012/13-2022/23)¹

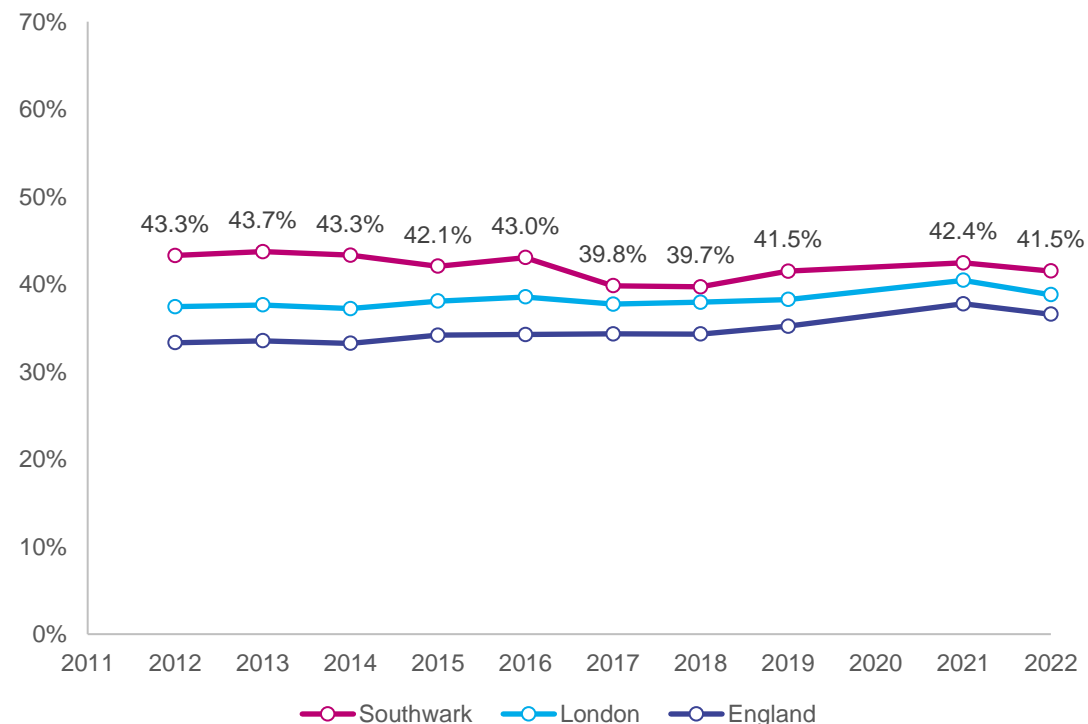


Figure 2: Trends in the excess weight of children in Year 6 (2012/13-2022/23)¹

Ward of pupil residence: excess weight

Areas of high deprivation are associated with higher rates of obesity

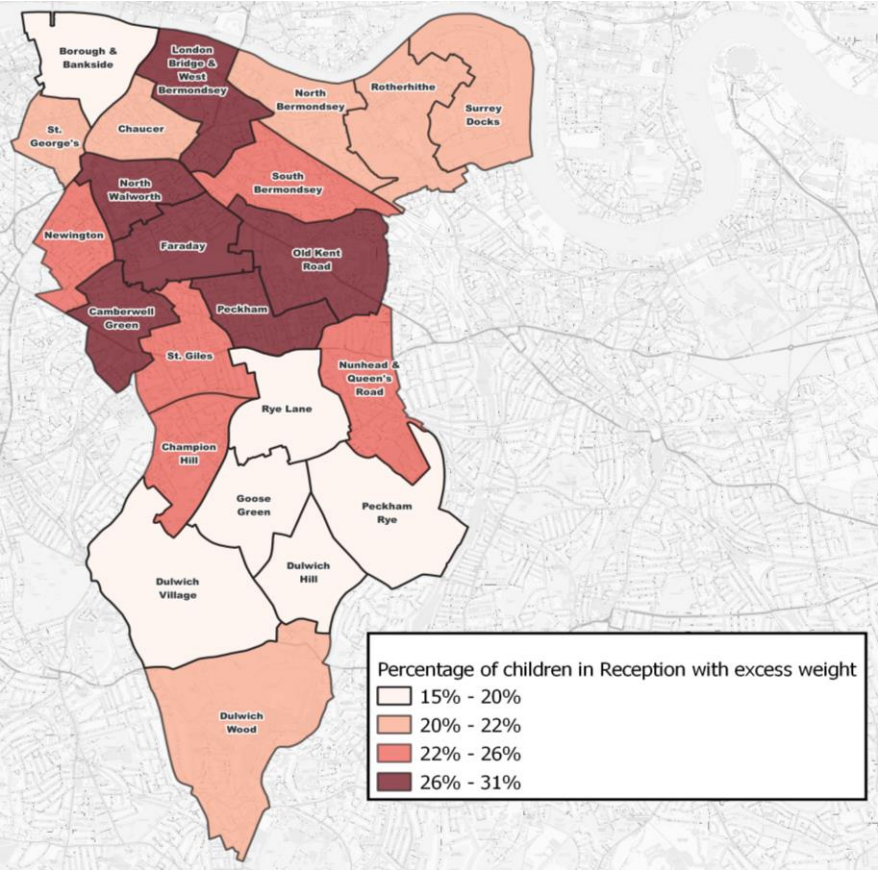


Figure 3. Proportion of Reception pupils with excess weight by ward of pupil residence: 3-year data 2018-2022 (excl. 2020/21)²

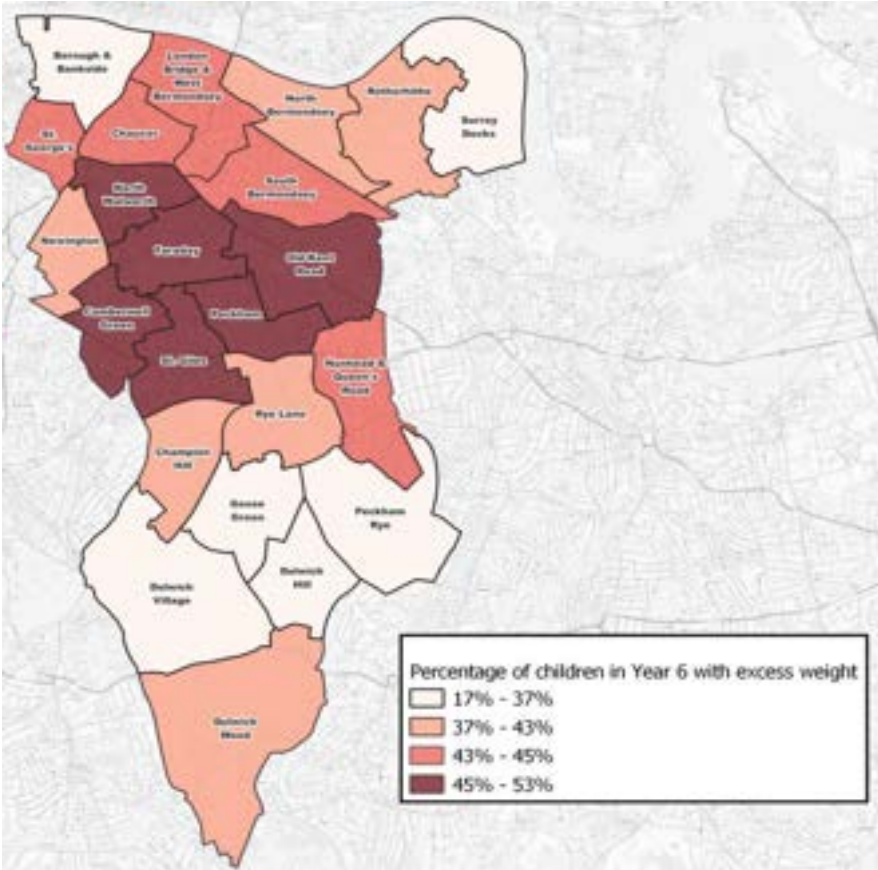


Figure 4. Proportion of Year 6 pupils with excess weight by ward of pupil residence: 3-year data 2018-2022 (excl. 2020/21)²

Adult obesity

Southwark has similar rates of excess weight in adults compared to the rest of London, but lower than England.

- In Southwark, the prevalence of excess weight amongst men aged between 45-74 years is the highest of any age group.³

Rates of obesity during early pregnancy are lower in Southwark (17%) than London and England.¹

Nationally 66% Black women are overweight & obese in early pregnancy.⁴

- Work is taking place to improve local data collection and analyses.

Obesity is closely associated with the development of several life-limiting chronic health conditions

- Nationally, 35% of adults with obesity reported a limiting longstanding illness compared with 20% of those who were not overweight nor obese.⁵

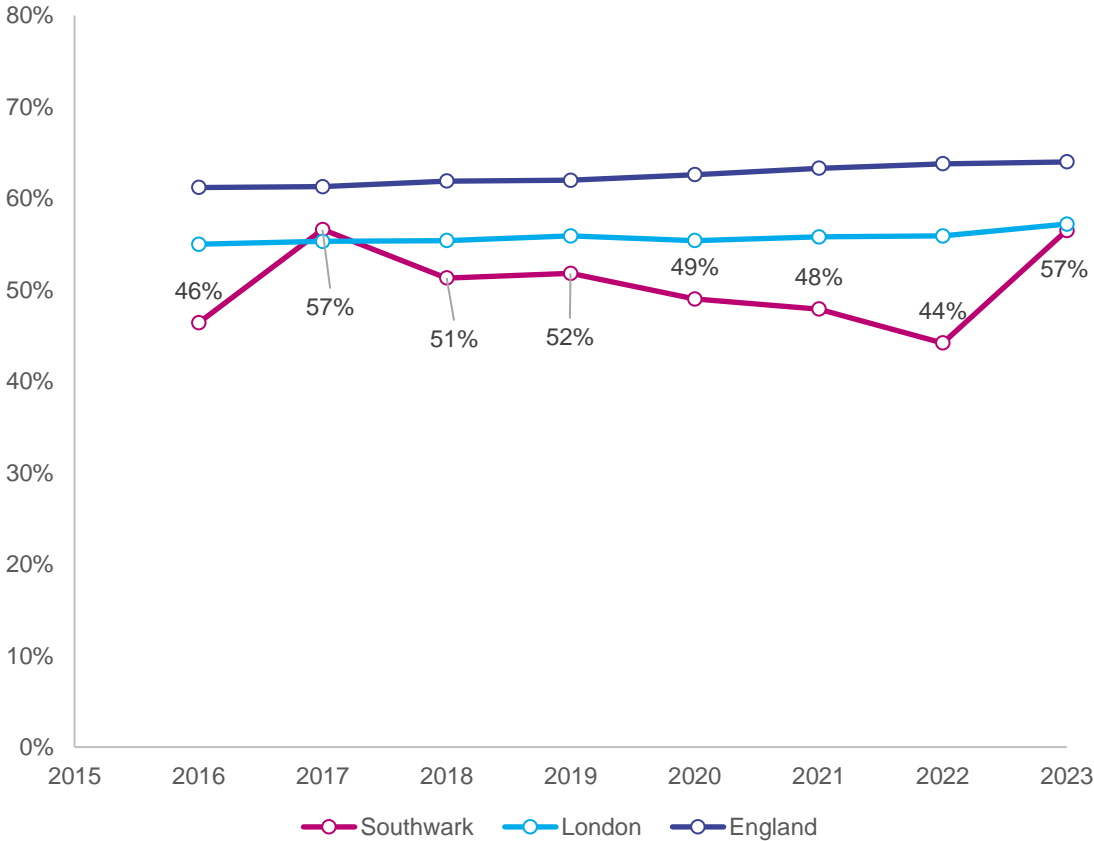


Figure 5. Trends in the proportion of adults (18+) classified as overweight or obese¹

Source: (1) (4) [Health of women before and during pregnancy: health behaviours, risk factors and inequalities \(publishing.service.gov.uk\)](https://www.publishing.service.gov.uk) (5) [Health Survey for England, 2021](https://www.gov.uk)

Physical activity

Levels of physical activity across Southwark are higher than the regional and national averages, with trends showing levels are returning to levels seen in 2018 when it peaked at 74%¹

- The CMO currently recommends that adults undertake a minimum of 150 minutes of moderate physical activity per week, or 75 minutes of vigorous physical activity per week or both.

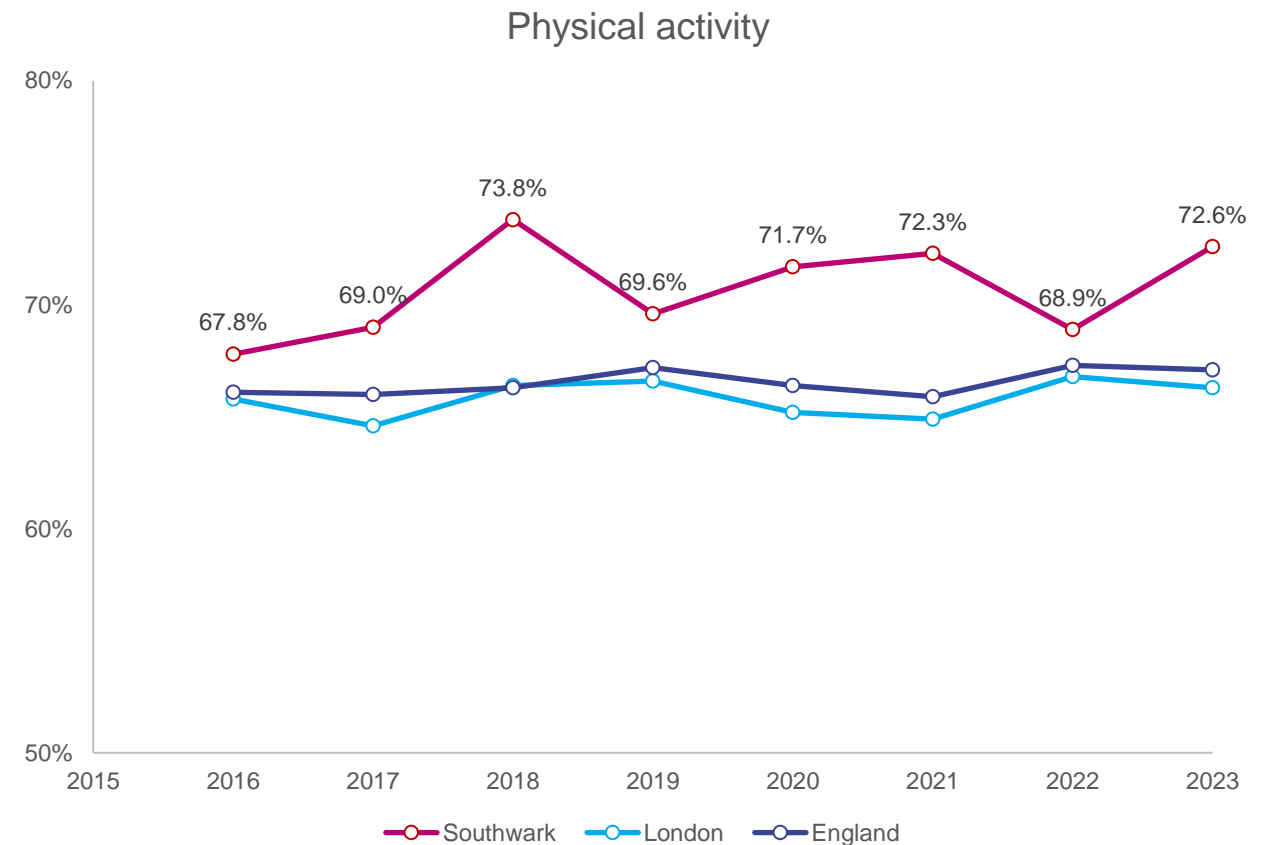


Figure 6. Trends in the proportion of adults reporting to be meeting physical activity goals (2015/16-2022/23)

Physical activity amongst adults (>45years) in Southwark

Levels of physical activity are considerably lower amongst Black residents in comparison to White British and other White adults in Southwark.

- There's however insufficient data coverage across different ethnic groups, and it is not possible to disaggregate the data by age and ethnicity.
- Work is taking place to strengthen local data collection and more in-depth analyses by age, ethnicity, social gradient and geography.

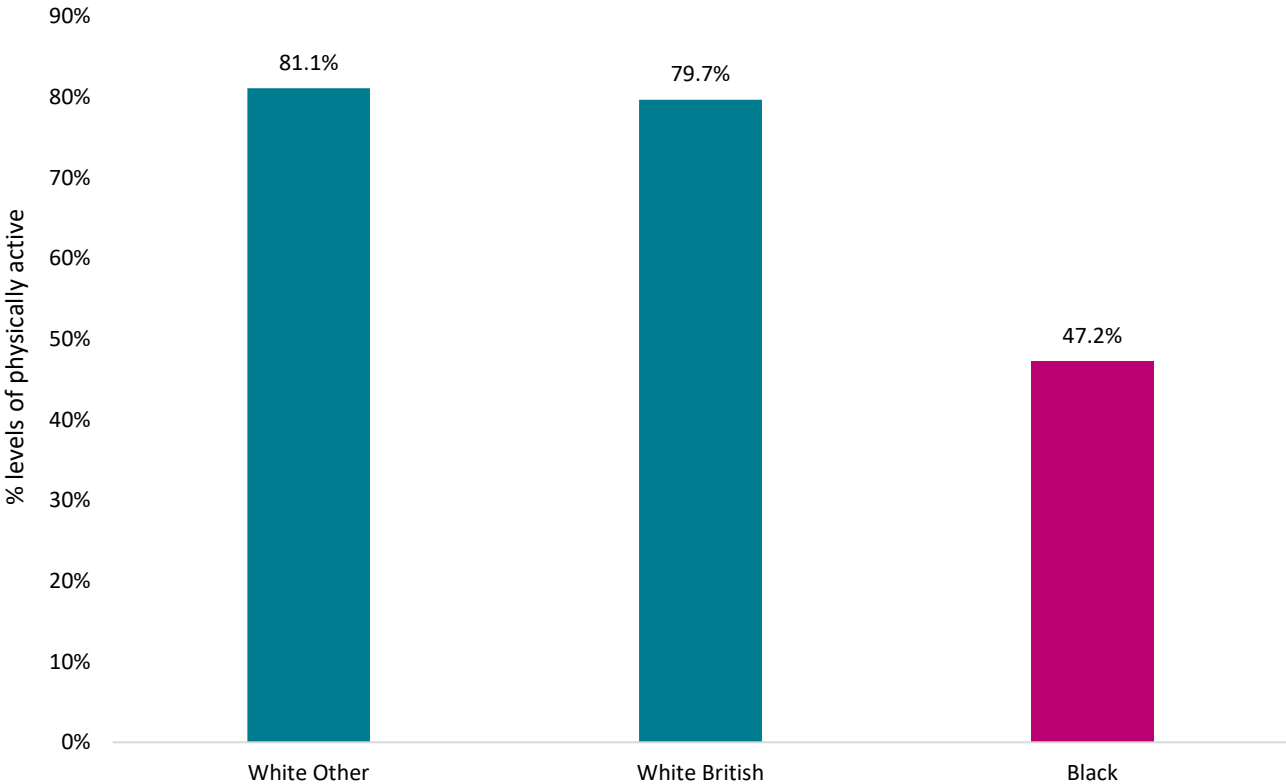


Figure 7. Proportion of adults surveyed reporting to be physically active (150 minutes or more of physical activity) in Southwark (November 2022/23), by broad ethnic group.

Systems approach to tackling obesity

Tackling Obesities: Future Choices

Map 0

Full Generic Map

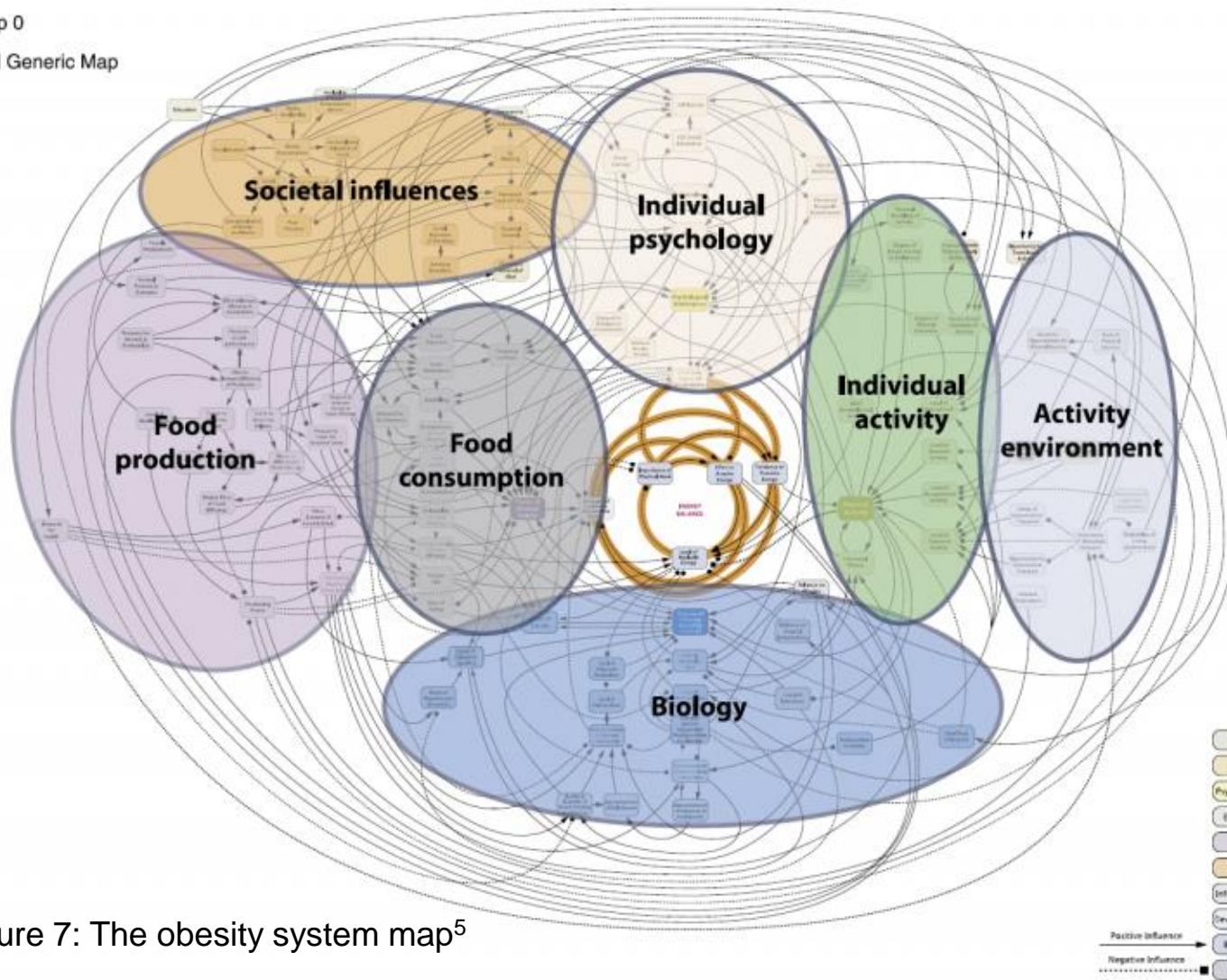
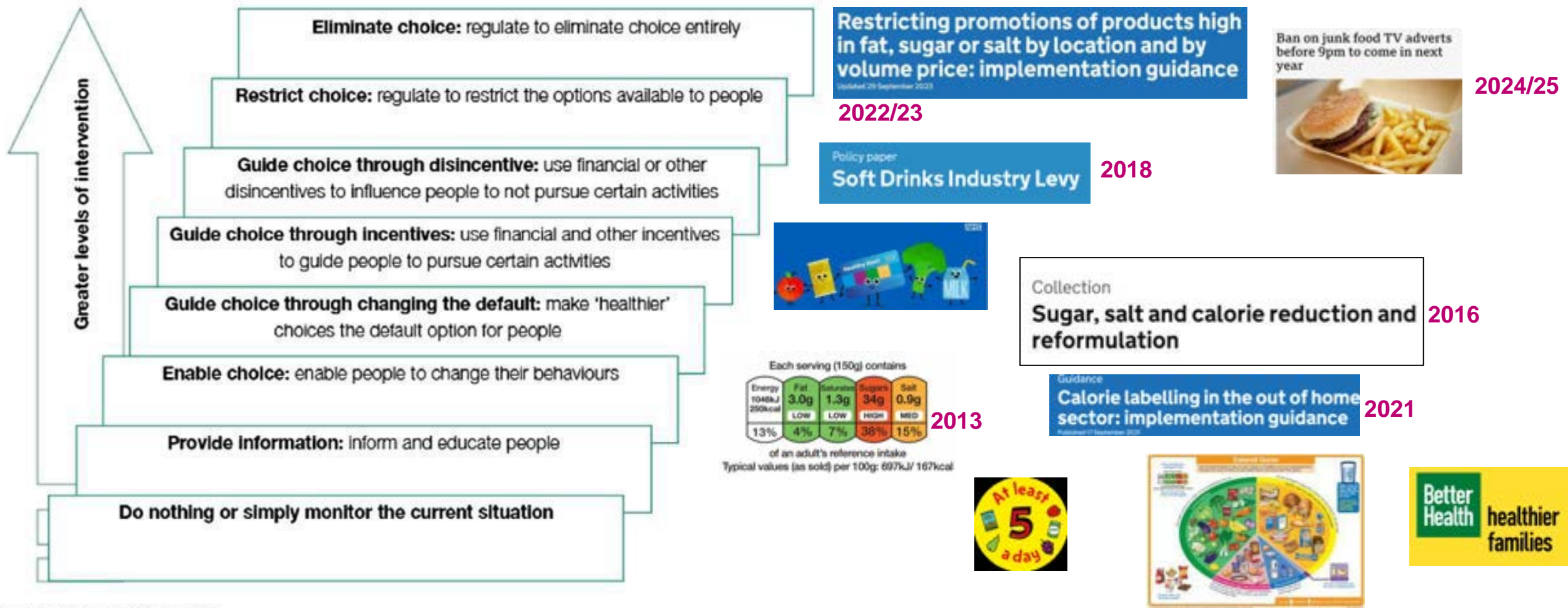


Figure 7: The obesity system map⁵

- Robust reference tool that underpins a lot of obesity-related interventions in the UK.
- **Complex multifaceted system of determinants** (causes) of obesity; focusing on single initiatives will not achieve the scale of change needed to reduce levels of obesity.
- Visualises the concept of a **Whole Systems Approach** which is critical in tackling obesity.
- **Obesogenic environment** ; range of social, cultural and infrastructural conditions that influence an individual's ability to adopt a healthy lifestyle.
- Partnership working is vital.

Public health policies to tackle obesity at national level using the Nuffield Balanced Intervention Ladder categories



Each serving (150g) contains

Energy 1048kJ 250kcal	Fat 3.0g LOW	Saturated 1.3g LOW	Sugars 34g HIGH	Salt 0.9g MED
13%	4%	7%	38%	15%

of an adult's reference intake
Typical values (as sold) per 100g: 697kJ/ 167kcal

Source: Nuffield Council on Bioethics, 2007

Tackling obesity in London

LONDON'S CHILD OBESITY TASKFORCE

Established in 2018 as part of the Mayor's commitment to address child obesity



The London Food Board (LFB) advises the Mayor of London and the GLA on the food matters that affect Londoners

Healthy Early Years London

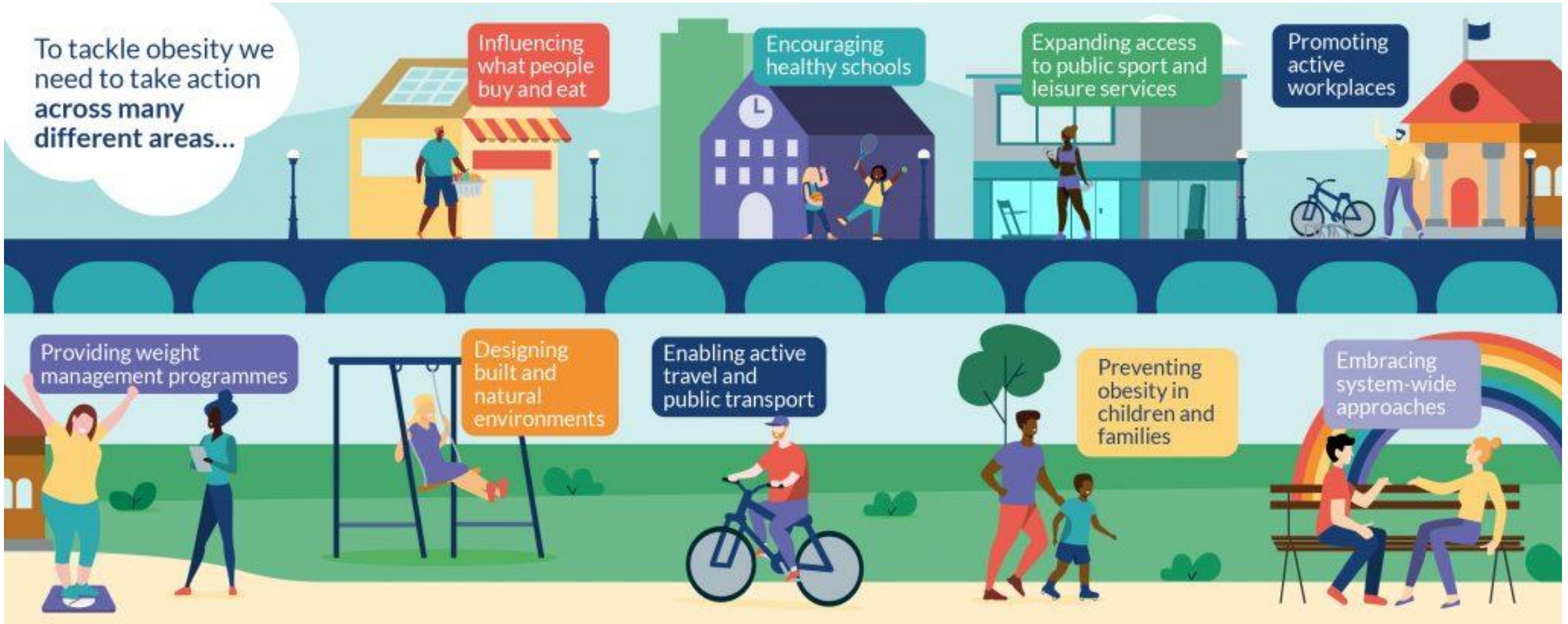
Healthy Schools London

Both programmes are currently being updated and aligned to be relaunched Sept 2025



Recognises that Londoners' physical and mental health is largely determined by the wider environment ; includes policies on developing a healthy city to enable health to flourish

How can Local Authorities reduce obesity? Insights from NIHR research



**Our approach to tackling obesity:
Southwark Healthy Weight Strategy
2022-27**

Southwark Healthy Weight Strategy 2022-27

- Partnership between Southwark Council, the South East London ICB (Southwark) and VCS.
- Adopts a whole systems approach, working with partners across the borough's healthy weight network to deliver effective prevention and treatment services that aim to reduce inequalities and improve health.
- Inequalities within obesity rates in Southwark have informed the identification of the 5 population groups prioritised in this strategy:
 - Maternity and early years
 - Children and young people
 - Black, Asian and minority ethnic groups
 - People experiencing food insecurity
 - Men aged 45 years and above

A set of ambitions have been developed for each priority group and related actions are reviewed annually.

Local interventions to tackle obesity

Place-based interventions examples



Advertising of high fat, salt or sugar (HFSS) products in the borough has been banned on council-owned advertising sites

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Hot Food Takeaway (HFT) restrictions

Addresses density in shopping parades and new hot food takeaways near schools



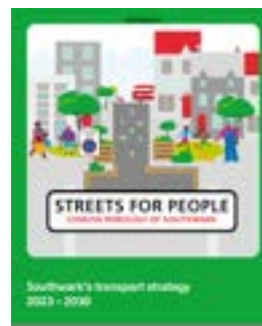
School Superzones

place-based interventions around schools in areas of greatest disadvantage.



Active travel

Council infrastructure and initiatives to promote walking and cycling



Southwark School Meals Transformation Programme



Good Food Retail

42 stores involved in Good Food Retail, with a 22% increase in healthier food stocked

Parks and green spaces

Protection and creation of new green spaces for everyone



Sports and leisure opportunities

Strengthening the council's offer for physical activities, especially those who are inactive or would benefit most

People-focused interventions examples

Weight management programmes (including targeted)

- Men aged over 45 years
- Latin American
- Healthy Church Initiative (Black-majority churches)
- Weight Watchers
- Child and Family Weight Management
- Exercise on Referral
- NHS Tiers 2 and 3 interventions



Free swim and gym offer

- Free swim and gym offer to support people to be active
- Free swimming classes
- Various classes for all abilities

Training and sign posting

- Southwark Healthy Weight Training for HCPs and non-HCPs
- Maternity Healthy weight training
- Signposting and training for Health Ambassadors, Health Promotion Van and VCS

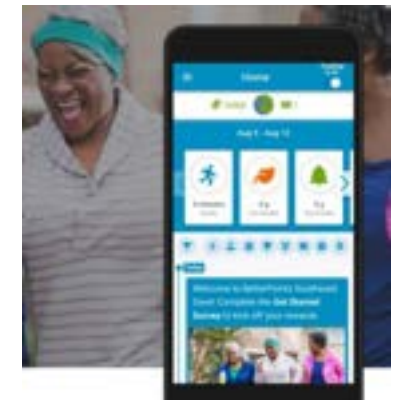
Rose Vouchers

Supported 1,447 children from 724 families in Southwark between April and July 2024, and provided vouchers for over 4,500 children since 2018



BetterPoints Southwark app

Rewards for being more active and for completing health improvement interventions



Resident experience

Child weight management programme (Alive N Kicking)

“We learnt a lot about physical activities and how often an individual should be training a week. As mum and son, we now sit together and plan our food shopping together. This has led to us to eating spending more time to together as a family. We cook more together than getting a takeaway. As a mother this programme has been very beneficial to me on the number of different topics we have covered. I especially enjoyed doing the programme alongside my son, being able to go to the gym with him has made us closer and I have seen an improvement in myself as well.”



“I wanted to improve my knowledge of label reading and healthy eating which has increased drastically, due to the info I received from the Alive N Kicking team. Screen time between the weekday and weekend had increased due to lock down. Surprisingly, the family has been doing workouts created by the physical activity specialist. Even I have increased my efforts to be active with the children at home.”

Men 45+ years weight management programme



"The 12 weeks of Men's Health Engineers has encouraged me, allowed me to talk, to feel normal and accepted - to give me a hope for the future. It has been led in kindness and understanding. To know that my weight gain is manageable to lose and as a result my confidence has started to return. I am starting to see 'me' again in the mirror."

Moving forward: Areas for development

Moving forward: Opportunities for potential development

- **Adult obesity and common long-term conditions:** need for the development of a patient-centred referral pathway.
- **Focus on people who are inactive:** Work with other HWB partners to support people who are physically inactive to be active.
- **Healthy Schools/Healthy Early Years programme:** consider how this could be strengthened in Southwark including promotion of the Public Health offer for schools.
- **BetterPoints app:** wider promotion and use of data collected to assess and address inequalities.
- **Sign posting and increasing awareness of national and local support services:** streamlining referral pathways available for people living with obesity.
- **Tier 3 weight management services:** increase capacity and support for Children and Young People.
- **Weight loss drugs:** work with partners to determine the most suitable delivery model in SEL.

Feedback from the Health and Wellbeing Board

Discuss potential areas for further development and opportunities for innovative approaches and collaboration, particularly in relation to the systems approaches required and partnership implications for:

- **Streamlining sign posting to all national and local support services** for adults living with obesity, **strengthening the range of interventions** and **increasing awareness of available services** to support healthy weight among the general population.
- **Enhancing the systems focus on people who are inactive.** Working with other HWB partners to support people who are physically inactive to be active.