



# Community Activity Programme – Pilot

Supported by Sport  
England & Clarion  
Housing

Final Report

Groundwork UK,  
October 2018

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# 1. Introduction

The Community Activity Grant programme was a pilot project, funded by Sport England and Clarion Housing Group and delivered by Groundwork UK, a charity working locally and nationally to transform lives in the UK's most disadvantaged communities.

This innovative 16-month grants programme was created to improve levels of sustainable physical activity in the lower socioeconomic communities that need it most and where there has been a comparatively lower level of Sport England investment over the last seven years.

Investment was targeted into two areas of deprivation (urban areas in Salford, and rural areas across North Cambridgeshire), where there are significant issues with inactivity, low levels of sports participation and associated health problems.



*“This is a really exciting partnership for Sport England as it enables us to try a different approach to getting funding to local community organisations who are ideally placed to get more people more active. Not everyone wants to take up traditional sports or be physically active through a traditional sports club.*

*“This programme will help find a wide range of groups in the heart of their community who can offer opportunities for local people to become active in a way that meets their needs”*

RONA CHESTER, CHIEF OPERATING OFFICER, SPORT ENGLAND

## 2. Programme Need

The rationale and need for the programme was developed based on a number of indicators in the respective delivery areas, including:

### Salford

- Almost 1/3 of the Lower Layer Super Output Areas (LSOAs) in Salford are in the 10% most deprived in the country.
- In terms of the health deprivation indices, of the 32,844 LSOAs in the country some of Salford's areas are amongst some of the worst 1% in the country, including:
  - » Broadwalk in Pendleton (18th)
  - » Winton (43rd)
  - » Eccles (40th)

### Cambridgeshire

- Whilst this county is, in many places, quite affluent, many communities have health deprivation issues.
- Local health priorities include tackling obesity, inactivity, childhood weight management and cardiovascular diseases.
- In Cambridgeshire, life expectancy is 6.5 years lower for men and 5.2 years lower for women in the most deprived areas when compared to the least deprived areas.

### Sport England Active Lives Adult Survey (2016/2017)

This shows that there are significant disparities between different socio-economic groups. People who are long term unemployed or have never worked are the most likely to be inactive (38%).

Both Salford and North Cambridgeshire have a higher percentage of people that are inactive when compared to the national average in England.



“

*“I became fitter, improved my mood, [it] gave me something to look forward to”*

PARTIPANT, START INSPIRING MINDS - START GETTING ACTIVE



# 3. Programme Aim & Objectives

The aim was to focus investments in the lower socioeconomic communities that need it most and where there has been a comparatively lower level of Sport England investment over the last seven years.

Investment was targeted into two areas of deprivation, urban areas in Salford, and rural areas across North Cambridgeshire. The areas targeted have significant issues with inactivity, low levels of sports participation and associated health problems.

The pilot aimed to develop a portfolio of projects with a focus on increasing participation in physical activity and sport and moving people up the behavioural change ladder towards action and maintenance. The behaviour change model\* below was included in the Sport England's consultation for their "Towards an Active Nation" strategy for 2016-2020. The particular focus was on moving people from steps 1-3 (pre-contemplation, contemplation and preparation) to action (step 4). This involved moving people from thinking about or planning to do something to actually getting started.

The project also aimed to support groups that had never considered applying for Sport England funding. With the support of Groundwork Enablers, locally embedded organisations could develop proposals which would appeal to their beneficiaries, encourage them to become more active, and help them to sustain positive changes in behaviour.

## Objectives

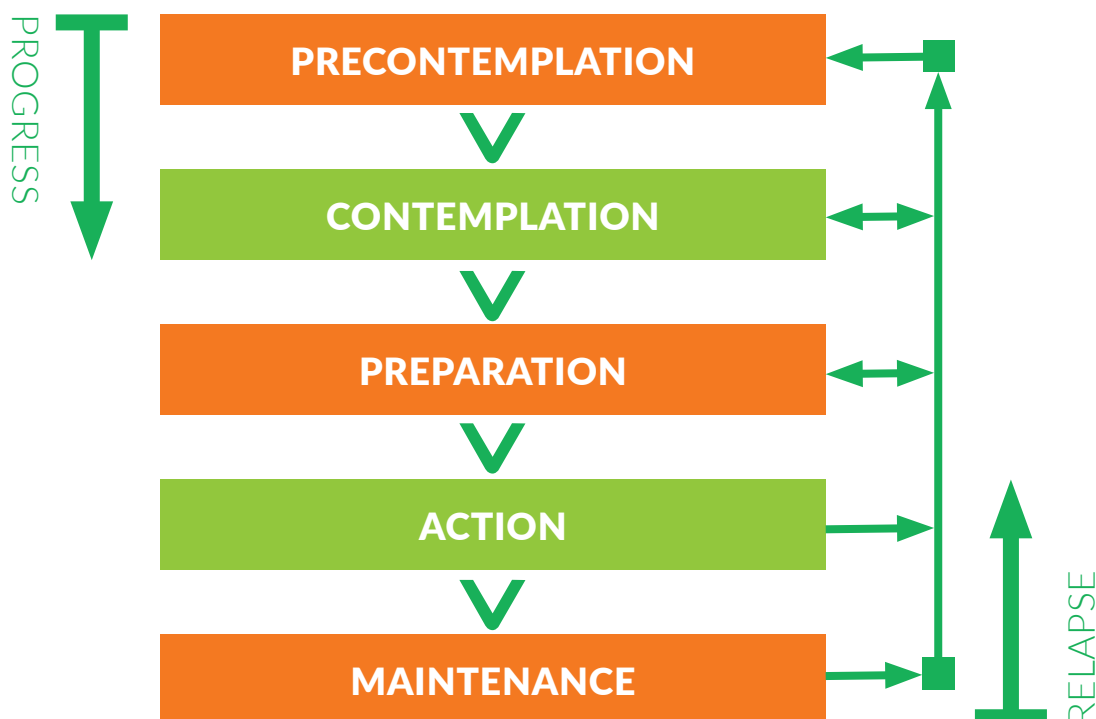
Support 400 beneficiaries, across circa 20 projects (average 20 people per project), to move from inaction (either pre-contemplation, contemplation or preparation) to action (two 30 minute activity sessions each month)

- Support at least 65% (260) of project beneficiaries to sustain engagement with a programme of physical activity for at least six months
- Support at least 50% of beneficiaries demonstrating a positive attitudinal shift towards activity

In addition, the programme also endeavoured to ensure that:

- 80% of awards to be made to non-traditional sporting organisations
- 90% of grant recipients have never received funding from Sport England

\* Prochaska and DiClemente Transtheoretical Approach in Handbook of Psychotherapy Integration John C Norcross, Marvin R Goldfried (eds), OUP, 2005.



## 4. Grantee Support

### Clarion Housing Group

Groundwork worked closely with a major housing provider, Clarion, as match funder and community 'anchor' partner – whilst developing the Community Activity Programme. Clarion manage over 125,000 properties across England.

In addition to supporting the programme with a financial contribution, the local Neighbourhood Officers helped to generate potential project applications working closely with Groundwork Enablers. Key members of the Clarion Neighbourhood Team also provided their expertise at the local advisory panels. The panels brought together local professionals and decision makers, their role was to help finalise project selection and to add value to proposed project activity. Clarion Neighbourhood Team members attended in both Salford and North Cambridgeshire, helping to make funding decisions, and providing insightful local knowledge offering advice around potential enhancements, additions, or scope for added value from other local services or schemes.

### Groundwork Enablers

Groundwork, with its experienced grant management team and two locally embedded community Enablers, were able to provide organisations with a comprehensive support package throughout their grantee journey.

Each enabler used their network of local contacts to identify and support organisations to put forward high quality applications. During the early stages of project idea development Enablers used their skills and experiences to further develop outline proposals or provide support to apply to other funding streams if their ideas were not suitable for the Community Activity Programme. Enablers supported groups through a range of methods including via email, telephone, and visits. They assisted groups to develop their ideas, collating necessary information and helping them to develop their full grant applications, including obtaining any supporting information where required.

An independent advisory panel was set up in each local area, facilitated by the Enabler to provide key



*“Katie Dean (Enabler, Groundwork East) was fantastic. She answered any questions fully and promptly, and provided great support throughout the project.”*

HEIDI LEMMON, WATERLEES YOUR SPORT

stakeholders from a cross section of organisations such as Sport England, local authorities, the voluntary and community sector and Housing Associations. Their role was to support and add value to projects to ensure they had the best chance of success as well as ultimately make funding decisions.

Enablers initially supported 27 Groups to develop project ideas; this resulted in 21 put forward as full applications to an independent advisory panel with 19 being awarded funding.

Once groups were awarded funding, the Enabler remained a key contact and provided as much support as the groups needed to assist with implementation, delivery, monitoring and reporting. A crucial part of the Enablers' role was to help build groups' capacity in collating beneficiary data ensuring that all groups could analyse the key achievements, celebrate success and capture lessons from the grant funding. This also would enable the groups to submit their Completion Report, required at the end of their grant.

Enablers were also able to offer assistance to grantees in project sustainability by assisting groups to find additional sources of funding to continue grant activities as well as providing networking and learning opportunities.

All grantees were given the opportunity to feedback on the Enabler function of the programme:

- > 100% of grantees surveyed were “satisfied” or “very satisfied” with the support they received from their Enabler
- > 80% of grantees valued one-to one support as “useful” or “very useful”
- > 100% of grantees found support at the initial application process “useful” or “very useful”
- > 91% of grantees found support at the end of grant reporting process “useful” or “very useful”
- > Only 18% of grantees responded that they would have applied to Sport England without Enabler support

“

*“Our Enabler was fantastic and seemed genuinely interested in our project”*

SPORT ENGLAND GRANTEE



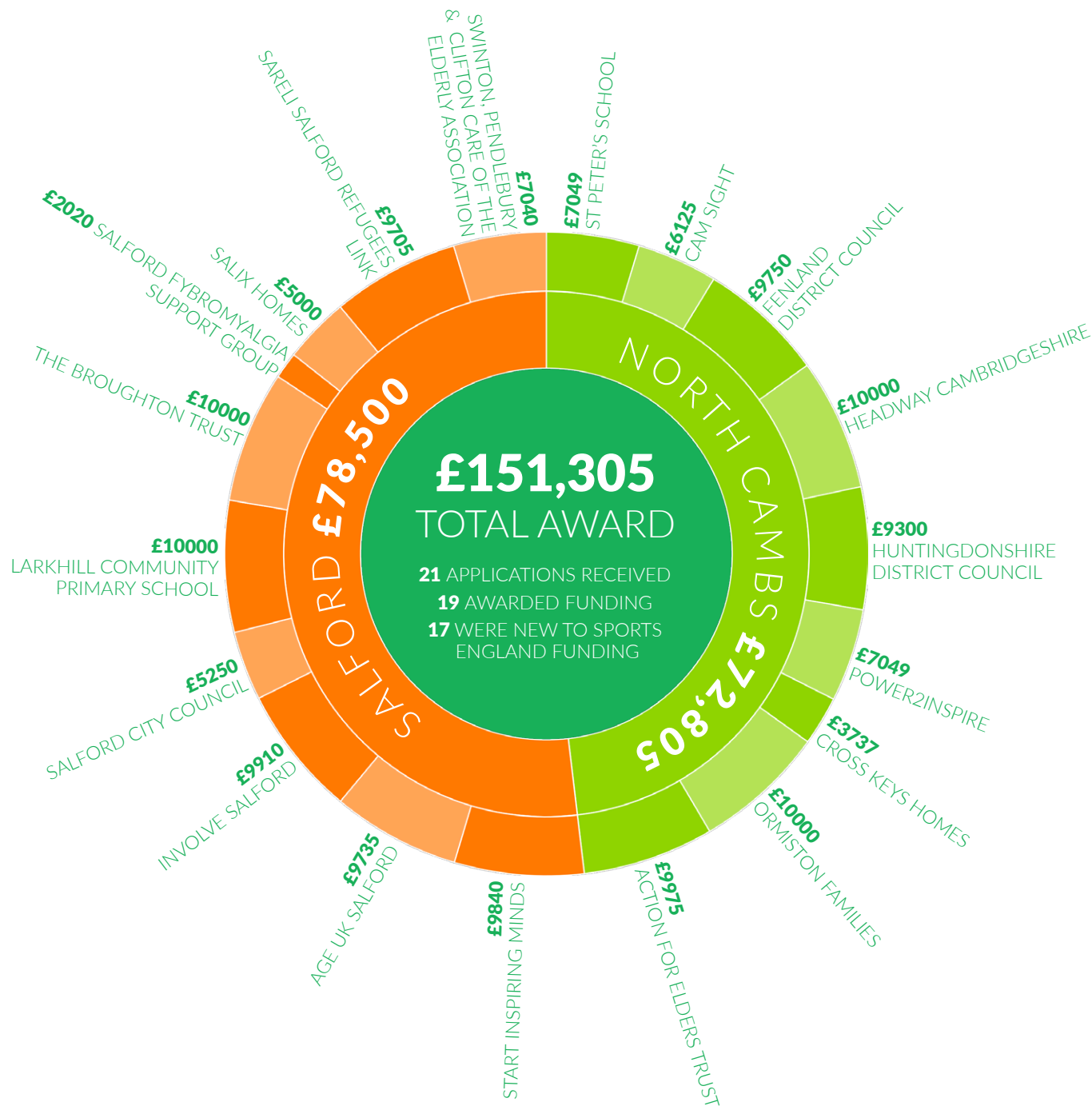
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*“I now know that I can run and cycle. Getting more confident each time I participate and even thinking about future events...Thank you Cam Sight for enabling me to try new sports and get active again!”*

PARTICIPANT, CAM SIGHT – FENLAND ACTIVITY

# 5. Project Focus

A total of 19 organisations shared over £150,000 of funding. We were keen to attract organisations who were not usually recipients of sports-related funding. The diagram below illustrates how the funding was allocated between the two areas and various projects.





# 5.1 Featured Projects (Salford)

## > SALFORD FIBROMYALGIA SUPPORT GROUP Fibryo Fitness



**INITIAL AIMS** The project aimed to deliver a weekly hour-long 12-week fitness class for people with fibromyalgia. Classes were run by a qualified fitness instructor with understanding of the condition. The sessions focused on gentle exercise including chair-based activities, and progressed to floor-based activities where appropriate including Tai Chi and Yoga. All classes were tailored to participants' levels of comfort and ability and were provided in a supportive environment. This led to participants continuing physical activity at home, gaining confidence to participate in other mainstream activities and generally feeling healthier and more in control of their symptoms.

**PROJECT OUTCOMES** By introducing gentle exercise on a regular basis the fitness levels of participants were enhanced. The general feeling of participating and improvement in overall wellbeing gave beneficiaries greater confidence and a determination to continue exercising. The project created a bespoke and multi-level exercise regime for people with fibromyalgia who had been unable to attend classes and engaged with previously inactive members of the community.

In addition, the project has extended its activities into a weekly intervention to supplement the monthly group meetings and talking therapy. The project has increased confidence and mobility for most people undertaking exercise who had previously done very little. Participants are keen to continue exercising both in the class and elsewhere to maintain the improvement sustained so far.

**PARTICIPANT FEEDBACK** *"It gave me the opportunity to exercise regularly with a group of people who had the same physical limitations as myself."*

*"I have serious osteoarthritis as well as fibromyalgia and I am currently waiting a total knee replacement. However, even with my restricted mobility, I have been able to complete the exercises. The classes are suitable for all levels of ability and I have loved being involved."*



**INITIAL AIMS** Salford's Duchy Road Caravan Park has 25 permanent plots for the Gypsy/Traveller Community. The site houses 40 adults and 57 children, whose opportunities to take part in recreational activities are limited. The environment of the site is also unsuitable for organised outside play. The wide range in age, interests and friendship groups of children makes high quality engagement on site difficult. The project aimed to deliver a range of off-site sporting opportunities for children from the Gypsy community

**PROJECT OUTCOMES** The project delivered weekly activity sessions for 2-5 year-olds including hand-eye co-ordination activities such as throwing, catching, mini tennis and basketball, co-ordination and balance activities, balance beam, balance circle, tots football. The project also delivered weekly activity sessions for 8+ year-olds including climbing, canoeing, kayaking, windsurfing, trampolining, swimming and raft building.

This achieved a high level of engagement from the Gypsy and Traveller community, reducing isolation of Gypsy and Traveller young people as well as introducing them to new and exciting activities in their local area. The project reached out to new young people who have recently moved onto the site and developed further strong relationships with them and their parents.

**FURTHER ACHIEVEMENTS**

- > The youth service has a renewed presence working on the Traveller site and has re-established trust after a period of absence.
- > The parents of the 2-5 year-olds have a better understanding of why physical activity is important for their children
- > The project was finished with a health and safety community event where agencies and local schools were in attendance. Activities included climbing, football, early years play, circus skills and CPR training

**PARTICIPANT FEEDBACK** *"It has helped my son develop hand to eye coordination using the bow and arrow set, he loved it!"*



**INITIAL AIMS** The project aimed to provide opportunities for older people to join walking groups to increase their physical activity, thereby reducing social isolation, improving mental health and wellbeing and learning new skills. Age UK organised two launch events which included taster walks and information sessions. The activities were shared via social media platforms, through the Age UK Salford website, the National Heritage Open Day website and neighbourhood networks.

**PROJECT OUTCOMES** Twice-monthly walking group sessions around the local area were then delivered, providing shared knowledge about the heritage of Swinton through the heritage trail plaques. Age UK shared information about other health walks taking place in and around Salford so older people could choose to walk more frequently. Feedback provided by group members supported development of a third heritage health walk.



LEFT: Paul, before  
RIGHT: Paul, after

**PARTICIPANT FEEDBACK (PAUL)** "I first heard about the Community Activity Programme through my connections to Critchley Community Hub. As I have an interest in local heritage, I was asked if I would be interested in leading the heritage health walks.

"It was around this time my GP had told me that my weight needed addressing. In order to be a credible leader and to improve my own health, I decided to join in and increase my own physical activity and make major diet improvements. I have always enjoyed walking, but had found in recent years I was walking less and struggling to keep up with people. I also suffered a knee injury which was adding to the problem.

"Feeling healthier fuels my desire to walk more and contributes to my weight loss. I've had some really positive comments from my family and friends, which was been really motivating.

"Since joining the programme I have lost over five stone in weight. The improvements to my physical appearance helps to improve my personal wellbeing – it's good to be able to impress people with what I have been able to achieve! I have re-educated my mind and body to eat better, exercise and not fall into bad habits. I feel empowered and satisfied with my achievements – and so much healthier.

"I'm due my next annual review at my GP surgery soon. I'm looking forward to the Practice Nurse wondering if the previous records she had for me are correct!"

## > THE BROUGHTON TRUST

### Lower Broughton Active Lives

- INITIAL AIMS** The project aimed to build stronger social relations within the community with a particular focus on reducing social isolation and improving wellbeing. Activities included weekly health walks, weekly bike rides, rugby, walking football, walking rounders, netball, beanbag darts, table tennis, boccia and watersports. After six weeks participants and wider residents were consulted about which of these they would like to see continued.
- PROJECT OUTCOMES** The project delivered physical activities including football, boxing, walking and tag rugby. The sessions were attended by a diverse range of individuals with a mix of abilities including children with disabilities, children from different ethnic backgrounds and many who did not speak English. Attendance at some events decreased during the winter but the project delivered indoor activities for all the family including boxing classes.
- PARTICIPANT FEEDBACK** *"Being with other people improved my confidence by chatting and swapping stories... My level of fitness has improved, mostly due to the walking."*

## > SALIX HOMES

### Street Games

- INITIAL AIMS** The project aimed to deliver a series of sessions to improve physical and mental wellbeing in a fun, sociable and accessible way for the most seldom heard members of the community that are at risk of or already involved in anti-social behaviour and low level criminality.
- PROJECT OUTCOMES** 70% of individuals engaged had none or less than 30 minutes session exercise per month. Through the project's activities 95% of participants appeared to want to change their lifestyle approach and become motivated to continue carrying out physical activity more than twice per week. The project has also reduced anti-social behaviour in the neighbourhood reported to Salix Homes and Greater Manchester Police.
- The main successes of the project are as follows:
- > Promoted intergenerational and social inclusion by recruiting older volunteers to support the project
  - > Young people are more aware of the benefits of physical activities
  - > Young people engaged in alternative physical activities outside of the programme
  - > Reduction of anti-social behaviour in the neighbourhood
  - > 95% participants felt more positive about being involved in physical activity
  - > 95% of participants felt the project inspired them to take part in 2 or more 30 minutes of activity per month
  - > 92% of young people were motivated to take part in physical activity for 6 months
- PARTICIPANT FEEDBACK** *"It's made me want to do more sport outside of school. I am going to join the rugby team and take up boxing."*
- "I speak out more in class and I'm not afraid to show my emotions. Before I came, I never acted like my true self and now I do."*



## 5.2 Featured Projects (North Cambridgeshire)

### > CAM SIGHT Fenland Activity

**INITIAL AIMS** Fenland Activity provided opportunities for visually impaired people in North Cambridgeshire to participate in regular outdoor physical exercise to improve health, fitness and balance. Volunteers were recruited and trained to guide local visually impaired people in long-distance walking, running and tandem cycling.

The programme encouraged familiarity and confidence with getting out and about and navigating the countryside. Beneficiaries gained increased health and physical fitness and grew in confidence and self-esteem due to the sense of achievement and social interaction.

**PROJECT OUTCOMES** The structure to recruit volunteers to deliver tandem cycling, guided walking, guided running, guided gym sessions, and VI tennis to their clients has been established. The tandem cycling scheme was successfully launched, securing experienced and confident cyclists and engaging with people with low vision and blindness. Beneficiaries have increased independence and confidence, with improved mental and physical wellbeing. The project has created an increased community feeling.

The group have developed their working relationships with other Fen based organisations, gaining support for the scheme and adding promotional opportunities to get involved with other future activities planned. Due to the project being well received, they have been able to expand the tandem project beyond expectations, as they were donated a tandem and were able to purchase an additional one, enabling the sustainability of the service into the future.

**PARTICIPANT FEEDBACK** *"I now know that I can run and cycle. Getting more confident each time I participate and even thinking about future events...Thank you Cam Sight for enabling me to try new sports and get active again".*



RIGHT: Participants in the gardening programme, including James (far left)



**INITIAL AIMS** Over a period of 9 months the project ran weekly facilitated outdoor gardening activity sessions in Peterborough. These ran at an existing community garden site and primarily benefited people with a brain injury, as well as other users of the site from the local community. The gardening programme provided a safe and accessible outdoor space for people to get active through practising a range of gardening skills, including growing plants and vegetables, and garden design and maintenance. The aim was to improve physical activity, overall wellbeing and levels of strength and reduce social isolation.

**PROJECT OUTCOMES** The gentle exercise and gardening led to increased confidence and independence, including participants engaging more with other users of the site, helping to reduce social isolation. Working with local partners, they also improved the provision of services for people with a brain injury by improving access to an important community resource.

Participants have gained in physical strength, energy and motivation improving their fine motor skills and dexterity. Behaviours and attitudes towards activity have changed as the project has given a purpose to it. There is now a sense of ownership amongst participants, ensuring the sustainability of the project in the long term.

**PARTICIPANT FEEDBACK (JAMES)** *"I first heard about the Community Activity Programme through the Community Brain Injury Coordinator at Headway. I was motivated to join because I was keen to get some structure and routine back into my life and to socialise with new people.*

*"If you'd seen me before the group, I was a wreck. I was depressed. I used to just go walking and I was in tears a lot of the time. Before I came, I felt nervous. I told my wife I was frightened and didn't think I could do it. But that changed after the first day and I really enjoyed spending time with friendly people in a lovely environment.*

*"The group has given me the experience socialising so I'm more confident and have the motivation to do more. The difference is that if I go to the gym, it doesn't do anything for me. I can't see any difference afterwards. With the gardening group, I can see that I've accomplished something.*

*"I feel 100% happier since being involved in the programme. I'm less depressed, more confident and motivated. Seriously, It's the best thing I've ever done."*

**INITIAL AIMS** Waterlees Your Sport ran sports sessions in a relaxed “kick-about” style, creating an enjoyable, fun atmosphere. Training opportunities were provided to some participants, in order to establish a team and legacy after the initial programme. Target beneficiaries were physically inactive people from low socioeconomic backgrounds from Eastern European countries, between 14-25 years old.

Wisbech was identified as an area with a high level of immigration, but showing little integration across ethnic groups within the local community. The project aimed to help improve the inactivity levels within this ethnic group whilst increasing social cohesion.

**PROJECT OUTCOMES** The project provided a semi-structured drop-in format, with activities chosen by the participants, mainly football and dodgeball. It reached a larger target group than expected, with an age range of 7-19 years old. Initially there was a clear divide between ethnic groups, but as the project progressed, participants formed a mutual respect for each other and positive peer role models were created.

The project managed to secure an FA Level 1 coaching qualification for one community champion. This has enabled the individual to gain confidence and experience to pursue their chosen career path to become a sports coach, and help facilitate future sessions.

**PARTICIPANT FEEDBACK** The young community champion said of the project:  
*“Since I’ve taken part in the sessions I definitely feel like my confidence is improving when it comes to talking to groups of people...” “I felt really proud and honoured when I was chosen to be the ‘Your Sport’ Champion. It’s given me the opportunity to share my experiences and knowledge as well as the chance to continue to learn and progress...this opportunity to coach will help me as I eventually want to work in sports and football coaching as a career”.*

## **POWER2INSPIRE** Community Power House Games Programme

**INITIAL AIMS** The Power2inspire project delivered weekly games, including bocchia, new age kurling, sitting volleyball and table cricket, in the county’s community centres, with trials in Huntingdon, Ely and March. The games were fully inclusive and suitable for all ages and abilities, and helped break down barriers between groups that use the centres, whilst also encouraging physical activity and take up of sport.

Different groups, for example older people and learning disabled groups, came together to learn and play. Each of the activities encouraged movement, stretching, bending, and some throwing and more vigorous action. The sessions benefited participants’ mental health as the groups bonded and grew. Participants were signposted to clubs and training opportunities for those who wished to take on the role of “centre captain” for any of the sports.



## PROJECT OUTCOMES

The project ran three pilot schemes targeting older people and people with physical, learning or mental health impairments. The results were mixed with Huntingdon not a success, Ely a huge success and March, from a slow start, a success. Overall, the project saw the confidence in participants grow, particularly those with the greatest impairments, and through building relationships and social interaction, there was a positive impact on mental health. They are now exploring sponsorship and other funding methods to continue the games in both Ely and March.

## PARTICIPANT FEEDBACK

"I am very grateful to be able to join these exercise activities and feel much more optimistic about my future".

## > ST PETER'S SCHOOL Outward Bound

### INITIAL AIMS

Outward Bound delivered a course of introductions into various sports and activities for the most disadvantaged children at St Peter's School, who follow an alternative pathway due to disengagement in mainstream education. The programme enabled students to gain accreditation in some of the sports, with the hope to encourage continued participation by giving them the confidence to explore other sports and attain other qualifications.

Activities on offer, delivered by professional coaches, included mountain biking, water sports, Duke of Edinburgh and taster sessions in Judo and other martial arts. As part of the project there was also accreditation for staff training in canoeing/kayaking and mountain biking with Duke of Edinburgh coordination.

This enabled the continuation of this type of provision for future students.



## PROJECT OUTCOMES

Students who participated in the project were vulnerable, with a majority involved with youth offending and/or known to the police, and some with ongoing complex social care issues. The sessions proved successful, with participants showing motivation and enthusiasm, with improved behaviour, attendance and engagement in education. Some of the students have now gone on to be more active and have joined sports clubs.

The project allowed conversations and discussions that reflected teamwork, motivation and progression as they were exposed to situations that challenged them. The project is planned for delivery in the next academic year.

## PARTICIPANT FEEDBACK

"I was finding school difficult and I wanted to do something different to help me through these difficult times...my health and fitness improved dramatically as I was doing very little. I now bike into school and I really enjoy my fitness...without this programme I am not sure I would have got through school".

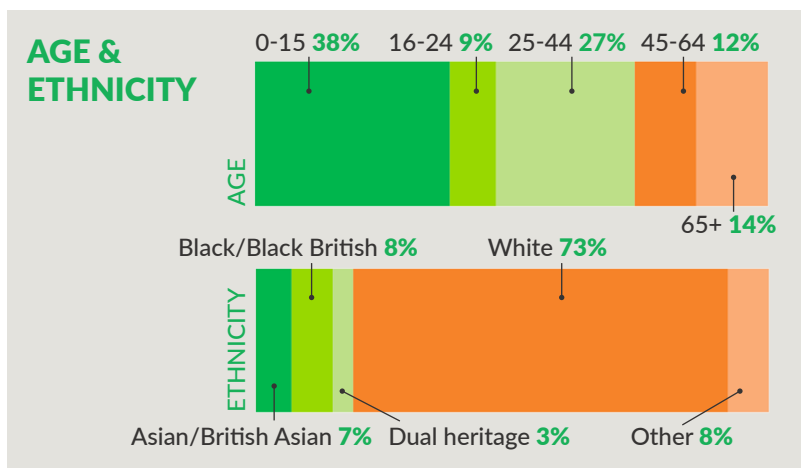


## 6. Programme Results

Grantees have provided the following results through their end of grant reports, the collection of beneficiary feedback at the end of their activity sessions, and through the completion of grantee organisation online surveys.

Beneficiary numbers were recorded by grantee organisations through their end of grant reports.

Other results were produced by surveying participants. 516 beneficiaries completed feedback postcards at the end of their activity session across the 19 projects delivered.



**2980** Total beneficiaries (that attended at least one session)

**1183** of those attended over a sustained period of up to six months



Male: **35%**  
Female: **57%**  
Prefer not to say: **7%**



**PHYSICAL ACTIVITY: BEFORE**

**29%** didn't do any regular activity in the last 6 months prior to engaging with the programme

**58%** did less than two 30 minute activity sessions per month prior to engaging with the programme



**PHYSICAL ACTIVITY: AFTER**

**93%** stated the project activities had made them feel more positive about physical activity

**91%** stated the project activities had inspired them to take part in two 30 minute activity sessions per month after the programme ended

**89%** stated that they were motivated to take part in physical activity for at least six months after the programme ended



*"The group has been a lifeline for me, lovely people"*

*"I have made new friends and become more active"*



**OTHER RESULTS**

**96%** stated the project activities had been enjoyable

**86%** stated the project activities had made them feel a greater sense of community in the local area

# 7. Programme Capital Investment

Groundwork has been able to contribute £50,000 in additional resources for capital improvements in public spaces, with one major\* project in each delivery area.

In the course of their activities, Groundwork's enablers looked for potential projects, partners and locations where this might be possible. Projects were chosen where they would be located in publicly accessible locations and benefit communities.

The project identified in the North West aims to provide support a number of local projects, including three that have been directly funded through Sport England Community Activity Programme. The project will increase access and improve signage to an existing wetland and enable an increase in recreational activities to take place. Improvements include:

- > Installation of measured route and markers around the site to provide 1, 2, 3, and 5 km routes which can be used by self led and organised groups as part of the weekly Run Together initiative
- > Install directional signage to encourage access to the wetland from the local area, linking the large residential areas to the site
- > Install directional signage along the riverside path to inform and encourage people to use new cycle and pedestrian routes

The project in the East has enabled further collaboration between Groundwork and Clarion in identifying a suitable capital investment project.

As part of an overall improvement to the sports and play area of Lime Avenue Wisbech, an area used by one of the projects directly funded through Sport England Community Activity Programme, Groundwork is working in partnership with Clarion.

The existing artificial turf is to be repaired along with the removal and replacement of the current low perimeter fence with a 3m high rebound mesh fence, so that balls stay within the play area and do not enter adjacent properties or damage parked cars. This will allow for the development of a more structured programme of sporting activities and planned league fixtures.

\* Major project = investment of £25,000 in each area (Salford and Cambridgeshire)



“

*“We’ve noticed a general improvement in his health and fitness and he seems much calmer and happier”*

DAUGHTER OF PARTICIPANT, ACTION FOR ELDER'S TRUST – BALANCE LIVES WERRINGTON

## 8. Project Outcomes

**One of the key successes of the programme has been the use of the Groundwork Enablers. Having experienced and skilled community workers using their existing networks to recruit organisations to the programme has been invaluable.**

The programme has reached groups that are rooted in their local community, that deliver activities to the people that need it most, and supported them to apply for funding. Only 2 of the grantees reported that they would have thought to look at Sport England funding had it been openly advertised without the support of their Enabler. Sport England funding had been perceived by some grantees as “only for sport organisations”. With the Enablers’ support to break down this barrier they could recognise the important role they play in helping to deliver key elements of the Sport England: Towards an Active Nation Strategy “that everyone, regardless of their age, background or level of ability, feels able to engage in sport and physical activity” and by “Focusing more money and resources on tackling inactivity”.

A key area of enabler support identified by the grantee was during the application process. Spending time working up initial ideas into fully formed projects gave the groups and the beneficiaries they were targeting a better chance of delivering a successful project. With support invested up front in the process, when the application came to the advisory panel, decisions on funding were less contentious, with fewer applications rejected. The advisory panel was then able to provide a greater emphasis on adding value to the projects using their local networks and knowledge.

A number of the grantee organisations used a bottom up approach to the design of their pilot projects. They used their existing knowledge of their service users and beneficiaries to help inform the design of the activities they were to deliver. Either through existing consultation or through delivering a number of activities on a trial and error basis, they then focused activities based on participant feedback; enabling the groups to develop a truly local demand led project.

The projects were aimed at moving people from inactivity to activity, and with 91% of the 516 participants that completed the beneficiary feedback postcards, stating the project activities “had

inspired them to take part in two 30-minute activity sessions per month”, this can be considered a great achievement. In addition to the positive results around an increased positive attitude to activity, the project organisations also noted some other key benefits:

### Health & Wellbeing

There was improved mental health and wellbeing of participants including a reduction in social isolation and loneliness amongst participants for the beneficiaries of the Age UK project in Salford. The project activities have led to meaningful friendships being made, with participants demonstrating support for each other and encouraging each other to participate. The opportunity to exercise with others was significant, particular for participant if the Fibromyalgia project who remarked that the illness could be isolating, as it is poorly understood. Therefore, the opportunity to exercise with others who know how it feels and the limitations it can bring was significant, with the social aspect playing its own part in promoting wellbeing.

### Reduced Anti-Social Behaviour

Some of the projects that had focused on a younger age group had noted that participants had been less likely to be involved in anti-social behaviour whilst taking part in the projects’ positive activities. With one young person from the Salix Homes project commenting “I am not getting involved in other things that I shouldn’t, my family have commented on my change”.

### Community Cohesion

For the Waterlees project in the East, the activities have helped improve community cohesion, by breaking down barriers between different ethnic groups. This was helped by some of the older participants acting as positive role models for the younger participants throughout the sessions. Participants have also learnt about respecting their area, tend to litter less, and keep the area in a safer condition.

## Increased engagement with education

The St Peters School project targeted students that either had an identified need (SEND) or were at risk of permanent exclusion. The majority of the students were involved with youth offending and/or known to the police, with some having on-going complex social care issues. During the project, the attendance and participation rate was 100% for the sessions. Their motivation and engagement improved and thus enabled them to engage in the academic work in school. This was shown in students attending more intervention sessions and taking an interest in their next steps in education or employment.

## Better local collaboration

Salix Homes – Street Games project has built / strengthened partnerships with youth delivery services. The project has had a positive influence on Salix Homes youth engagement and delivery of services for young people. A Youth Panel has been set up with dedicated funds to support young people and youth community projects to address Education, Employment, Health and Wellbeing and Social Cohesion

## Increased bidding capacity

The Action for All Ages project has been successful in gaining funding to keep one of their popular activities going for a further 20 weeks beyond the Sport England funding.

The Sport England funding and support from the Enablers has impacted upon the organisations positively. In the Salford area particularly the funding has encouraged collaborative ways of working with other funded organisations, with links being drawn between the projects and culminating in an end of project event that was attended by a number of the grantees.

This was more problematic in the East due to geographical logistics, where a natural crossover of the groups is less apparent. However, the projects have been able to make key strategic links with a range of other organisations to either add value to their current activities or as they look to the sustainability of the project. One example of this is the Cam Sight project that has been able to secure a trained UK Athletics guide walker/runner from a local running club to support their clients and they have established positive links with the March Parkrun where one of the participants now participates on a fortnightly basis.

The funding has led to further bids for similar activities, and encouraged groups to look at Sport England as a future funder for their other projects and services. One example is the Larkhill School Scootfit project that has applied to Sport England for a scooter and nature trail. In addition the Involve Salford project are exploring Sport England funding options for in the future, as they are now a fully open community gym and venue for other physical activity. The funding has also enabled the Headway project to try new approaches to delivery by integrating formal exercise within some of the other sessions they delivery such as gardening and they are looking at ways in which they can implement this in other areas of their work.

A number of the organisations commented during their end of grant reports that the project would have been unable to take place without the support of the Sport England funding. Whilst the number of grantee organisation is relatively small it's encouraging to see such a high number of beneficiaries – 2980 – that would otherwise not have had the opportunity to engage in physical activity. The impact is further demonstrated by the 91% of those surveyed who are now motivated to take part in physical activity for at least 6 months, progressing up the behavioural change ladder towards action and maintenance.



# Appendix 1: Other funded projects

## > Salford

### **SWINTON, PENDLEBURY & CLIFTON CARE OF THE ELDERLY ASSOCIATION**

Action For All  
Ages

The project aimed to deliver tai chi, zumba, ballroom dancing and yoga classes and train volunteers enabling them to deliver sessions. The project aimed to achieve an improvement to individual's wellbeing, increase levels of physical exercise and widen the range of participants.

The project has reduced social isolation and increased awareness of health and wellbeing and participants have increased their physical activity and made new friends.

### **INVOLVE SALFORD** Well Involved

The project aimed to deliver physical activity sessions for people who do not participate in volunteering, employment or sport, particularly women under 25, men over 45, offenders and ex-offenders, people in recovery from illness and asylum seekers and refugees. The project aimed to improve participants' wellbeing, improve their confidence and resilience, develop new skills and expand their social network.

The project delivered weekly table tennis sessions, dance classes, various sports sessions including half term activities for young people and children and a weekly zumba class.

### **LARKHILL SCHOOL** Scouting in the Community

The project aimed to engage with children who don't normally participate with ball games or other physical activity and as a result are isolated from their peers. In particular the project aims to involve obese and inactive children; vulnerable children who have social and mental health issues; and autistic children who have poor co-ordination and balance.

The project has delivered a 1 hour Scouting activity in the community every Monday and Tuesday with over 95% of the children targeted engaging in the activity. Over 480 children participated in the activity for 6 weeks. During the scouting in the community sessions the children developed their balance, strength and coordination. It also helped to improve their confidence and self-esteem, their resilience to keep going to achieve their goals and the feeling of trying a new activity for the first time.

### **START INSPIRING MINDS** Start Getting Active

Start Getting Active aimed to deliver physical activity sessions for individuals who experience mental illness or are at risk of mental ill health especially those that lack self-esteem and motivation, social isolation, emotional resilience or have impaired physical health. The activity sessions were designed by and for Start's members to be inclusive of all levels of ability. In addition, the project aimed to deliver therapeutic art sessions three times a week, and longer sessions at weekends.

Physical activity sessions included baby and toddler yoga, walking and running, dance, zumba and group-games sessions. The sessions enabled strong social networks to be developed. Beneficiaries cited the support and encouragement that comes from 'doing it together' as being beneficial. Participants in the running group all completed 5 k run and have signed up to run the Salford 10k in September and outside of the sessions, some members meet each week to run together and one member has joined a local running club.

**SARELI SALFORD  
REFUGEES LINK**  
Congo Ndombolo  
Jump Roof Dance

The project aimed to improve wellbeing, motor and communication skills and reduce social isolation by providing activities that focus on the African Ndombolo Dance style. This included regular dance activities and sessions to raise awareness of the style. There was a weekly drop-in and advice session to raise awareness of activities and their benefits and training for ten young people in how to manage and support volunteers and lead Ndombolo dance sessions, for which they received a non-accredited qualification

The organisation worked with two universities and African Women Health Action to examine the health of refugees in the UK. This demonstrated a need for regular activities, advocacy, advice and support, especially for women and young children leaving care. The project consulted with 65 young people who were leaving care and asked them for their opinions on isolation and inactivity. It found that 85% of young Africans were facing social exclusion, loneliness, low mood, anxiety and stress. 95% were unemployed and unskilled. It also found that 75% of young African refugees leaving care had no transitional plan in place and were not getting the support required to transition from being in care to adult independence.

## > North Cambridgeshire

**CROSS KEYS  
HOMES**  
West/Raven  
Basketball

The West/Raven Basketball project aimed to engage seldom heard young people within the local and wider community, aged between 11 and 19. Weekly basketball sessions were delivered by a qualified sports coach, to help increase the physical activity of participants, coupled with the opportunity to gain a coaching qualification to help make the project sustainable.

The majority of young people engaged in the project were 11-13 year olds, as they were unable to recruit the target beneficiaries of NEET 11-19 year olds. This meant the training element of the project was unable to go ahead as participants were too young. Weekly sessions of basketball changed to multi-sporting activities following feedback. Participants agreed that there was a greater sense of community through the sessions and they feel inspired to take part in more activities.

**HUNTINGTON  
DISTRICT  
COUNCIL**  
Active Family  
Sundays

The aim was to help families (with children between the ages of 7 and 11 years old) to embed better lifestyle habits into their routines, including healthy eating and physical activity.

The success of the project was mixed. It proved difficult engaging families on a more regular basis. For those who were engaged, they reported learning new sports, having quality family time together and improved behaviour in the children and better fitness levels for the whole family.

This project has been a learning experience for the group, enabling them to understand what barriers people face to participation and what is needed to engage them. They identified that fewer regular sessions at targeted times throughout the year would help make the activity more sustainable and attractive for families. Confidence in sport was also an issue for parents, as not being active themselves led to them being fearful of using the equipment. Therefore coaching is viewed as a key element in delivering similar projects in the future.

## **ORMISTON FAMILIES**

### Small Steps Together – “Body fit” sessions

The Small Steps Together project is a perinatal support service. It is a preventative service that will work with those at risk of developing, or have, low to moderate perinatal mental health and wellbeing needs. The aim was to expand the service provision with the introduction of free exercise classes, running “Bodyfit” pregnancy Pilates sessions. The aim was also to run “Bodyfit” Post-natal Pilates sessions for those who have recently had a baby, but might be unsure how to start exercising again.

Feedback from participants has been positive, and many have said they have been able to promote the benefits of exercise to their family after being involved in the project. Target numbers were exceeded for the project and over 50% of participants have continued a recognised sporting activity 6 months after their pregnancy. Many reflected that exercise and the Pilates sessions have proved a key part in maintaining their wellbeing in pregnancy and after giving birth.

## **ACTION FOR ELDERS TRUST**

### Balanced Lives Werrington

Fit and Balanced Lives was a project that aimed to support residents and neighbours of Werrington Lodge care home to become physically active, improve their physical mobility and health, and create positive attitudes towards physical exercise. The project targets older people aged 65+, to provide weekly two-hour classes at the home, taking a holistic and sustainable approach to improving physical mobility and health by also addressing mental wellbeing, preventative health and social isolation.

Key achievements included residents’ improved physical stamina, mobility, strength and social interaction, and a culture change to embed physical exercise within the care home. They used a relationship centred approach to bring meaning and value to participants, developing security, belonging and purpose, which helped encourage them to participate in the weekly physical activities.

Due to the success of the project, they plan to deliver the weekly classes long-term. They have been working on a sustainability plan, including funding applications to trusts and foundations. They plan to develop Balanced Lives in care homes as a key strategic strand of their work, having recognised there is an unmet need for expert support for care home residents.



## Contact Groundwork

Groundwork is a charity working locally and nationally to transform lives in the UK's most disadvantaged communities.

Groundwork UK provides central support services and local project delivery is carried out by Groundwork Trusts.

For information about national programmes, partnerships, campaigns and activity please contact Groundwork UK:

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