

NEWSLETTER



Welcome

It's been a positive few months across our Health and Communities work, with strong partnerships, growing participation and continued impact supporting healthier, more connected communities. We were proud to support **Healthy Hearts Week** across South Lakeland delivering community health checks, alongside community engagement in Glenridding; sharing **water safety** knowledge and **life-saving first aid** skills. Building on this momentum, we're excited to invite you to our **July Open Weekend** on the **18th and 19th**, where we'll be offering free activities at your local Better Centre for the whole community to enjoy.

Age Friendly South Lakeland

Golden Age Games, held in Kendal on Thursday 28th May, provided a powerful platform to mark **Age Without Limits Day** and actively challenge ageism within our communities. A key commitment within the Age Friendly South Lakeland Action Plan, the event brought together over 70 older adults to celebrate the benefits of staying active, connected and engaged at any age. **As one participant reflected, "10/10 – the taking part and camaraderie were the best. Looking forward to the same next year."**

Walking audits, led by volunteers have begun, with the first taking place on Stricklandgate, Kendal. The focus is on assessing pavements, parking machines and public conveniences to help create inclusive spaces for everyone.

Healthwise

Referrals into our GP Exercise Referral Scheme span multiple clinical pathways, supporting individuals with **respiratory** and **cardiac** conditions, **cancer prehabilitation and rehabilitation**, and a wide range of long-term health conditions. National evidence continues to reinforce the value of this approach, highlighting that **each referral** can generate over **£20,000 in social value** and around **£5,600 in health improvements** through enhanced wellbeing, reduced NHS demand and stronger community connections. This growing evidence base supports the continued investment in prevention, community-based health interventions that reduce pressure on health services while improving quality of life outcomes.

One local participant shared, **"Now, I've lost over 10kg and I'm in the gym three times a week. My energy levels are better, my confidence has grown massively, and my mental health has improved in ways I didn't expect... I wouldn't be where I am without Healthwise,"**.





Chatter Matters

We're delighted that our four social groups for older adults are now **self-sustaining** throughout the year. Welcoming around 400 visitors each month, these sessions play a vital role in **reducing social isolation** while also supporting physical wellbeing through integrated 'exercise by stealth' activities.

The groups have also developed into valuable **social prescribing hubs**, connecting local residents with a range of partner organisations and support services. So far this year, participants have benefited from engaging talks delivered by Town Council Resilience Groups, Home Instead, Healthwatch and Fibrus, who provided support to older adults to build confidence with everyday technology.

Since attending Chatter Matters, Alan has become a regular at the centre, regaining confidence and a sense of purpose. He values the social connection, particularly as a carer for his wife, and now feels more able to re-engage in activities like DIY at home.

Float to Live

Better Leisure Centres are proud to be working in partnership with Westmorland and Furness Council and the RLSS to deliver **Float to Live water safety sessions** across our communities. This collaborative initiative reflects a shared commitment to **prevention, education, and public safety**, particularly vital given our proximity to coastal environments and the Lake District, where water-based activities are a key part of local life.

These **free sessions** are designed to equip individuals of all ages with practical, **life-saving skills** to help them respond effectively in emergency situations in open water. By delivering the programme at Coniston and Windermere Lakes, we are building confidence, awareness, and resilience among participants in real life settings.



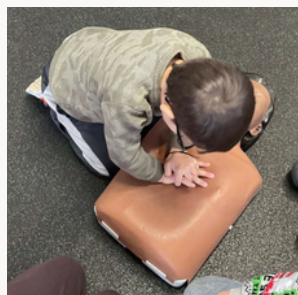
Better Health MOT

Our Better Health MOT continues to provide **valuable early insight into key health indicators**, including blood pressure, cholesterol, visceral fat levels and Q-Risk, helping individuals better understand and manage their wellbeing. Data shows a significant number of participants presenting with elevated cardiovascular risk factors, **reinforcing the importance of preventative checks, early identification, and timely intervention** to reduce longer-term health risks and strain on the NHS.

This model is also highly effective in **workplace** settings, offering a convenient, approachable way for employees to access health checks without needing to visit their GP. Feedback highlights that participants find the service informative, reassuring and motivating, making it a powerful tool for **improving staff wellbeing, reducing risk, and supporting healthier, more productive employees.**

Fit4All

We are proud to be recognised as **partner of choice** for delivering rural Exercise on Referral through the Fit4All programme in Eden. This reflects our **strong local presence** and our ability to **deliver inclusive, accessible sessions** that **meet the needs** of our communities. Building on this success, we are looking forward to further expanding this provision through a needs-led approach to ensure that future delivery is shaped by local demand, reduces inequalities in access, and supports improved health and wellbeing outcomes across rural populations.



Supporting Young People

Our team had a brilliant time at Ulverston's Blue Light Hub event, where we engaged with over 200 **primary school leavers**. We delivered interactive sessions focused on health and wellbeing, helping young people prepare for the **transition to secondary school** with confidence and knowledge about staying active and healthy.

Our **HAF** summer programme will soon be underway across Better centres, offering a diverse range of engaging activities for young people, from **water safety and first aid to inclusive cycling and gymnastics** - providing participants with opportunities to **build confidence, develop new skills, and stay active** in a safe and supportive environment. This varied offer ensures both fun and learning, while supporting health, wellbeing, and inclusion throughout summer.