

An insight into inequalities in adult physical activity in Nottingham City

Based on data using the Active Lives Survey 2024-25

PRESSRED

active notts

The Adult Active Lives survey began in November 2015, which means we now have **a decade of insight**



Ten years of comparable data — This gives us more than a snapshot of our area, it gives us a trajectory. This shows us the direction inactivity is heading in our area: Where it has improved, stalled, or become entrenched.

The national picture is one of overall progress. But a decade of data makes it clear that growth is not equal. In most cases the gap between our most and least affluent communities has widened. Disabled adults and those with long-term health conditions, women, older residents and people in our most deprived neighbourhoods continue to experience levels of inactivity that the national average conceals.

Demographic and economic shifts are ongoing and have **intensified inequality gaps**

- Generally, our populations are growing, ageing and becoming more diverse
- The shift towards an ageing population is moving more people into age groups we know are more likely to be inactive
- Economic pressures are pushing more people into lower income brackets, where we know inactivity is more likely



active notts

Inactivity at a glance:
The local picture

National Active Lives data shows the direction of travel for England. To see what that means for Nottingham City, we need to understand our population, how it's changing, and the inactivity and inequalities we see locally.



PRESSRED

active notts

Our growing adult population is shifting towards an older and more diverse community

There are 270,000 **adults (16+)** living in Nottingham City

An increase of around 13,000 since 2015



40,000 of these are **over 65**

That's 15% of the adult population



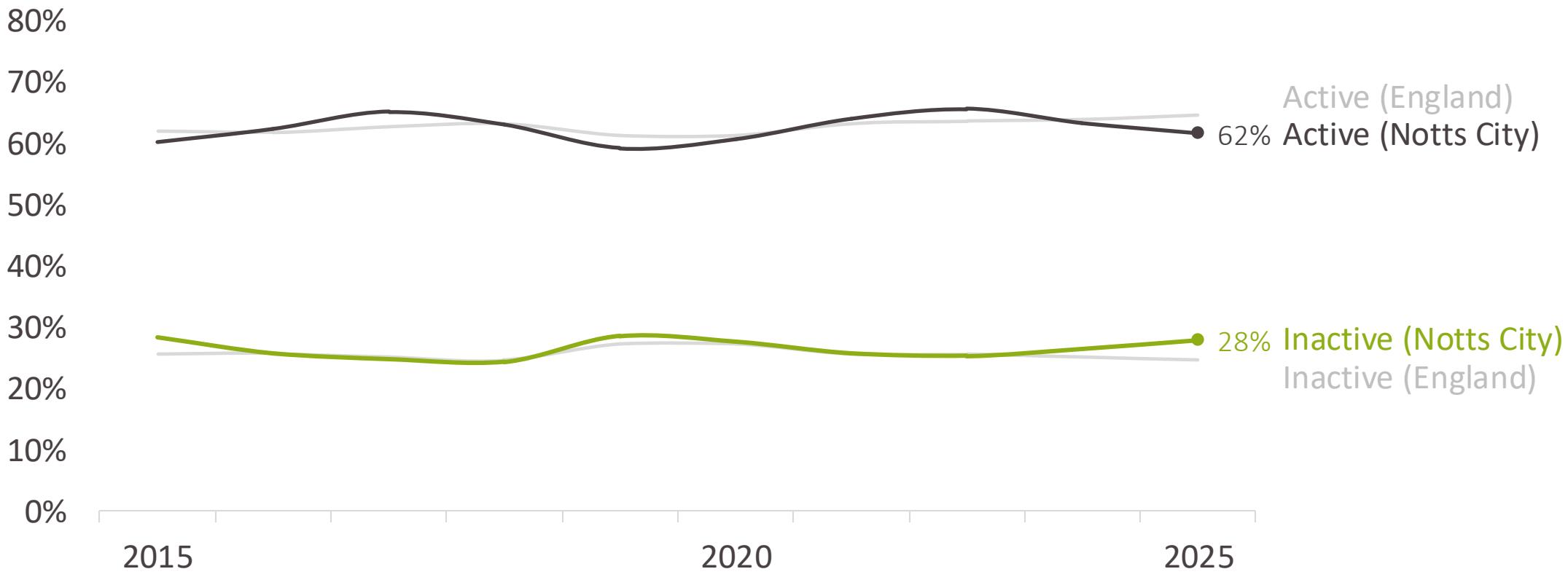
74,000 of these are from **global majority** ethnic groups

That's 39% of the adult population



Source: ONS Mid Year Population estimates for England and Wales, 2015 & 2025 (16+); Census 2011 & 2021 (24+)

Physical inactivity for adults in Nottingham City is relatively stable



Source: Sport England, Active Lives Adults (16+), 2015-25, excluding gardening

Currently, **28%** of adults are inactive



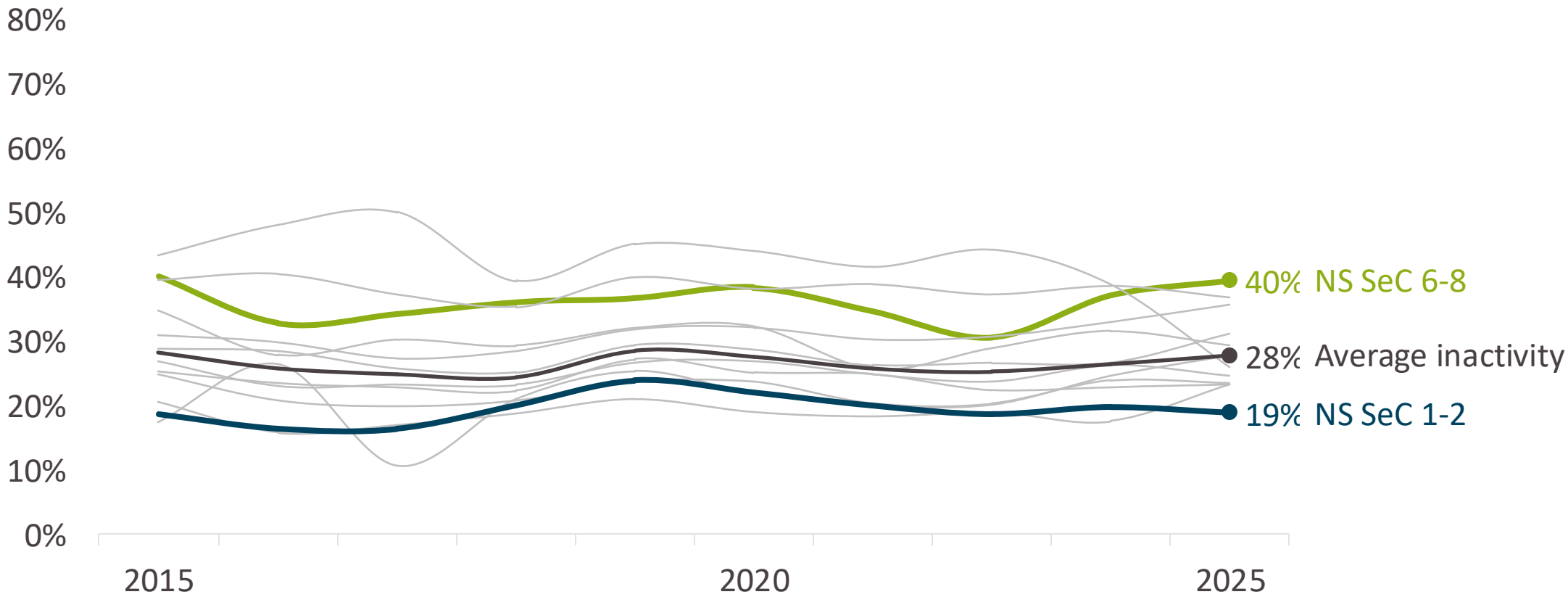
That's around **76,000**

people not meeting recommended activity levels

Source: ONS Mid Year Population estimates for England and Wales, 2025 (16+); Sport England, Active Lives Adults (16+), 2024-25, excluding gardening

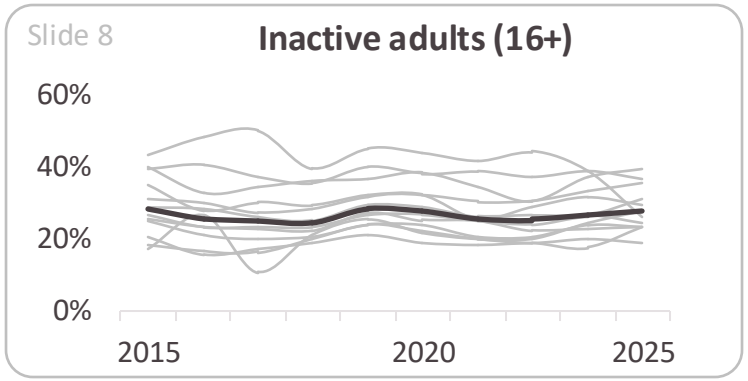
Average inactivity hides the variations within our population

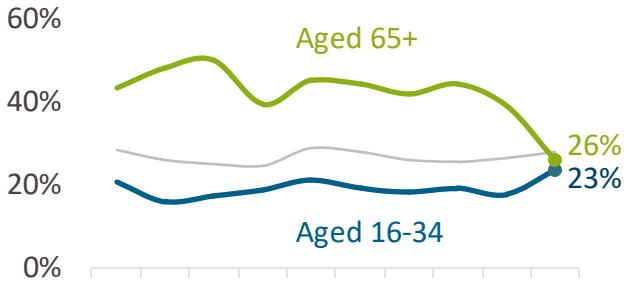
Inactivity across Nottingham City averages 28%. Within that, it rises to **40% for the least affluent (NS SeC 6-8)** – the highest of any group – and falls to **19% among the most affluent** (NS SeC 1-2). The lowest of any group.

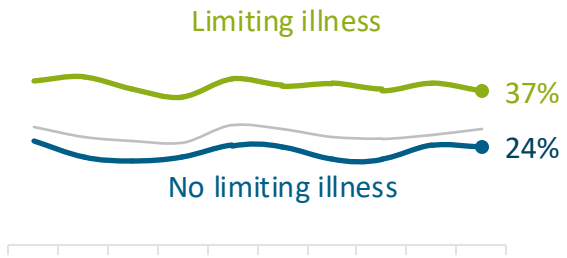


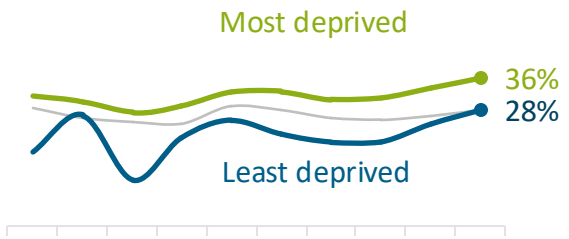
Source: Sport England, Active Lives Adults (16+), 2015-25, excluding gardening

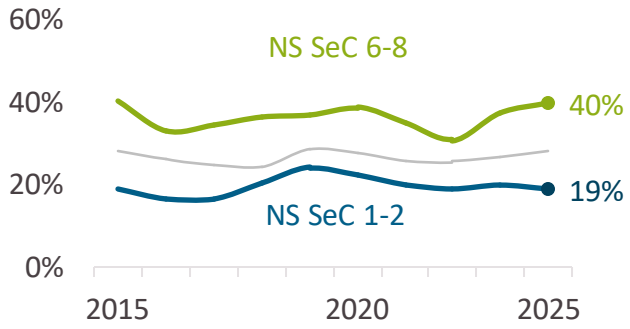
The inactivity gap: Which groups sit above and below the average

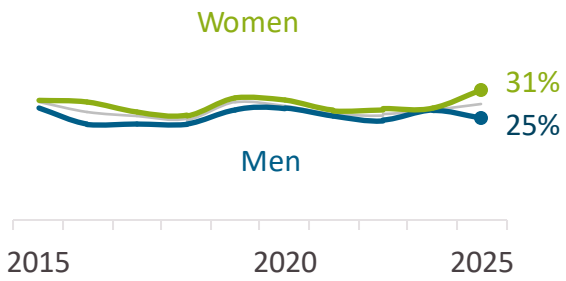


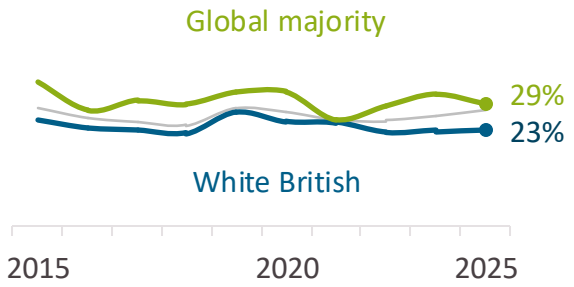










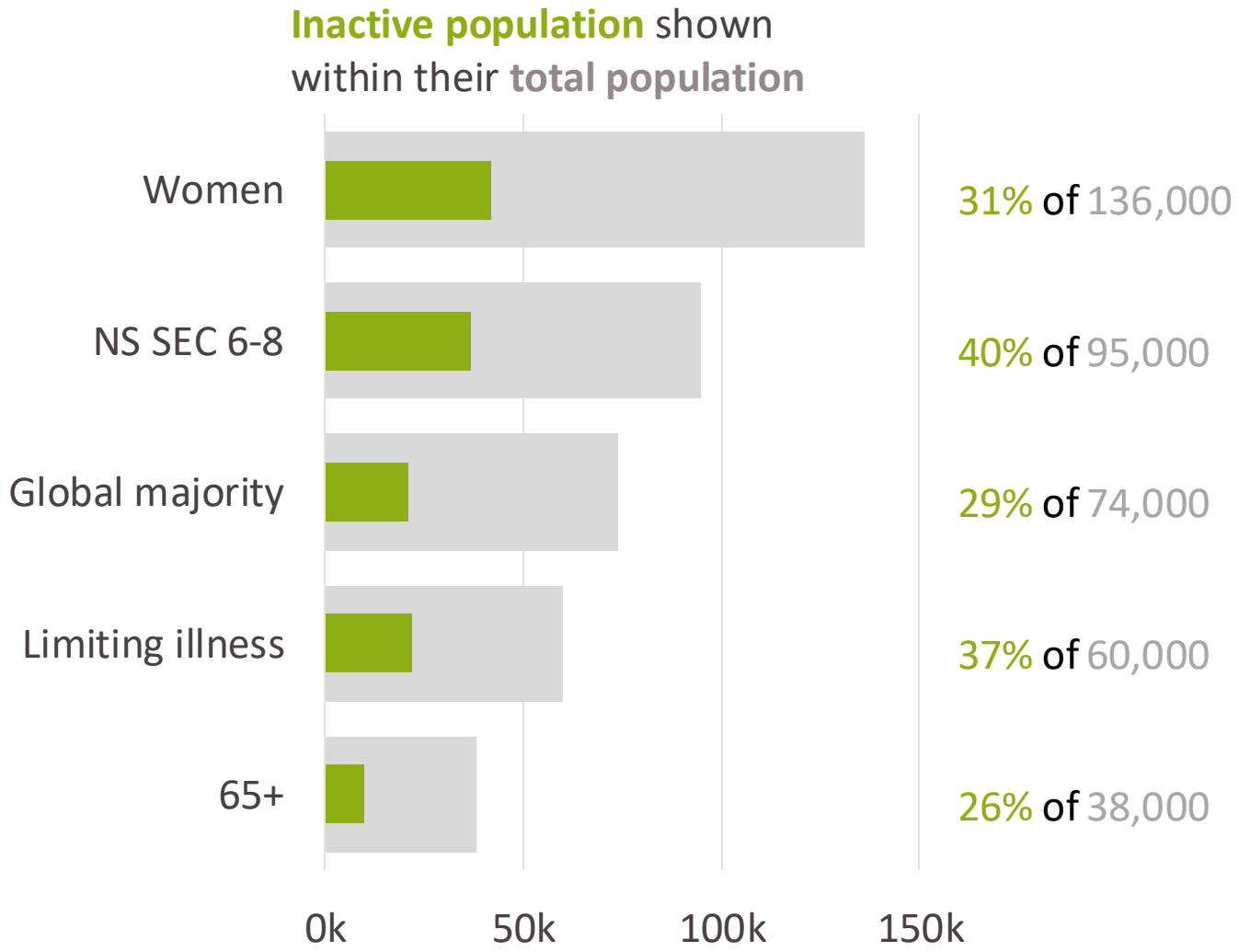


Source: Sport England, Active Lives Adults (16+), 2015-25, excluding gardening

Global Majority makes up the biggest population but not the highest % of inactivity

There are 138,000 in Global majority but only 29% are inactive. Compared to 40% of inactive adults in our least affluence households (NS SeC 6-8).

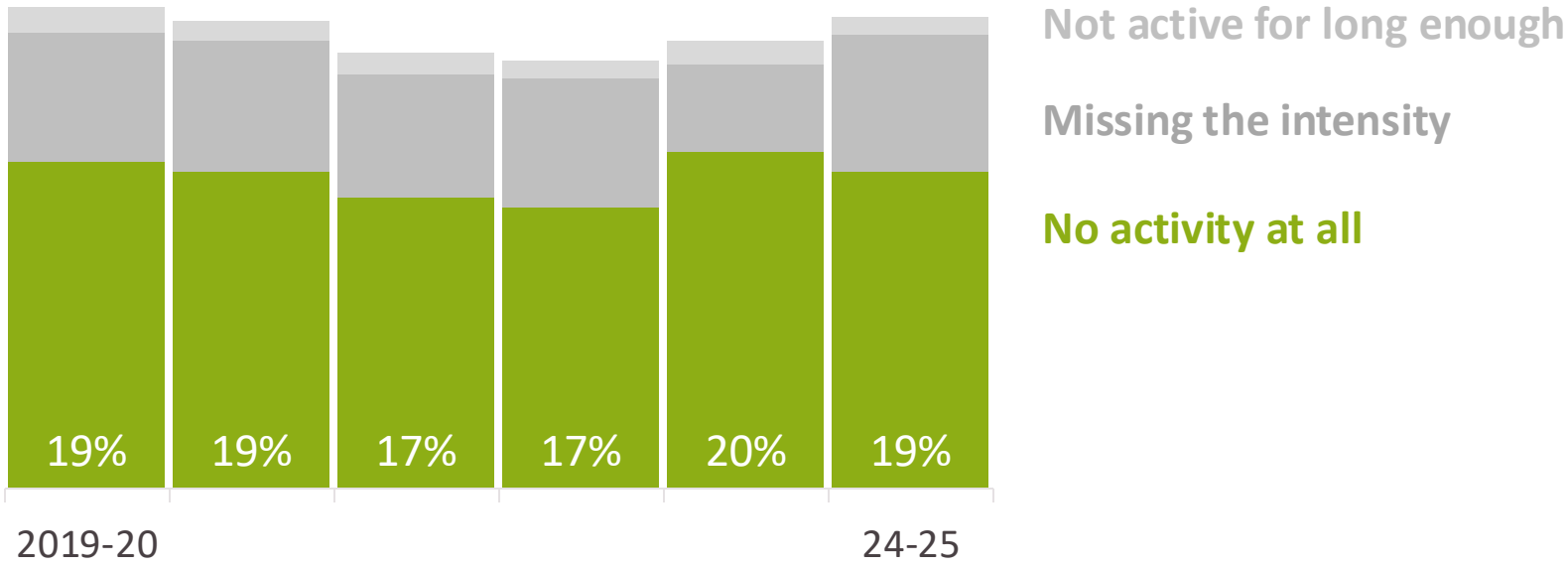




Source: Sport England, Active Lives Adults (16+), 2024-25, excluding gardening; Census 2021

The proportion of adults doing **no activity at all** has fallen in the last 12 months

A drop of 1 percentage point in the last 12 months is **3,000** fewer adults doing **no activity at all**



Source: Sport England, Active Lives Adults (16+), 2019-25, excluding gardening; ONS Mid Year Population estimates for England and Wales, 2025 (16+)

Characteristics and the inequalities metric

Having looked at who's inactive locally, we now turn to **active levels (meeting the CMO guidelines)** and the characteristics Sport England identifies as key drivers of inequality.

The inequalities metric shows how far activity falls as these characteristics stack up. It's not which characteristics someone carries that matters most — it's how many. That's what reveals the scale of the additional challenge some people face.



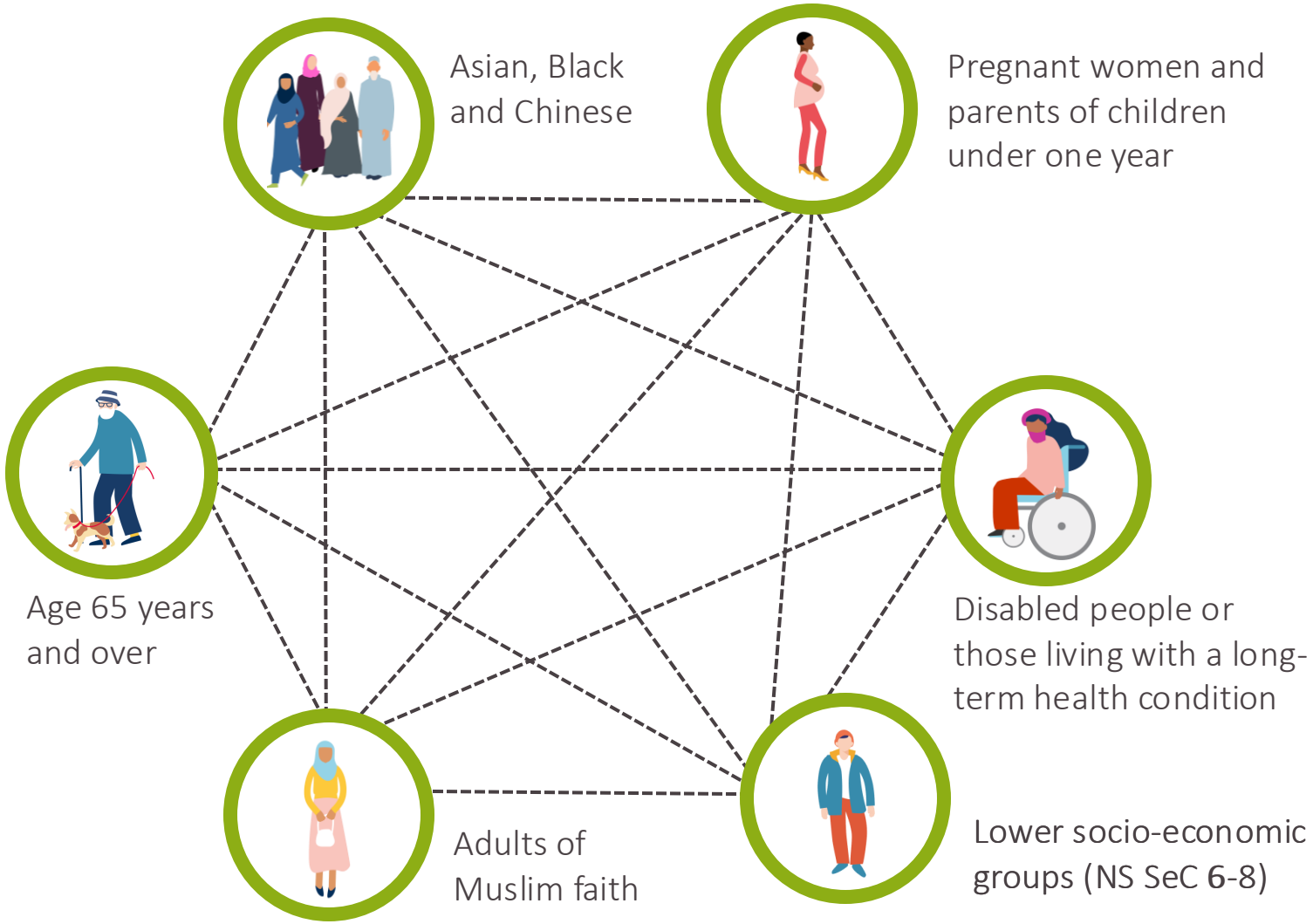
PRESSRED

active notts

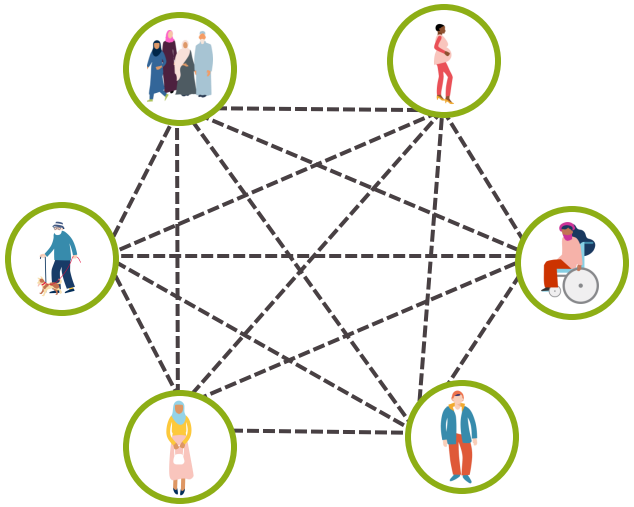
No one is a single characteristic

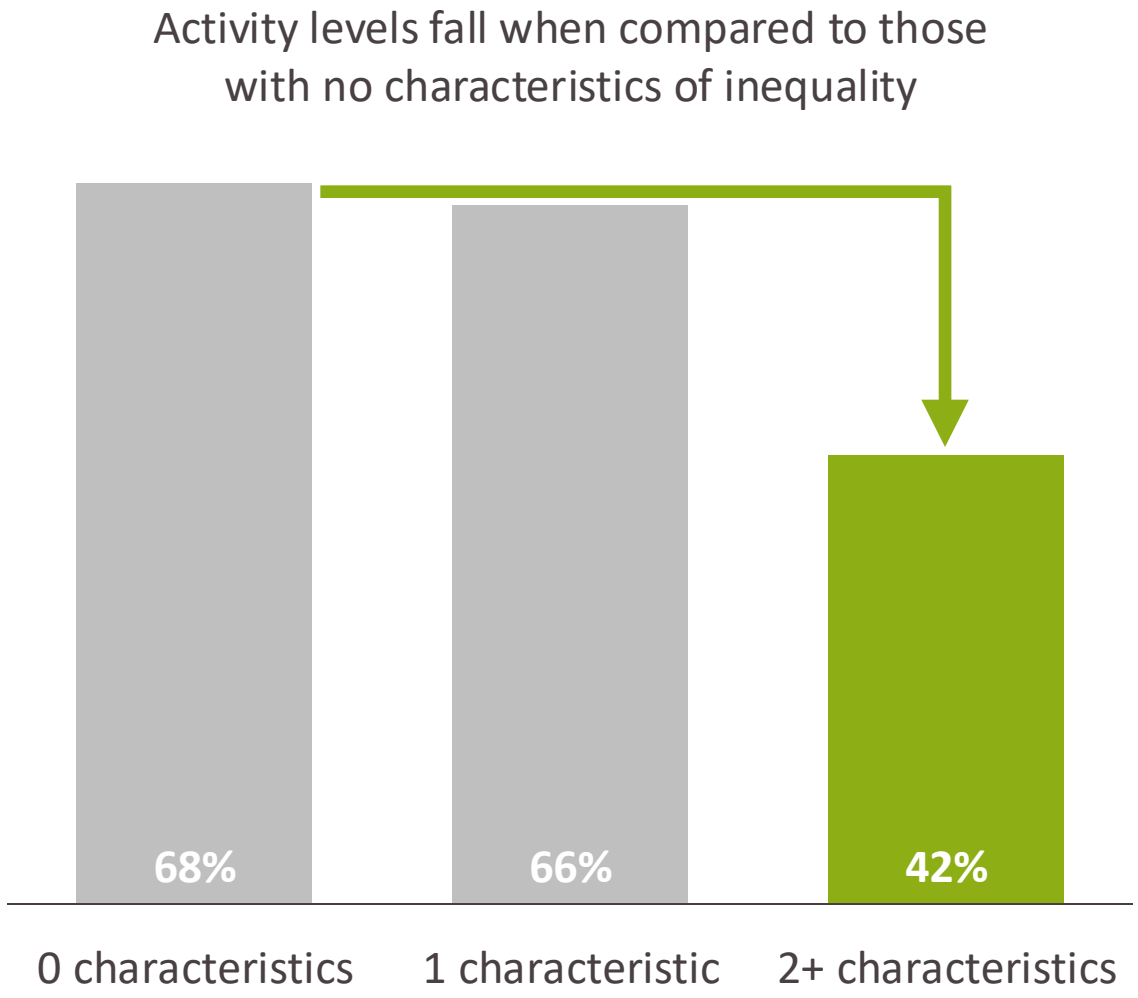
The inequalities metric lets us look at people as a whole, rather than one characteristic at a time.

Combining characteristics associated with being less active can lower individual activity levels.



Having **2 or more characteristics** can dramatically reduce our ability to be **active**





Source: Sport England, Active Lives Adults (16+), 2024-25 , excluding gardening

A local example: low affluence, plus one more characteristic

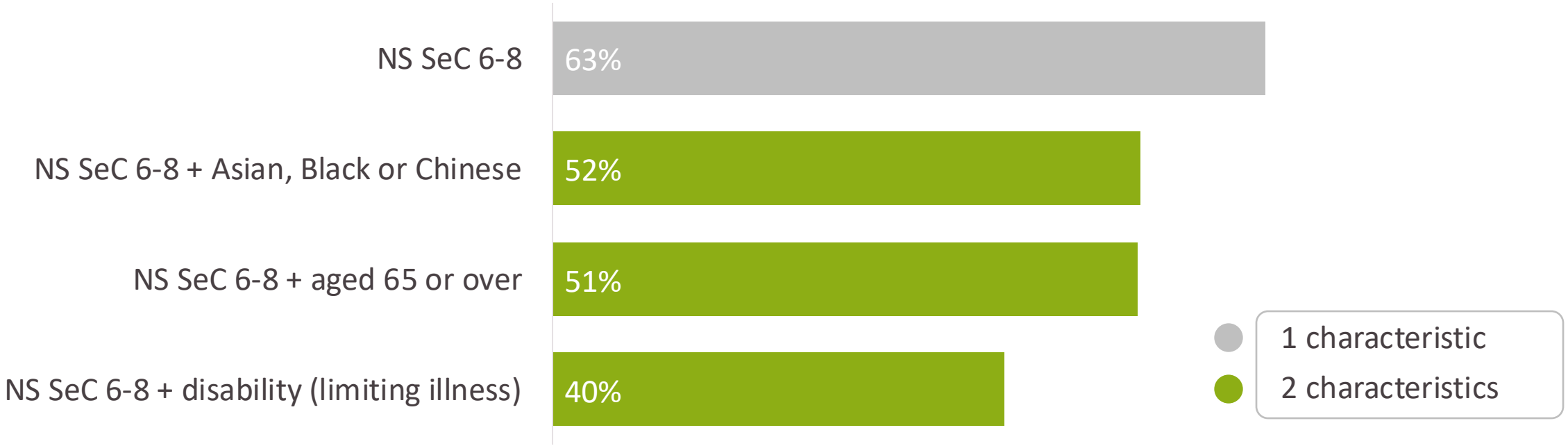
To bring this to life locally, the next slide looks at people in low affluence households — one of our key inequality characteristics — and shows what happens when a second characteristic is added.

We've chosen low affluence as our example because it cuts across so many other characteristics: people in low affluence households span every ethnicity, age group and disability status. That makes it a useful lens for showing how combining characteristics compounds the challenge, rather than a group that stands apart from the rest.

This is one example, not the full picture. The same pattern will hold for other combinations too.



Using low affluence as an example — activity drops further still when **combined** with age, ethnicity, or disability



In this example, the steepest fall is seen when disability (limiting illness) is added — but all combinations show reducing activity levels

Source: Sport England, Active Lives Adults (16+), 2022-25 3 years combined excluding gardening

Inactivity in our place

Understanding who's active in our places, and how, helps us see the full picture. Mapping also lets us explore where outcomes are worse at a place level.

The focus on place began in 2017, when Sport England's Local Delivery Pilots set out to test how working in and with places could help tackle inequalities among the least active.

Place-based work matters because lasting change happens when it's rooted in the communities that need it most.

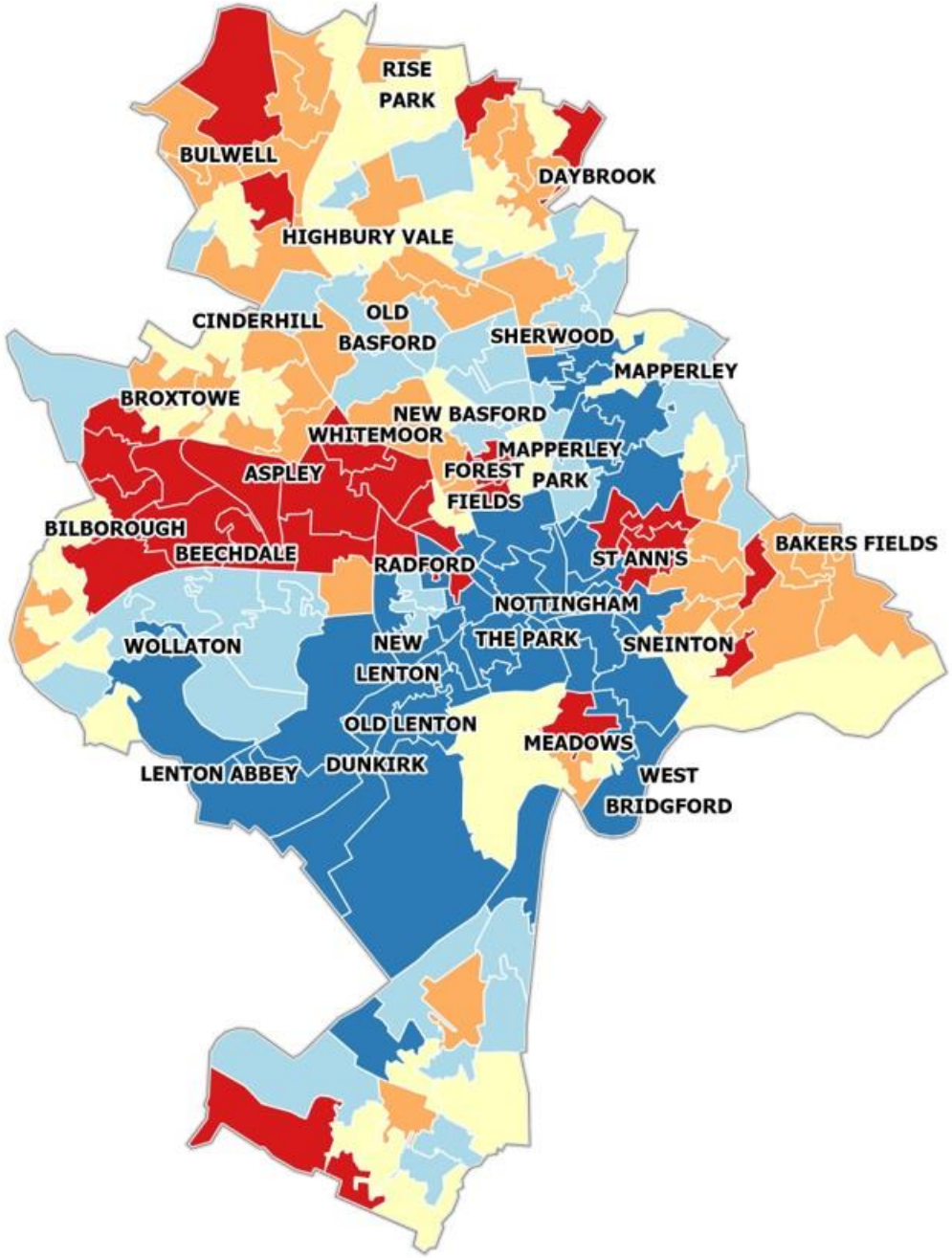


PRESSRED

active notts

Inactivity more than doubles across the city

(18%-40%)



Adult inactive overall (Nottingham City data range)

Less inactive — More inactive

18% 28% 32% 33% 35% 40%

Source: Sport England, Lower Super Output Area (LSOA), Small Area Estimates Nov 2023-24. Contains OS data © Crown copyright and database right 2026

How we get our physical activity minutes

Understanding changing trends driving the types of activities we do is important. Nationally, running and fitness activities continue to grow strongly, while active travel and cycling for leisure have dipped over the last 12 months.

This matters because knowing through which activities our communities get their minutes tells us what to protect, what to invest in and where the biggest opportunities lie — from everyday walking routes and green space to sports and leisure facilities.



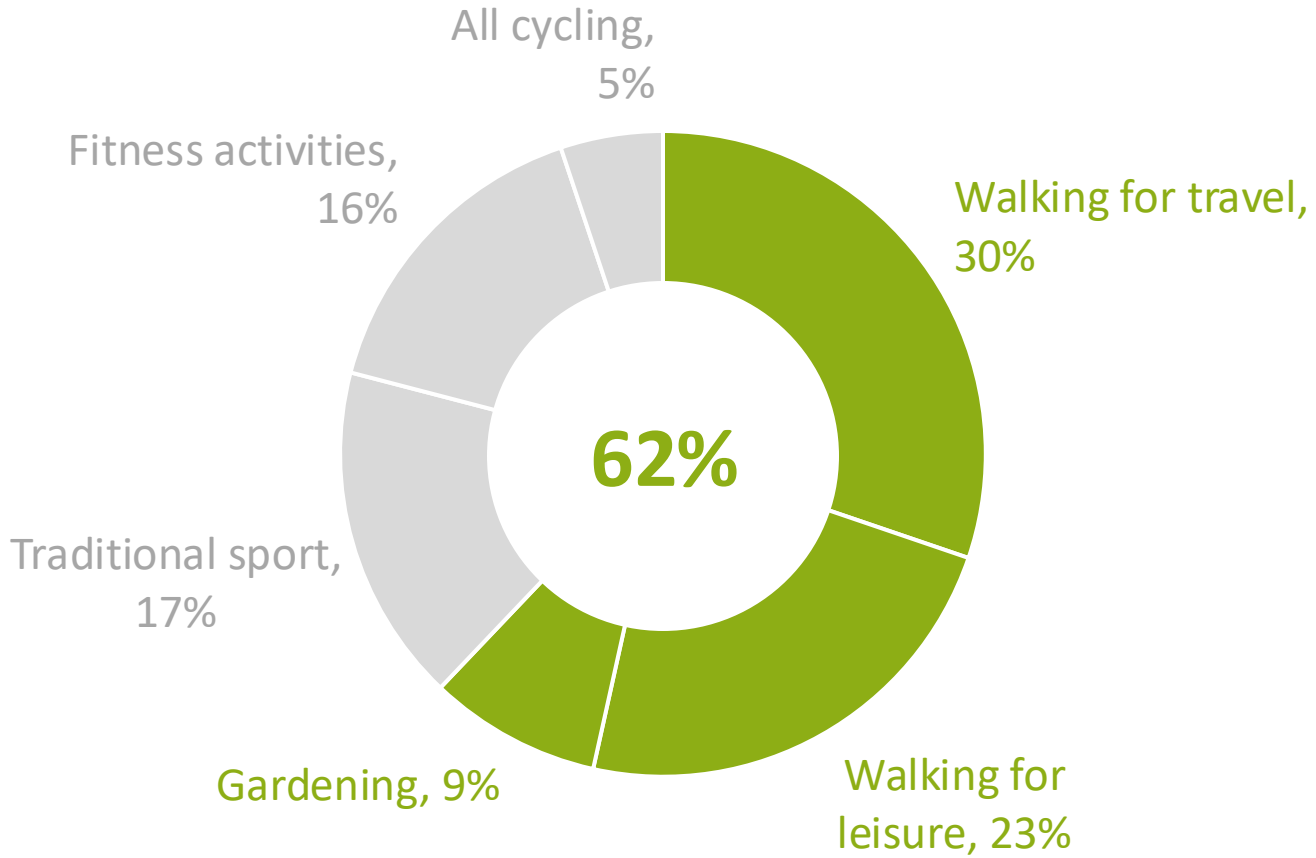
PRESSRED

active notts

Almost 2 thirds of our active time is spent doing informal activities

Walking and gardening can be done with no sports or leisure facilities



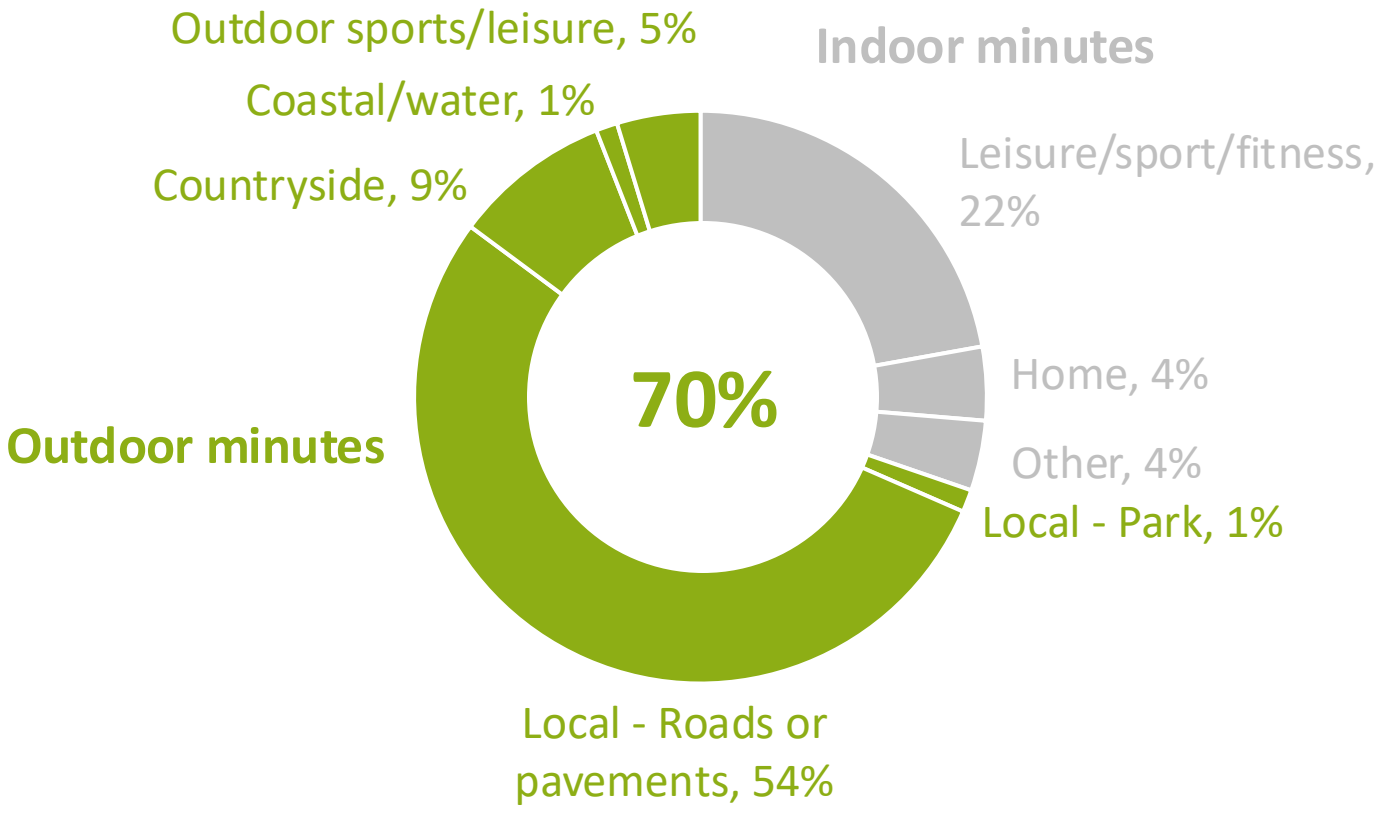


Source: Sport England, Active Lives Adults (16+), 2024-25, excluding gardening. Measure: Minutes of physical activity per week



70% of our active time comes from **outdoor activities**

This shows the importance of our active environments



Source: Sport England, Active Lives Adults (16+), 2024-25, excluding gardening. Measure: Minutes of physical activity per week

What gets us moving?

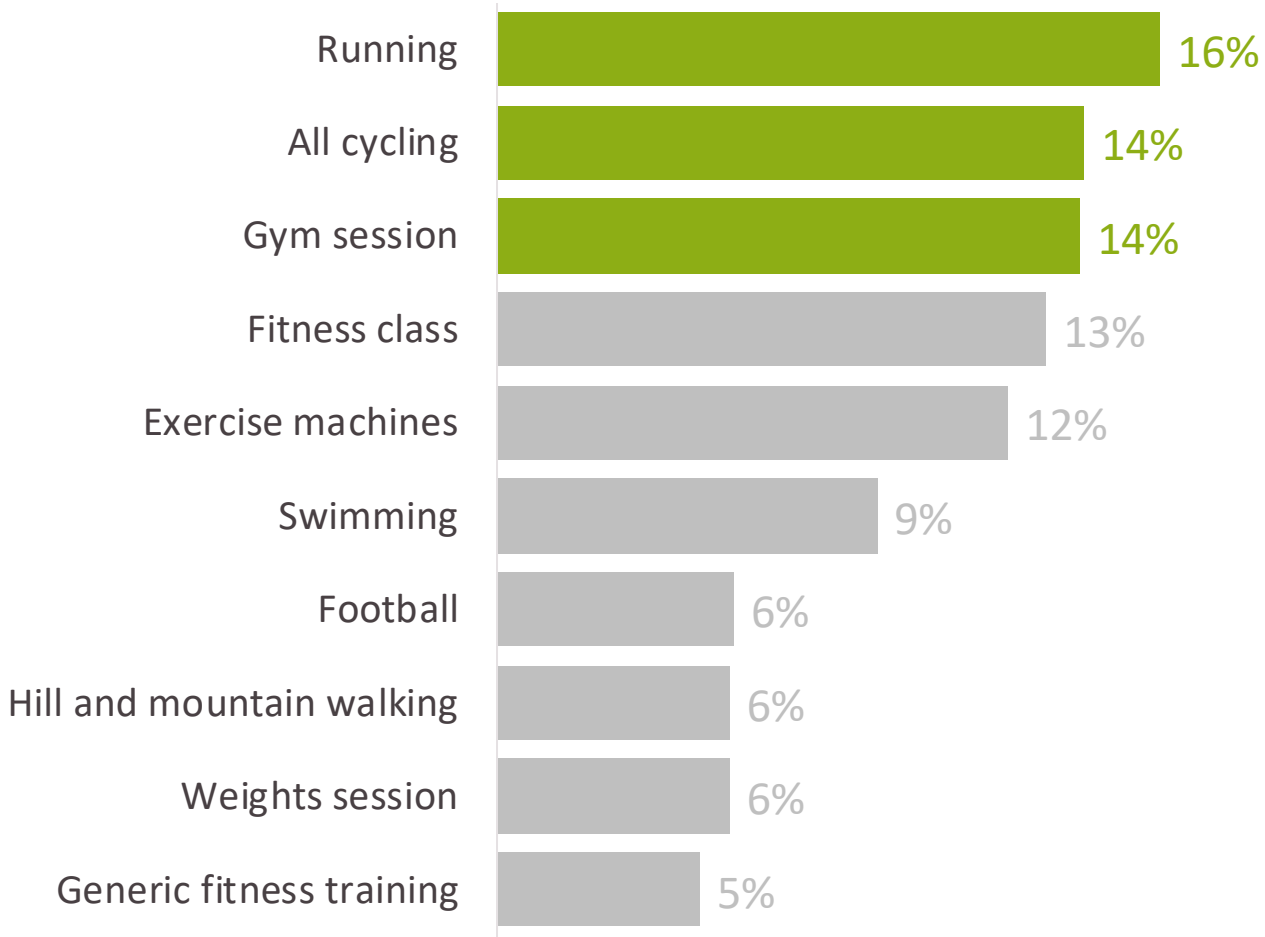
adults regularly take part in locally, each at 14% or above.

As a national comparison, football has held steady at just under 5% since 2015.



Top 10 sports and activities

Participating **at least twice in the last 28 days**



Source: Sport England, Active Lives Adults (16+), 2024-25, excluding gardening

The importance of physical activity and social outcomes

Active Lives also captures data designed to better understand impact against four of the five social outcomes to which sport and physical activity contributes.



PRESSRED

active notts

Social outcomes are measured by asking different questions…



Mental wellbeing

How **happy** did you feel yesterday?
How **satisfied** are you with your life nowadays?



Individual development

I can **achieve most of the goals** I set myself
If I find something difficult, I keep trying until I can do it (**resilience**)



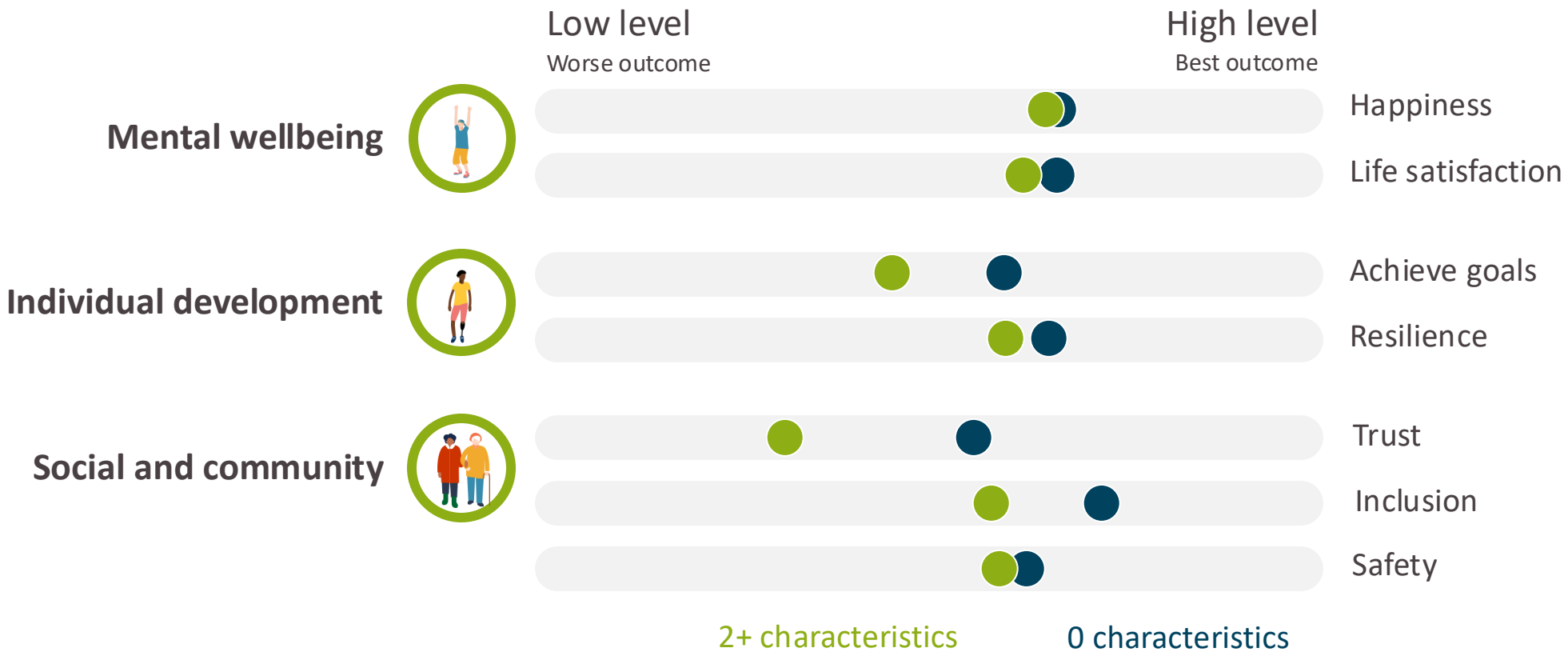
Social & community

Most people in our local area can be **trusted**
My local area is a place where people from different backgrounds get on well together (**inclusion**)
I feel **safe** in the public places and settings where I would like to exercise

Source: Sport England, Active Lives Adult Survey November 2024-25 Report

The more inequalities stack up, the worse outcomes tend to get

Adults who face **two or more inequality characteristics** tend to compare poorly on social outcomes, to those facing **none**



Source: Sport England, Active Lives Adults (16+), 2024-25, excluding gardening

Appendix

Demographics

	2015-16	16-17	17-18	18-19	19-20	20-21	21-22	22-23	23-24	24-25
All adults (aged 16+)	**2,016**	**1,987**	**1,979**	**1,992**	**2,009**	**2,019**	**2,012**	**1,984**	**793**	**811**
Male	857	886	853	869	869	878	856	862	350	360
Female	1,154	1,098	1,120	1,112	1,119	1,130	1,132	1,094	439	436
16-34	611	624	644	709	635	686	691	634	256	256
65+	391	389	347	327	397	426	391	382	144	160
NS SEC 1-2	812	798	838	857	816	860	851	855	366	369
NS SEC 6-8	355	339	343	318	318	336	315	337	107	127
White British	1,452	1,414	1,418	1,362	1,360	1,353	1,309	1,302	473	502
Global majority	328	343	317	358	390	422	421	446	183	188
Limiting illness	352	389	370	389	443	445	451	437	165	204
No limiting illness	1,535	1,466	1,475	1,471	1,408	1,447	1,403	1,396	569	545
Least deprived quintile	1,200	65	69	55	110	148	178	142	73	90
Most deprived quintile	68	1,209	1,195	1,162	1,083	931	914	941	339	348
0 Characteristics	-	563	706	716	696	688	718	663	304	276
1 Characteristic	-	426	394	451	534	567	587	567	244	253
2+ Characteristics	-	140	155	176	195	232	247	294	113	139

Source: Sport England, Active Lives Adults (16+), 2024-25

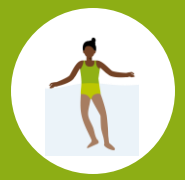
How do we measure activity?

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 is generally excluded from the survey but is counted within active minutes



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



Walking for travel includes walking as a way to get from one place to another, such as the shops work or visiting friends*



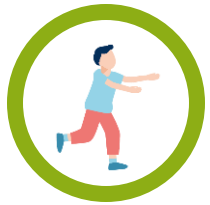
Cycling includes leisure and travel, track, road and mountain biking or racing, exercise bike or cycle class



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 includes artistic and creative dance (ballroom, ballet, contemporary etc)

*Only activity of at least 10 continuous minutes are counted

AI tools have been used to help process data and refine the narrative for this pack. All figures are taken from the published survey data, and all analysis has been carried out, checked and verified by Press Red