

the
little
book of

Healthier Fleetwood

*stories of life
and health
empowerment*

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**HEALTHIER
FLEETWOOD**



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ImaginationLancaster, Lancaster University



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What this little book tells you?

This Little Book tells you about how the Healthier Fleetwood programme from the perspective of Fleetwood residents. It explores how Healthier Fleetwood helped the community break out the loneliness, make new friends, and reconnect with the town life. Finally, it tells you some inspiring stories of change within Fleetwood.

Who is this Little Book for?

This Little Book is for Fleetwood residents and was co-designed with the residents themselves. It is based on conversations and workshops that happened in Fleetwood between 2021-2022.

This Little Book is also for people who want to know more about Healthier Fleetwood. Particularly those new to the town or that simply want to explore more of what's on offer.

Finally, this Little Book is for people like you and me. People that are wondering what if... This Little Book will encourage you to go out, find new friends and re-discover your town.

Our town, our community, our solution.

The relationship between residents and organisations is built on the community's feeling that has been listened to. However, often services are put into communities to "fix" things without understanding the community's needs or even who they are. Healthier Fleetwood was born from the community and became what Fleetwood needed.

Healthier Fleetwood is a place for the community to try, experiment, and make new friends. But, *how does Healthier Fleetwood become what it is today?*

The original idea of Healthier Fleetwood came about when a local GP, Mark Spencer, wanted to better understand why health in the town wasn't improving despite advances in medical treatments. The starting point was to listen to what really mattered to the residents of the town. He then thought that he could up with a plan, but soon realised that it had failed even before it started. His idea was of a well-structured organisation. But, Fleetwood residents are proud (and like to challenge the rules). If there was something to do, it needed to come from the residents themselves!

HEALTHIER FLEETWOOD

connecting our community



Healthier Fleetwood logo.

Several coffees after and chatting with many more people, a new idea evolved. Healthier Fleetwood was a channel to listen to the community to support people to help themselves. This new approach required some guidance but empowered the community to come up with the solutions to their own problems.

Who can better understand the community than the community itself? It really sounds weird, isn't it? But by supporting different groups to do what they wanted, Healthier Fleetwood had found its path, but more over it brought hope to Fleetwood.

"People need hope and aspiration. They need to feel they are part of that journey."

by Andrea Saniford

At the time of writing this Little Book, Fleetwood residents meet every month. Pauline Kennedy chairs the meetings. Her role is to start the conversation and



Healthier Fleetwood monthly meeting.

encourage people to share the good news. This turns out to be fantastic, as people have different ways to express themselves. Some share poems, some others sing, but many people just speak. Everyone is heard and respected.

Healthier Fleetwood supports people to become who they want to be. It gives them the connections and helps they need to do the right solution for them. By listening to what you need, Healthier Fleetwood can help you. To make you feel listened to. To make you feel how special you are.

Bid loneliness goodbye

We, humans, are social. The company of others makes you feel good. Family and friends are an important part of your daily lives. This desire to socialise even helps to give a structure to your day.

Indeed, many of Fleetwood's residents felt that socialising make them happier. The idea of visiting your parents, your grandchildren and your friends gives structure to your day. Planning ahead where and when are you meeting is essential.

Being with others can also give a sense of hope. Something to look for during the day, a way of sharing your journey with your loved ones.

Healthier Fleetwood helps the residents connect with people that otherwise won't be connected to. A different way to meet other people and bid loneliness goodbye. You must recognise that regardless of your age, you can always meet people and be together again no matter where you are.

Breaking the loneliness in a community brings back the sense of community. But more important brings hope to your lives. You may wonder how



Back to netball group supported by Healthier Fleetwood.

Healthier Fleetwood can help me make new friends? Isn't it just about health? Well, yes, it's about health, but not only physical health.

Healthier Fleetwood recognises that by feeling part of something, you can feel better. Healthier Fleetwood supports other people like you to achieve your goals. It connects people to make them feel happier. Healthier Fleetwood connects you to 'what's in the town' and things you can do. It is up to you to bid loneliness goodbye.

Activities bring together people with similar interests. Whether you are good or not at it doesn't matter. People are here together to have a good time and learn new skills.

The activities organised by the community and supported by Healthier Fleetwood are open to everyone. They are a great opportunity not only to meet others but also to learn new skills.

The Harmony and Health group is a singing group. In this group, some people meet to sing, others to hear others sign, others to dance, and others to meet people. In all four scenarios, people meet with others.



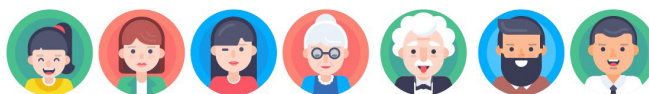
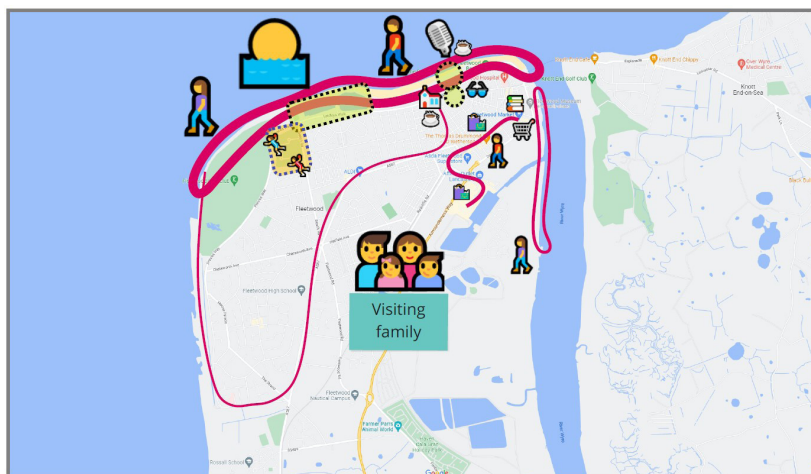
Harmony and Health group supported by Healthier Fleetwood.

People feel part of something. People have something to look for during their week. But more importantly, leave your home and make it happen! This is the case with many other activities.

New friends

When I started school, my mom always used to say: "New friends are everywhere; you just need to make an effort to meet them." Many years had passed, and yet it remains true. Perhaps, being introverted, the only thing I'd change is "to make an effort to get out."

Many of us may feel alone, our friends may have moved out, our family may be far, and in some cases, some may have passed away. We might have gotten used to the feeling, but sometimes we ask ourselves: *am I the only one like this?*



Activities and most visited places in Fleetwood

You will be surprised how many people are feeling the same. Healthier Fleetwood allows you to reconnect with your neighbours, your community, and your town. The chance to make new friends!

**"Strangers are friends we haven't
yet met."**

by Pauline Kennedy

The activities and groups organised with support from Healthier Fleetwood are excellent venues to connect with others. There is the walking group, a coffee morning and card & games for fun. Many of the people attending



Snooker social group supported by Healthier Fleetwood.

these venues feel like you. They are also there to meet others and make new friends.

Healthier Fleetwood monthly meetings are also a great venue to get closer to others. Everyone is invited to these meetings. You will hear news about regular and new activities, meet new people, and discover what is on offer in the community.

Healthier Fleetwood connects you to venues to meet other people and make new friends. The platforms are open to everyone. All you need to do is to know the door. Make an effort to get out. Making new friends is much more likely to happen if you put yourself out there!

Give it a go

Healthier Fleetwood supports people like you to do what they want to do. Many have chosen to create groups to get closer to others. These groups have different goals. Some are more physical, such as football and walking groups, and others are more relaxed, like singing or crafts. But the important part is that like-minded people come together to learn and develop new skills.

There are groups for every taste. The groups are not only organised by the type of activities but also for their end goal. Some activities are just there to meet new people, such as the coffee group. Others, to have a space for people that have gone through similar experiences, like the veterans' group. Or even just to give a new purpose by volunteering.



Fleetwood beach wheelchairs group supported by Healthier Fleetwood.

While there is a wide range of opportunities, the staff at the Affinity shop are there to help you. They are friendly and always happy to have some tea and talk with you about what are your interests. David Grove is passionate about the community and knows what's on offer. He is always happy to recommend you things that may be of interest to you.

These activities are also good for learning new skills. Perhaps you are already good at singing or yoga, but what about gardening? I guess what I want you to know is that you already know what you are good at. But why not give it a go-to something new?

There are more than 60 groups, for example: the social cycling & family rides, science & discovery club, include football, walking football, afternoon tea dances, craft group, gardening club, and many others. There is something for every taste, just pop into the the Healthier Fleetwood hub or website (<https://www.healthierfleetwood.co.uk/try-something-new>) to find something right for you.



Men's walking fotbball group supported by Healthier Fleetwood.

You may come to the shop with something in mind. But with David's knowledge about what's on offer, you might even find new interests. You will never know, give something new a try, and you may find a new hobby. Who knows what you might be good at.

***"You need to try it to find out
and everyone made me feel
welcome here."***

by a Fleetwood resident.

Find out more

It's always been difficult for me to be on top of what is happening. Happily, for me, Healthier Fleetwood is always there. There are two main ways where you can find out what is happening in my town. Attending one of the monthly meetings that Healthier Fleetwood organises or popping into the Affinity shop.

The monthly meeting is open to everyone. The meetings are a safe space for the residents all to share your concerns. They are where you can find out what's happening in town and meet new people.



Healthier Fleetwood monthly meetings.

The Affinity shop is located in the Affinity shopping centre. There Healthier Fleetwood has a shop. They keep information about what is happening and lots of other things. Dave Grove is usually there and he is always happy and keen to help.

These two ways are how you can find out what is happening in your wonderful town. If you need more information or want to get involved, you can contact Healthier Fleetwood's team. Although it's a small team, they are always very friendly.

Mark Spencer, Pauline Kennedy, Karen Boylan and David Gore are the key contacts for Healthier Fleetwood. You can contact them at:

E-mail: listening@healthierfleetwood.co.uk

Tel: 07399 093835

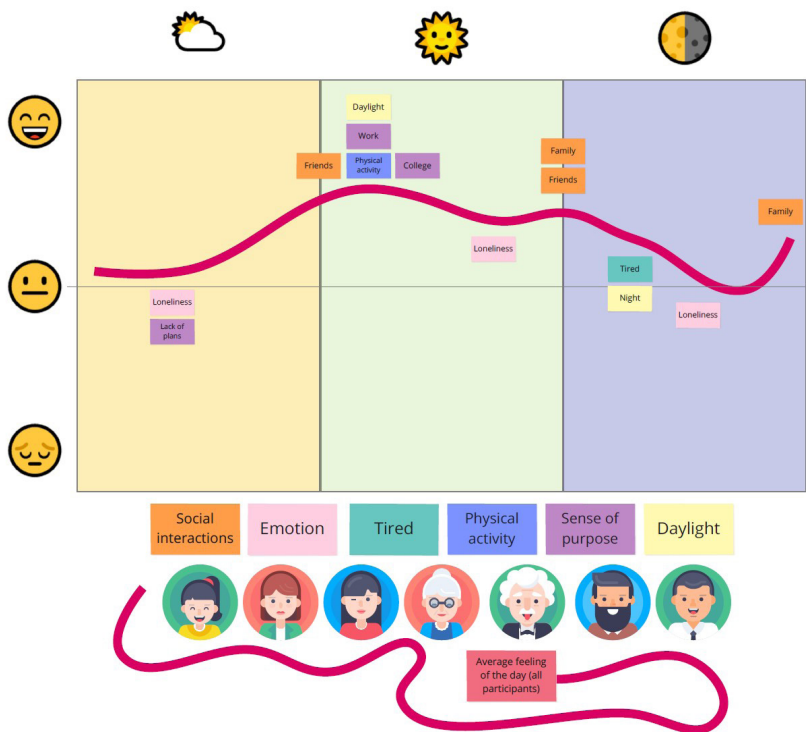
Web: www.healthierfleetwood.co.uk



Healthier Fleetwood community hub

This could be you

The mood of many of us is influenced by some external factors, such as the weather, but there are some factors that we can control. A structure for your day or something to look forward to is a great example of things for which you can plan. Visiting family, going out for a coffee with a friend, or planning to walk along the seafront are great examples. In fact, many people said that these little changes helped them.



A day in Fleetwood

The picture shows what areas helped some people in Fleetwood to get a better day. But also, it is important to recognise the help that we get through others. A friend, family or someone you meet from Healthier Fleetwood can make you see things differently.






Healthier Fleetwood supports day-to-day life in many aspects. Helping people like you and me boost your self-confidence and improve your health. Healthier Fleetwood also helped many of people to recognise where you find happiness. It can come from the little things that surround us.

Healthier Fleetwood was a great support during the COVID-19 lockdown. As social networks were already in place, they helped keep an eye on each other. More importantly, it helped respond quickly and provide the support Fleetwood needed.







**“Healthier Fleetwood has an
impact on our lives.”**

by a Fleetwood resident.

Over the following pages, you will see some examples of how Healthier Fleetwood has supported people in Fleetwood. This could be you!

| |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
|---------------------------------|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|--|---|
| Visit family | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ |
| Visit friends | ✓ | ✓ | | | ✓ | ✓ | | ✓ | |
| Walking | ✓ | ✓ | | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | | |
| Work | | | ✓ | ✓ | | | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ |
| College | | ✓ | | | | | | | |
| HF activity | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ |
| Physical health improvement | ✓ | | | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | |
| Mental health improvement | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ |
| Self confidence | | ✓ | | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | | | ✓ |
| Support during COVID | ✓ | | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ |
| Other kind of physical activity | ✓ | ✓ | | | | | ✓ | | ✓ |
| Support for elderly | ✓ | | | | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | | ✓ |
| Church | ✓ | | | | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | | |

Healthier Fleetwood support in the community

| | | | | | |
|--|--|---|---|---|---|
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Occupation:

- Father
- Office worker

What do you do in your free time?

- Sports
- Movies
- Family



What makes you happy during the day?

I usually wake up happy as I look forward to work. Work makes me tired and drains a bit of my energy. But I look forward to getting a nice meal back home. It gets dark later and makes me feel bad, but I get happy as the rest of the family comes home.

How did you find out about Healthier Fleetwood?

I was having a coffee with a friend. He mentioned the idea of Healthier Fleetwood, and it resonated with what I was looking to do. Since then, I have been involved with Healthier Fleetwood!

How has Healthier Fleetwood changed your life?

It helped to give more structure to my day. I am a very social person, so Healthier Fleetwood allowed me to interact with other people within the community.

What part of Fleetwood do you like the most?

I like going for a walk on the seafront. It is a nice place where you have a lovely view, and you can have some tea in town when coming back. I also like to visit my family that lives in town.

Do you attend any of the groups or activities supported by Healthier Fleetwood?

I used to attend several groups before the pandemic. These days, I am still in touch with people I meet and go from time to time to some events. But not as much as I used to.

Would you recommend Healthier Fleetwood to a friend or family?

Yes, definitely. Healthier Fleetwood has made me closer to the town. It helped me to realise that Fleetwood has a lot to offer.

Have you noticed some changes in your life since you started engaging with Healthier Fleetwood?

Yes, it makes me enjoy more the little things in life and others' company. In a way, it has also helped me to improve my mental and physical health. It was a great support structure to have during the COVID-19 lockdown.

Occupation:

- Student

What do you do in your free time?

- Movies
- Family
- See my boyfriend



What makes you happy during the day?

I wake up indifferent, but having to go to college helps me because I see my friends there, making me happy. Then, I go home, and it makes me sad being at home alone, but I like those days when I see my boyfriend.

How did you find out about Healthier Fleetwood?

I got involved with Healthier Fleetwood some time ago. It has been great and helped me to find a safe place.

How has Healthier Fleetwood changed your life?

Healthier Fleetwood has allowed me to be surrounded by others. I like to talk with people, but I don't have many people to talk to other than college. So, Healthier Fleetwood has been great to meet new people. Talking to strangers helped me feel confident and have a better image of myself.

What part of Fleetwood do you like the most?

I like going for a walk and spending some time in the park with my friends. Sometimes I go there on my own because there are some good memories from when I was younger and being there makes me remember them and makes me happy.

Do you attend any of the groups or activities supported by Healthier Fleetwood?

No, but I contact the people via the Healthier Fleetwood hub in the Affinity Shopping Centre.

Would you recommend Healthier Fleetwood to a friend or family?

Yes, it has helped me to boost my self-confidence. I wish many other people like me get the opportunity I have.

Have you noticed some changes in your life since you started engaging with Healthier Fleetwood?

Yes, it made me realise what makes me happy. It also encourages me to do more exercise and see what others have gained.

Occupation:

- Retired

What do you do in your free time?

- Friends
- Family
- Knitting



What makes you happy during the day?

Usually, I wake up and feel lonely. But as the sun starts to come out, I get happier. I go and meet my friends and family. At the end of the day, I look forward to seeing my grandchildren.

How did you find out about Healthier Fleetwood?

A friend of mine dragged me to one of the monthly meetings. I wasn't interested initially in attending, but she insisted too much, and I went along.

How has Healthier Fleetwood changed your life?

I would not say changed. Healthier Fleetwood improved my life. It made me realise that many others also feel like I do and want some company. Healthier Fleetwood is the facilitator for use meet and organises to meet for coffee or go to one of the activities organised with support from Healthier Fleetwood.

What part of Fleetwood do you like the most?

I like going for a walk, and going for a coffee. The library is a good spot to finish the day.

Do you attend any of the groups or activities supported by Healthier Fleetwood?

Yes, the singing group has become part of my weekly activities. I was sad that we could not meet in person during the COVID-19 lockdown, although we managed to meet online. I have found many new friends here, and it has helped me to feel better about myself.

Would you recommend Healthier Fleetwood to a friend or family?

Definitely! Being part of Healthier Fleetwood has helped us organise different activities and sing in other parts of the country. This is great for someone like me, and I wish others could have similar experiences.

Have you noticed some changes in your life since you started engaging with Healthier Fleetwood?

I realised that I started doing more physical activities by going out more. Some days it is just walking, some other days I feel happier and dance. I have noticed that my health has improved since I started doing this. If I benefit from this, others can too!

Occupation:

- Retired

What do you do in your free time?

- Family
- Walk



What makes you happy during the day?

I wake up a little sad, but I get happier as the sun comes out. I like it when I have my breakfast and it's sunny. Then I go for a walk and met my friends. When I go back home alone, I feel alone and tired at the end of the day.

How did you find out about Healthier Fleetwood?

One of my neighbours invited me to one of the activities that Healthier Fleetwood promoted. As I like walking, I thought it would be great to join them for a walk!

How has Healthier Fleetwood changed your life?

Yes, it has made me happy. I have the opportunity to enjoy part of the day with other people, and they keep me walking! Since I started meeting with other people, I felt more connected to the community.

What part of Fleetwood do you like the most?

I like to walk around the seafront between Fleetwood and Cleveleys.
Other times I like to go to the Mount, it is a lovely view!

Do you attend any of the groups or activities supported by Healthier Fleetwood?

Yes, I meet with others in the walking group.

Would you recommend Healthier Fleetwood to a friend or family?

Healthier Fleetwood helped me find things to do during my day and have something to look forward to. This is very important at my age. I would recommend others to come along.

Have you noticed some changes in your life since you started engaging with Healthier Fleetwood?

Yes, having some company and having people talk while I walk is great. As I mentioned, it also made me feel more connected to Fleetwood and its people.

Occupation:

- Mum

What do you do in your free time?

- Family
- Coffee
- Walk



What makes you happy during the day?

I don't like to get out of my bed. I then need to help the kids to get ready for school. But, once I start the day, going for a coffee makes me happy. In the afternoon I like to spend it with my family.

How did you find out about Healthier Fleetwood?

I just moved here and came to the church. They have a lovely coffee and board games meeting that I like to attend. I heard about Healthier Fleetwood here but haven't got much time to explore other activities or things they have.

How has Healthier Fleetwood changed your life?

I cannot say. Coming to the coffee and board game has undoubtedly helped me feel part of the community. I have made a few friends here and don't feel alone.

What part of Fleetwood do you like the most?

I like to take the kids to the park, they have a good time there. When I am on my own, I like to come to the church or go for a coffee.

Do you attend any of the groups or activities supported by Healthier Fleetwood?

The coffee and board game meetup. Although, I come here as part of the church.

Would you recommend Healthier Fleetwood to a friend or family?

Yes, what I have heard has made me wanting to give it a try. I have only heard good things about it and I'm intrigued.

Have you noticed some changes in your life since you started engaging with Healthier Fleetwood?

Yes, it made the transition to come to the Fleetwood easier for us as a Family.

Summary

Healthier Fleetwood borned as a mechanism to connect and listen to the community. Healthier Fleetwood is a channel to listen to the community to help themselves. This new approach requires guidance but enables the community to come up with the solution to their problems.

Humans are social, the company of others makes us feel better. Being with others can also give a sense of hope. Healthier Fleetwood recognises that by feeling part of something, you can feel better. Healthier Fleetwood supports other people like you to achieve your goals. It connects people to make them feel happier.

Healthier Fleetwood allows you to reconnect with your neighbours, your community, and your town. The chance to make new friends. Strangers are friend we haven't yet met.

Healthier Fleetwood supports people like you to do what they want to do. Many have chosen to create groups to get closer to others. There are groups for every taste. There are more than 60 groups. Give it a go-to something new!

It's always been difficult for me to be on top of what is happening. There are two main ways where you can find out what is happening in my town. Attending one of the monthly meetings that Healthier Fleetwood organises or popping into the Affinity shop.

Healthier Fleetwood supports day-to-day life in many aspects. Helping people like you and me boost your self-confidence and improve your health.



Healthier Fleetwood received the Queens Award for Voluntary Service 2022.

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