Hello,

Welcome to Take Five to Age Well Hillingdon! We are so glad you have signed up and are part of our community.

Congratulations - you have already made a step towards improving your health and wellbeing. You have joined a group of people like you who have made this commitment to your future selves. We are here to support you through this celebration of healthy habits.

Your commitment will make a difference: all the science tells us that we can act to increase the number of years we spend in good health. Getting older can be a time of joy and laughter, activity and energy and Take Five to Age Well is here to prove it. We recognise it's not always easy and we all have good days and bad days - that is all part of life, and we don't expect everyone to complete their action everyday - just as much as is feasible.

Think about how good you might feel at the end of the month having been part of Take Five to Age Well. Why not also encourage a friend or family member to sign up with you and support each other?

What to expect:

You decide your action(s) from one or more of our areas: eat, drink, move, connect and engage and think. You commit to *try* and complete that action everyday for the next month. We are here to support you by sending regular emails with information, ideas and facts related to the actions that you have chosen. **Knowledge is power** – people that have a good level of health knowledge, have better health outcomes – that's why we want to share as much information as possible to help you take control of your health and wellbeing.

Your action(s) must work for you and so whatever you have signed up for, feel free to adjust it to suit you and fit into your life. Each action *will* make a difference. You should feel these benefits within days and they will keep growing throughout the month.

Tips to help your pledge:

- **Keep it specific -** our suggested actions to take are all quantifiable - this helps you keep track of your action and gives you a daily goal to achieve. We recognise that everyone is different, and you may want to do more or less of a particular action but try to make sure it's specific.

- **Make it achievable -** you know yourself better than anyone - choose actions that are challenging but attainable. Remember, you need to try to do this every day so make sure it's something you will be able to do and enjoy.

- **Attitude matters** – research suggests that how old we feel impacts our cognitive and physical health. So, think positively and believe in yourself.

Share the love: tell other people you are taking part - they can help support you and you can share the health information with them too.

A bit about where Take Five came from: Take Five is run by a small group of passionate people at the Open University (OU) and Age UK. It was started in 2023 by Dr. Jitka Vseteckova and Rachel Millar as a route to proactively engage people in healthy actions for ageing well. Jitka is an academic at the OU and has spent her career researching and communicating about ageing well to help support healthier, happier lives. Rachel has spent most of her career in television documentaries and is passionate about public engagement of research. Having had a successful pilot with support from countless partners, they are now working with Hillingdon Council to bring Take Five to you. More details of the team and the research are on the website.

Tip of the day: stand on one leg whilst brushing your teeth. This will improve your balance and core muscles and maintaining balance as we age helps protect against falls. Make sure you have something nearby to hold on to if you need it!

A note about smoking. Take Five to Age Well doesn't address smoking, yet smoking is the biggest preventable cause of death and ill health in the UK. Research shows it's **never too late to quit** – our lungs and circulation improve and over years recover. There are now many techniques to quit and they can be tailored to your needs – we encourage anyone who smokes to seek advice from your local Hillingdon stop smoking service. For more information, please refer to the Hillingdon Council webpage on Stop Smoking.

We'll be back in touch on **1st May** when we all begin our Take Five to Age Well journey.

In the meantime, you can check out our website for further information, as well as contact details for the project team.

Best wishes,

Take Five to Age Well Project Team.

Reminder: This information is general guidance and if you have any concerns over your own health please speak to your medical professional.