

Obesity in the South West

Project details

Full project title: Obesity in the South West

Sponsor: [South West Public Health Observatory](#)

BSMC team: [Alan Tapp](#), [Stella Warren](#)

Background

The UK's (and western societies) obesity epidemic is arguably the most serious and intractable health issue facing modern society. Physical activity levels have plummeted from the levels of 30 or 40 years ago, and the abundance of cheap fatty foods has led to average body mass indices climbing to alarming levels.

Solutions to this crisis lie in a series of small lifestyle changes which when accumulated together will lead to a change in the balance of energy intake and expenditure for each of us. There is a clear theoretical role for social marketing in encouraging these changes. The government's [Change4Life](#) programme is an ambitious attempt to do this.

The research

We were asked by the [South West Public Health Observatory](#) to provide a comprehensive literature based guide to social marketing based solutions to the Obesity problem in the South West.

Results

We provided a detailed report, focusing on evidence from around the world, including the North Karelia project in Finland, and various large scale projects in the US. Closer to home, we are already involved in the Ginsters Active Workplace programme in North Cornwall, and this knowledge was included in our report.