





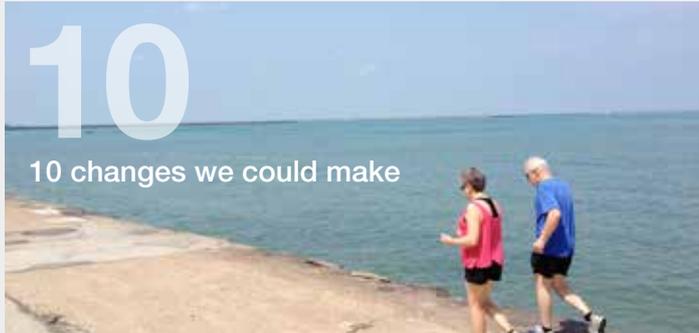
10

10 killer facts



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10 reasons to be positive



10

10 changes we could make



People

People already active



Join us...

# Active by Design.

## Helping to create healthy lives by designing and managing places and buildings that encourage physical activity

The Design Council is championing Active by Design in the UK – a new programme that will address one of the most serious health issues facing modern society: increasing levels of poor health and the development of certain chronic diseases, brought on by a combination of lack of physical activity and poor diet. The need for this is being seen in vastly increased levels of obesity, heart disease, high blood pressure, stroke, type 2 diabetes, some cancers and even, possibly, dementia. This is coming at an enormous financial cost, most of which needs to be borne by an increasingly stretched National Health Service.

Active by Design will promote the use of good design to encourage greater levels of daily physical activity in buildings and public spaces in cities and towns, and increase access to healthy and nutritious food.

We want to be a catalyst for change, finding new linkages and connecting aspects of our planning system, health service and the built environment sector, both public and private, where few currently exist and in ways that have not been done before. We are doing this in the belief that this will improve the health of the nation, enrich the lives of individuals and provide both social and economic benefits to our cities and towns, and to the NHS.

There is no single panacea. It is a **BIG AMBITION** that we believe will be solved by many simple, practical solutions.

10 killer facts

£900m

In the UK the direct financial cost of physical inactivity to the NHS is estimated as £900 million.

x2

Since the mid-1990s, the number of people with diabetes in Britain has doubled to 3 million.

1.7bn

Nearly 1.7 billion people are overweight on planet Earth – of these, 475 million are obese. The total number overweight has more than doubled since 1980.

68%

68% of men and 58% of women in England are overweight or obese.

\$1,400,000,000,000

The UN's Food and Agricultural Organisation has estimated the worldwide cost of being overweight or obese, such as through the increased risk of heart attack, to be \$1.4 trillion.

\$960bn

If the current rate of increase in obesity continues, the total health care costs in the USA attributable to obesity are expected to double every decade, reaching \$860-960 billion by 2030.

**21% ONLY**

21% of children in the UK play outdoors; for their parents, the figure was 71%.

## Older/ sooner

Our bodies are getting older sooner. Researchers at the Dutch National Institute for Public Health found, through a project that began in 1987, that 40-year-olds are experiencing weight-related problems such as high blood pressure and diabetes at the same rate as people in their mid-50s.

**Just 9  
minutes**

A quarter of British adults now walk for less than nine minutes a day – including time spent getting to the car, work and the shops.

**BMI > 30**

A study of 8,500 obese twins with a BMI greater than 30 in Sweden, showed they were almost four times as likely to develop dementia as those with a normal BMI.

## 10 reasons to be positive

The facts are clear. We have a pandemic on our hands. The joint problems of high levels of inactivity and unhealthy diets need to be addressed. The good news is that, in different parts of the world, a wide range of programmes are being put in place locally and are having a positive effect. We've listed just ten here that give us hope for the future. They are examples we should look up to and learn from. There are many, many more...

Active by Design

# NYC

Urban regeneration  
encourages active living

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The High Line in New York is a new public park, created by converting an old elevated railway track in lower Manhattan into a green walkway for New Yorkers.

# CHI

Bicycle sharing schemes are rocketing

Over 500 bicycle sharing schemes now operate in nearly 50 countries around the world – from Barcelona to Buenos Aires to Brisbane. The two biggest are both in China, in Wuhan and Hangzhou.

# LON

Changing how we move around the city

The Movement for Liveable London promotes discussion on how a fairer, healthier, greener and more pleasant future for London can be achieved by changing the way people move around the city.



# UK

Growing food locally  
for better health

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Growing food locally around the UK is on the rise. Capital Growth, London's food growing network helps people wanting to grow their own food at home, at an allotment or as part of a community group.



Active by Design

# BRI

Transformation brings  
walkers and cyclists in

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An award-winning scheme in New Road, Brighton has transformed an unloved street into an attractive space for pedestrians and cyclists, now extremely popular with residents.

# CAN

Creating healthy cities  
for 8 and 80-year-olds

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8-80 Cities is a Canadian non-profit organisation dedicated to creating successful cities that are good for an 8-year-old and an 80-year-old. They nurture physical activity, human interaction and healthy lifestyles.

# SWE

Fun can change people's  
behaviour for the better

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Using fun to change people's behaviour for the better can really work! In Stockholm, turning a set of stairs into musical piano keys tempted 66% of people away from taking the escalator. The craze has now gone worldwide.



# BOG

A pioneering approach to urban exercise in Bogota

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Since the 1970s Bogota has pioneered Ciclovía, a traffic-free initiative now run by many city authorities around the world. Nearly 100 km of streets on Sundays are closed to vehicles and they are taken over by pedestrians and cyclists.

Active by Design

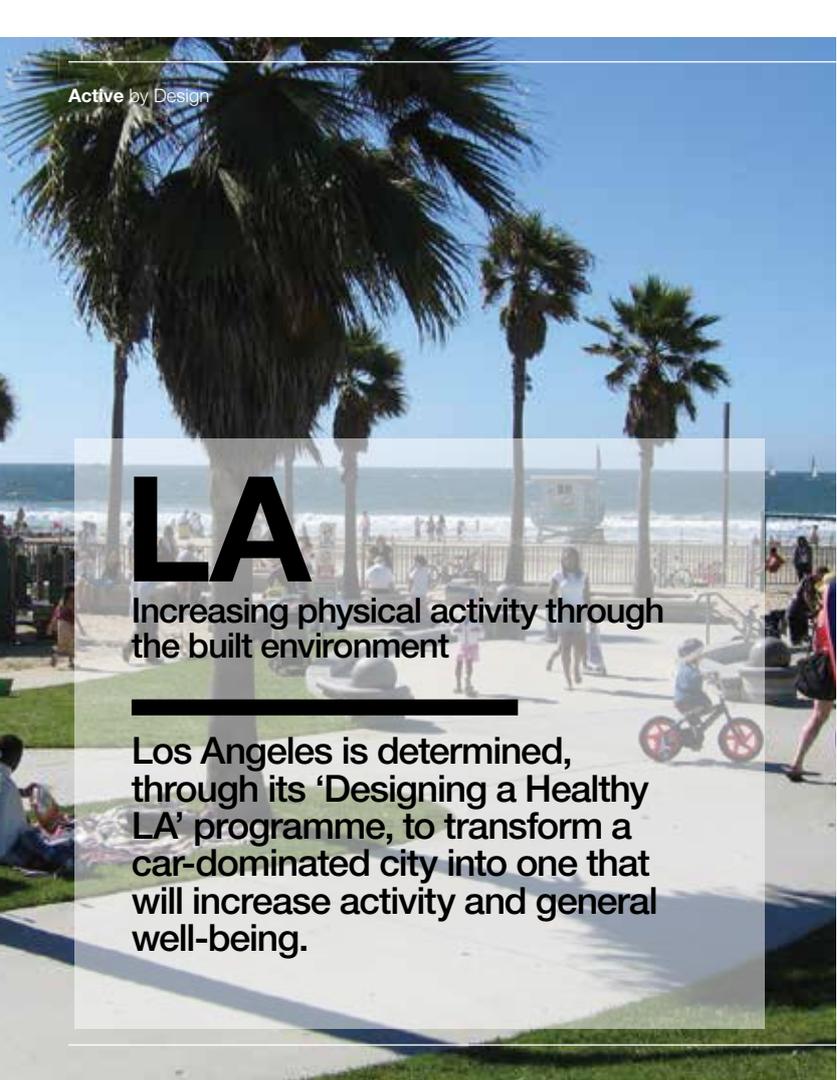


# NYC

Prominent staircases invite people to walk up

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The Museum of Modern Art (MOMA) in New York has been designed with prominent and impressive staircases to encourage people to use the stairs rather than the lifts.



# LA

**Increasing physical activity through the built environment**

**Los Angeles is determined, through its 'Designing a Healthy LA' programme, to transform a car-dominated city into one that will increase activity and general well-being.**

These examples are uplifting and show what can be done, in so many ways, by individuals and organisations working together for a healthier future. Professional people from a range of disciplines can contribute further. The next section of this guide suggests just ten ways in which professionals can change the way they think about these issues and respond to them, and the significant effect this could have.

## 10 changes we could make

01/

### As local authority managers...

Think about how your local authority can encourage higher levels of physical activity amongst your residents, staff and all the people who work in your area or visit it. Should you be giving this greater priority? Can you learn from what other local authorities are doing? Could you set an example within your council offices? How could you improve access to healthy food? Can you collaborate with colleagues from different departments in your local authority to achieve real change in activity levels?



02/

### As town planners...

Can Active by Design principles be embedded in planning policy as part of promoting healthy communities, as set out in National Planning Policy Guidance? Can you identify places within your towns where a series of schemes could be developed, across both new developments and existing neighbourhoods, to promote activity? How could you work with colleagues in other areas such as highways, public health and youth services to provide facilities that will boost physical activity levels amongst your residents and people who work in your areas?



**03/**

**As transport planners...**

Are the health benefits of physical activity considered when you are planning new road infrastructure? Are there opportunities to encourage higher levels of physical activity amongst all user groups and to prioritise movement by modes that are inherently 'active'? Are there lessons you can learn from other towns and cities, in the UK and abroad, about how to focus investment on improvements that are most likely to bring significant health benefits? Could you be more proactive and set ambitious policies that focus on health?



**04/**

**As architects and designers...**

You can help people be more active through the way you masterplan places and design the interiors of buildings. Do your designs enable or restrict physical activity? Could you design staircases that are more attractive to look at and use? Could you position them more prominently in your buildings? Are you making maximum use of 'outdoor' space, on roofs, terraces and areas immediately adjacent to your buildings, to encourage higher levels of activity and opportunities to produce or provide healthy food?



## 10 changes we could make

05/

### As developers...

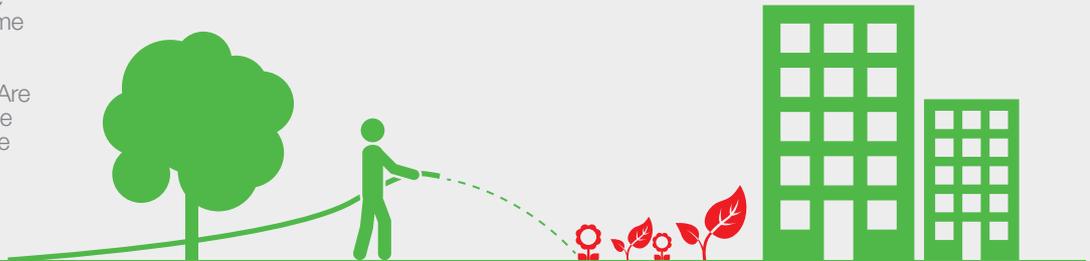
You develop new and existing buildings, and urban spaces, that can enhance people's lives. This can include the design of public areas to improve activity, the relative positioning of lifts and staircases in buildings, and the allocation of 'public' or common spaces to uses that encourage greater physical activity or better access to healthy food. Particularly as employers look for new ways to attract the best staff, you need to be one step ahead in how you develop buildings and urban spaces.



06/

### As buildings managers...

Do you know how 'active' your building is? Are you making full use of all the 'public' spaces available – in foyers, lobbies, terraces, roofs and immediately outside your building? Could you reimagine some of these spaces to encourage more activity? Could you run a campaign to encourage tenants to be more active? Are there opportunities to use outside space for food production eg. to provide to the building's cafe?



**07/**

**As health professionals...**

Could you be giving more consideration to the impact of buildings and places on the health and well-being of people? Are you doing enough to encourage physical activity in the home, at leisure and when people need to stay in a hospital or similar health facility? Could you work more closely with other professionals e.g. the architects of health facilities, planning departments or meal providers, to influence policy and improve the overall well-being of people?



**08/**

**As employers...**

In a world of work that is changing radically, you will want to provide a healthy and fulfilling environment for your employees. Are you doing all you can to provide facilities that enable people to be as active as possible during the different stages of the work day? Could you commission a review of how active your employees are, what changes they might want to see, and how you might introduce some of these in your buildings and the immediate surroundings?



## 10 changes we could make

09/

### As representatives of the voluntary sector...

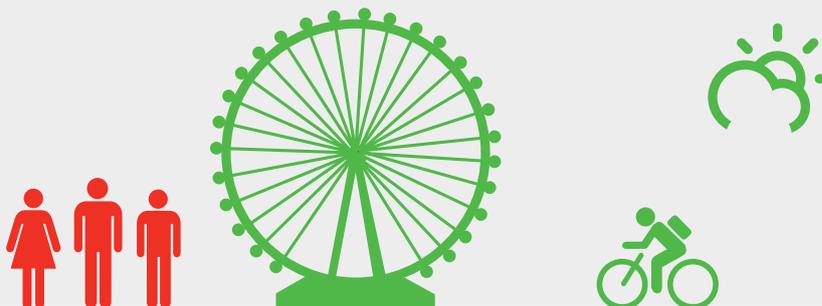
Consider ways in which you can encourage greater physical activity and access to healthier food, both for the people who work for you and the communities you are serving. How could you raise awareness in your community about the importance of being active and eating healthier foods? Could you work more closely with both private and public organisations in your area to improve the facilities that people have access to?



10/

### As managers of academic and cultural organisations...

You have significant responsibilities, variously, for students, academic staff, employees, and visitors to your institutions. In the design and management of the facilities you are responsible for, are you creating enough opportunities for people to be physically active and to grow or have access to healthy food? How could you work better with local authorities, health professionals and planners to improve the overall well-being of all those people using your buildings?



**People already active:** This subject has caught the attention of health professionals, planners, politicians, the media and many others. / Many organisations of different types, ranging from local planning authorities to professional bodies and private companies, are getting involved and starting to find solutions. / Here are just a handful of them from the UK and around the world.

The Movement for Liveable London / Derwent London / Child Growth Foundation /  
Public Health England / 8-80 Cities, Canada / Ciclovía, Bogotá – and around the world /  
Center for Active Design, New York / UK Healthy Cities Network / Greater London Authority /  
National Obesity Forum / BHF National Centre for Physical Activity and Health /  
Planning Institute of Australia

**Join us...**

**Join us:** If you or your organisation are not already involved in some sort of initiative to address these problems, we invite you to join us now. / The Design Council is keen to demonstrate the many ways in which design can contribute to finding solutions that will enhance people's lives and build a healthier society, wherever you live. One of the key reasons we believe we are well qualified to act as a catalyst in this is our ability to integrate the many disciplines that need to work together to find future solutions. These range from planning to architecture, health to transportation. The Design Council has people with a breadth of experience and expertise in these and other related areas. / We are developing a range of approaches and possible solutions to these problems and are looking for people who would like to get involved with us, or think they could benefit from our advice and guidance.

**If you want to talk to us, please contact Kathy MacEwen (Kathy.MacEwen@designcouncil.org.uk / 020 7420 5204) or Brian Quinn (Brian.Quinn@designcouncil.org.uk / 020 7420 5269) and we can begin a dialogue about one of the most pressing problems of our time.**

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We would like to thank Philip Hodson, Communications Consultant and BergHind Joseph for their help, pro bono, in writing and designing this guide. We would also like to thank Derwent London for contributing towards the cost of its production.

The Design Council champions great design. For us that means design which improves lives and makes things better. As an enterprising charity, our work places design at the heart of creating value by stimulating innovation in business and public services, improving our built environment and tackling complex social issues such as ageing and obesity. We inspire new design thinking, encourage public debate and inform government policy to improve everyday life and help meet tomorrow's challenges today.

**[www.DesignCouncil.org.uk](http://www.DesignCouncil.org.uk)**  
**@DesignCouncil**  
**#ActiveByDesign**

[All information is correct, as of March 2014]

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