Retired church Minister Clive Jones from Staplehurst in Kent was taken ill during a family holiday last summer. Subsequent checks diagnosed manageable heart palpitations and high blood sugar levels. With his GP and, Clive believing, a much higher power warning him to make some life changes, Clive was motivated to join his local Healthier You: National Diabetes Prevention Programme.

Clive was referred by his GP to one of the first Healthier You sessions to be run in the South and was encouraged to begin making some positive lifestyle changes by Ingeus tutor, Cathy Sutcliffe.

“My wife Lynne and I are part-time carers for our young granddaughter Lylah, so it’s hugely important that I stay fit and active,” explains 69 year-old Clive, who ministered at churches in Staplehurst and New Malden for almost 40 years.

“A Ministers life can be quite sedentary and I guess I’d slipped into some bad habits. This was the warning shot I needed to lose weight and control my sugar intake to ensure I’m around for many more years to enjoy life with my family.

“It’s really helpful to have the support of Cathy and the group, there’s a friendly camaraderie and we’re all aiming for the same outcome. Lynne does the majority of the household grocery shopping and cooking and so attended the initial courses with me to hear first-hand what we should be eating and in what quantities.

“I feel so much better for making just some simple life changes. I thank the programme, and my Lord for giving me the motivation to change.”

A few months on and Clive has lost 18lbs, wears his belt two notches tighter and no longer struggles to keep pace with the church walking group. He and Lynne also regularly swim, garden, cycle and walk. His blood sugar levels are decreasing and he credits the Healthier You group for his new-found lease of life.

Clive’s group meets monthly at Marden memorial hall to discuss all aspects of preventing Type 2 diabetes. The course covers nutrition and exercise advice and suggests behavioural interventions to maintain a healthy weight and become more physically active.

Healthier You: NHS Diabetes Prevention Programme is the first nationwide programme of its kind in the world. It is delivered in the South by Ingeus, in conjunction with a proactive network of NHS colleagues and specialist partners.