



Improving your strength and balance



A guide to being active in and around your home

How Find Your Active Can Help You!

As the world begins to reopen there are many people who will feel anxious, nervous and lost confidence to engage in community life again.

This booklet has been developed to support older people and those who were asked to shield during the Covid-19 lockdowns. We hope this will help you to be active in and around their home, help to build back your confidence, strength and activity levels.

Right now it is important you are provided with trusted information to allow you to Find Your Active, whether that is in, or around your home.

Find Your Active is Active Essex's brand new campaign which celebrates the fact that everyone can enjoy the huge benefits of moving more – we want you to find what is right for you. When it comes to getting active we know that finding the right activity greatly increases your chances of creating a new, sustainable and healthy



So, whether its getting out in the garden, a short walk, a social bike ride, some light stretching, a friendly game of football or a visit to your local leisure centre, the benefits of increasing daily movement will soon show, and have a really positive impact on your health and wellbeing.



The two key activity types that help are:



Do not worry if you have not done much for a while, these strength movements are gentle and easy to follow. For the chair-based activities, choose a solid, stable chair that does not have wheels and that will not slip on the surface it is on.

- ✓ You should be able to sit with your feet flat on the floor and your knees bent at a right angle. Avoid chairs with arms, as these will restrict your movement.
- ✓ Wear loose, comfortable clothing and keep some water handy.
- ✓ Build up slowly and aim to gradually increase the repetitions of each movement over time.
- ✓ Try to do these at least twice a week and combine them with other gentle activities that increase your balance stability, seated stretches and flexibility exercises.

Activities for you to do at home

Always warm up before you start.



Seated Exercises

Sit up straight in a supportive chair, take 2-3 deep breaths in and out to calm the mind and body in preparation for the exercises.

Heel Lifts

Lift heels off the floor, then place them back down. Lift toes off floor then place down. Do these slowly and fully. (30 seconds)



Chair Marching

Lift one leg at a time, as if marching. You can add your arms in too, if comfortable. (30 seconds)



Standing Exercises

Remember to have something sturdy, like a work surface, next to you. Use it to stay steady and safe.

Marching

Slow march on spot, gradually lifting the knees slightly higher, or by marching a little faster and adding arms in. (30 seconds)



Shoulder Rolls

3 each way. You should feel warmer and be breathing a little harder now.



Wall Press Up

Slowly bend both arms so that your nose moves closer to the wall. Slowly push back into standing.

Start with 3 repetitions then build up.

Make this harder by moving very slowly and smoothly.



Ways to Build Activity into your Everyday Life

As well as doing these exercises 2-3 times a week, try to avoid any long periods of inactivity and find ways to build movement into your day, every day. Any movement is good, particularly if it makes you feel a little bit warm and makes you breathe a little faster.

Remember, something is better than nothing, it all counts. Here are some ideas of ways to stay active in and around your home:



Cleaning

All household jobs will keep you moving and strong



Stretching

Regular stretching is good for your body



Stairs

Walking up and down stairs helps with balance



Gardening

Getting outside in the garden has many benefits



Walking

Walking to the shops improves strength and balance



Dancing

Dancing is great to get you moving and lifts your spirits too



Online

Try a class on the Find Your Active YouTube Channel

Five Ways to Wellbeing

Connect

Connect with the people around you. With family, friends, and neighbours. At home or in your local community. Building connections will support you every day.

Stop and Take Notice

Whether you are walking to the shops, eating lunch or talking to friends, take a moment or two to be aware of the world around you and what you are feeling. Pausing to really take notice like this can be very relaxing and calming. Some people call this 'being mindful' or 'mindfulness'.

Help Others

Do something nice for a friend, help out at home, thank someone, smile, volunteer your time, join a community group, look out, as well as in. Any acts of kindness, whether small or large can make you feel happier and more satisfied about life.

Be Active

Moving more makes you feel good! Science tells us that physical exercise changes the chemicals in your brain and releases happy hormones! Even better if you can get moving outdoors! The important thing is doing activity you enjoy!

Keep Learning

A comfort zone is a cool place but nothing ever grows there. Step out of the comfort zone. You will learn things you never knew that you never knew.



Useful Contacts and Websites

Essex Wellbeing Service

Provide support people in the community and at work with a range of health, wellbeing and day to day needs. They help people access information and support to stay healthy, safe and well from help to quit smoking, to supporting families in adapting to the 'new normal'.

Tel: 0300 303 9988

Website: www.essexwellbeingservice.co.uk

Email: provide.essexwellbeing@nhs.net

Active Essex

Active Essex is a county-wide initiative that helps you take those first steps to a more active lifestyle.

Website: www.activeessex.org

Email: administration@activeessex.org

Find an activity near you: findyouractive.activityfinder.net/

