

## New Year, New You?

'New Year, New You' is the message to Kent residents who are facing increasing health issues from poor lifestyle behaviours including inactivity and unhealthy eating. Along with smoking and drinking too much alcohol, these can have long term effects on people's emotional and physical health, leading to an increased risk of many types of cancer, heart and lung disease and stroke.

In 2017/18, the percentage of Kent adults (over 18) classified as overweight or obese was 62.8 per cent\* which is slightly higher than the national figure (62 per cent).

KCC Director for Public Health, Andrew Scott-Clark said: "The best way to tackle problem weight is to eat a healthy, balanced, reduced-calorie and sugar diet. You can also maintain a healthy weight and prevent many illnesses by exercising regularly, at least 30 minutes a day of brisk walking. Priorities focus on changeable factors such as helping families to improve poor diets and help for those who need to lose and maintain a healthy weight.

"KCC supports national initiatives such as Change4Life and One You, alongside community-based weight management programmes for adults and fun activity based programmes for families with children and educational programmes in schools. Services like One You Kent which really can help a new you, this new year."

Try the 'How are You?' quiz, Easy meals app or Active 10 app at [www.kent.gov.uk/healthyweight](http://www.kent.gov.uk/healthyweight). You can also book up for a free Health Check and find out more about a range of tools, tips and local support services that can help you at [www.oneyoukent.org.uk](http://www.oneyoukent.org.uk) Sally from Tunbridge Wells lost 11kg with one-to-one support from the One You Kent team, team as well as joining the September Counterweight Group in the Camden Centre, Tunbridge Wells. She said: "What a great group to join, really friendly people... supportive and made my journey very enjoyable. So very happy to lose the weight I have with the support I received I recommend it to anyone who wants to lose weight and feel great."

Anthony from Dartford lost two stone and quit smoking with One You Kent. He said: "One You Kent and its amazing team of wonderful staff have enabled me to lose weight and stop smoking which have helped me tackle sleep apnoea and regain my confidence to re-enter the workplace. They made the difference for me and helped me rebuild my life."

Andrew Scott-Clark added: "We want more people to get the help they need at the right time and this could be in a range of different ways. People do not have to struggle alone, we want them to seek support and information to help them live a healthier life. If people are depressed then we urge them to see their GPs or contact Live Well Kent - who provide community mental health support services. For more information, go to [www.livewellkent.org.uk](http://www.livewellkent.org.uk)"

KCC supports the national Dry January campaign and encourages residents to be aware of how much they are drinking by using the 'Know Your Score' interactive online anonymous test - [www.kent.gov.uk/knowyourscore](http://www.kent.gov.uk/knowyourscore) A range of formal and informal support is also available, such as AA and Smart Recovery (peer support) in Kent and Al-anon for friends, family and carers of alcoholics. KCC Public Health commissions specialist treatment providers to provide structured treatment for alcohol addiction.

Meanwhile, figures for Kent last year show a decrease down to 15 per cent of residents being smokers – approximately 185,000 people – and the number of people who have never smoked is on the rise, up to 56.2 per cent.

If you're aged 40 to 74-years-old, and not on GP cardiovascular register you will be invited once every five years for a NHS Health Check. Your blood pressure, height and weight will be checked along with blood cholesterol and you'll also be asked some questions about your lifestyle and family history. The check will identify the risk of you developing heart disease, kidney disease, stroke, diabetes or dementia in the future.

For advice about small changes you can make to improve your health and wellbeing, and find more support in your area regarding your lifestyle, see [www.oneyoukent.org.uk](http://www.oneyoukent.org.uk) (search for 'Health Checks') or call [0300 123 1220](tel:03001231220) (option 4) to find a clinic near you.

Geoffrey Lymer  
Kent County Councillor  
Dover West Ward