

Paul sheds nearly five stone for the sake of his granddaughter



Start weight: 18st 10lbs

Current weight: 14st

Weight loss: 4st 10lbs

Start BMI: 35.8

Current BMI: 27.3

Percentage weight loss: 25%

Being around to raise his young granddaughter was 53-year-old Paul Hitchcock's motivation to change.....

"In 2016, after a long and vigorous vetting process, my wife and I received guardianship of our beautiful granddaughter Amy. At that point I vowed to change my lifestyle. Years of being sedentary and eating too much of the wrong foods had taken its toll on my health, leaving me obese and battling with high blood pressure amongst other problems.

I've never really been one for groups, so I tried and failed to do my own thing, losing one stone in two years. My epiphany came on a particularly dark day when I realised that if I didn't change I wouldn't be around for my granddaughter's key milestones. I eventually joined Livewell in early 2018.

Opening up to change

Livewell opened my mind to change, giving me the confidence and kick start to adjust my lifestyle. Rather than going onto a specific diet, which Livewell doesn't advocate for long term weight management, I was supported to make changes to the way I eat - reducing portion sizes, bulking up on healthier fruit and veg, reducing sweet treats and cutting out sugary fizzy drinks completely. Now I take a lunch break at work every day and head out for a brisk 30-minute walk. Leaving the car behind, I walk more often and have embraced gym classes and running.

My whole attitude towards exercise has changed for the better

The support from Livewell is second to none. Both staff and the volunteers are helpful, encouraging and completely non-judgmental. Working with the team to set achievable goals and concentrate on positive improvements has helped change my mind-set in almost everything I do. The positivity is infectious - other clients support each other and I would like to think that I have helped others in a small way too.

As part of my programme I enjoyed a wide range of Livewell activities which are made to feel inclusive to everyone regardless of fitness ability.

I never thought I'd consider myself a runner but having completed the Couch to 5k course, I head out up to three times a week and it's something I can do to keep fit for free.

Life as a happy and healthy Grandad

To put it bluntly I feel fantastic, I can honestly say that I don't remember feeling this good ever!

My family love the more active, positive and changed me. Playing with my five-year-old granddaughter without getting breathless or tired is so rewarding, I am no longer the grandparent sitting on the bench watching. I now believe I will be around to share our special bond as Amy grows up, seeing all the significant life events I was so scared of missing before. My son commented how he'd never seen me running around and keeping up with Amy so much.

As far as my health is concerned my asthma has improved, my blood pressure is lower and my medication has reduced. My goal is to be able to stop taking the tablets completely. I am also seeing improvements with my back

and leg which I believe is due to the improved muscle tone, due to exercising, and of course the fact that I am carrying almost five stone less weight!

As part of the Wellness membership for clients that complete their Livewell programme, I continue to do classes, use the gym and run regularly. I'm a new improved grandad!"

Inspired by Paul's success?

Livewell's free 12-month Lose Weight programme supports clients to achieve their health goals through free exercise sessions, an 8-week weight management course and weekly meetings and drop-ins. To find out more visit www.livewellderby.co.uk

