



Impact Report 2022/23



Our Impact



“The project has enabled us to engage with some new families that may not have accessed the leisure centres otherwise. It has made us think that we need to review all of our classes as to how inclusive they are, so that people with SEND can access any class, rather than always waiting for something targeted to come along.”

“Some have connected with people that they live near to in sheltered accommodation but never knew – and as a result have been meeting outside of the sessions to go for lunch etc” Make the sunshine project visit

“Before I started in all honesty, I used to get into trouble a lot, due to mental health blackouts from built up rage from the past, but now I have a safe place to release that aggression in a controlled manner plus someone to talk to in general, I’m not half as angry as I used to be, plus it’s done wonders for my physical health, I used to smoke roughly 20/30 cigarettes a day whereas now I don’t smoke at all I’ve even stopped drinking which has helped life a lot.”

“I am told that since starting wheelchair rugby I am more fun to be with and less grumpy”

“More time to dedicate to the physical mobility needs of people who use our services gave the staff and service users a far greater degree of confidence to both participate and deliver”

“I attended with my husband who has dementia. For me it has been great to meet and socialise and walk with other carers. However, my husband has also become active - if he was not here with me engaging in the activities offered, he would be sat at home”

“We meet once a month, and have a WhatsApp group where we share ideas and just general conversations which allows for companionship. We had a number of outings to the beach. I have met beautiful people who I interact well with and am like-minded to.”

“Dancing with others who share your difficulties and being ‘held’ by skilled facilitators is confidence building. Parkinson’s affects body flexibility and balance. And many also suffer freezing (sudden inability to move at all). This inevitably affects confidence in moving and makes many self-conscious in trying large movement and stretching oneself at all. The sessions demonstrate that we can all do more safely than we at first think and no one is laughing at us, although there’s plenty of opportunity to laugh with one another.”

“I like to move in this session - it makes me feel ready for the day and helps with my back pain!”

The Together Fund

The Together Fund (formerly called the Tackling Inequalities Fund or “TIF”) formed part of Sport England’s 2020-2023 support package to help the sport and physical activity sector through the coronavirus crisis.



The programme looked to reduce the negative impact of coronavirus and the widening inequalities in sport and physical activity in the following under-represented groups:

- Lower Socio-economic Groups
- Culturally Diverse Communities
- Disabled People
- People with a Long-term Health Condition

The funding ran until August 2023 and enabled community groups working with these audiences to continue to exist and engage with their communities, with a view to keeping them engaged and active during the pandemic, through the recovery stages and beyond.

This report focuses on Phase 4 of the fund, which saw additional National Lottery funding committed to help the groups that, from Sport England’s insight, were being disproportionately affected by the pandemic, significantly impacting their ability to be physically active.

SASP took the decision to reach out to those most in need, by working with new and existing partners delivering on the ground and in the know, to work up projects for potential beneficiaries. The following report highlights the key findings and outcomes from these local projects. We’d like to thank all the organisations and participants who contributed to this report.



Funding Awarded



People with Long Term Health Conditions (LTHC)



Disability



Projects



Lower Socio Economic Groups (LSEG)



Culturally Diverse Communities



People reached *

* estimate from responses to evaluation form

Our Partners

Lower Socio-Economic Groups

The latest Sport England Active Lives Adult Survey shows there are still significant inequalities between different socio-economic groups and their engagement in sport and physical activity. Those less affluent are most likely to be inactive (29%) compared to the most affluent (13%). Sport and physical activity has been seen to support positive social change within communities by improving community connectedness and reducing social isolation.

¹ Adult Active Lives Survey November 2021 - 2022



Types of activities:
Angling, Boxing, Dance, Drama Games, Family activities, Fitness activities, Movement through technology, Multi-sports, Outdoor woodland wellbeing, Skateboarding, Swimming, Wellbeing activities.



Participants



Projects

Lower Socio-Economic Groups Impact

On organisations

- Developed new relationships and/or partnerships
- Attracted new participants
- Increased confidence in delivering physical activity.

On participants

- Increased physical activity
- More active with family
- Mixing with people from different backgrounds.

Support through the Together Fund has allowed us to test new ideas and has greatly increased our partnerships.



I was communicating and working as a team with people I had only just met so each week they all become familiar and friendships were formed, we were all able to give each other the encouragement needed to build our confidence and as a group decided even if we were not much good at dancing we would all just enjoy ourselves and have a laugh.



Lower Socio-Economic Groups

Recommendations when working with this group

1. Be flexible in your offer.

Be prepared to adapt your offer to suit your participants needs. Continually consult to find out if and where they need support.

2. Reduce barriers.

Removing the barriers of cost, transport and timing can make engagement far easier.

3. Develop exit routes.

Link in with local clubs to provide exit routes for participants who want to further their skills. Offer taster sessions at clubs to build relationships with coaches to support the transition.

“By removing the barriers of cost and transport for certain groups it has made engagement far easier and fluid. Something we would have really struggled with without the funding. Sessions took place both in the centre and on an outreach basis, we bought resources or paid more for instructors to travel or deliver and different times. This helped to ensure everyone got a chance to take part.”

”

Dear Selina
We will miss you so much we hope you will see another Drama but if you don't just Remember we love you
O



Lower Socio-Economic Groups

What next?

- Providing outreach groups and classes that allows access to individuals and groups who otherwise might not be able to access these opportunities.
- Put more of the funding towards instructor costs, and for young people to be able to buy/own equipment for themselves.



Lower Socio-Economic Groups Stories

Birchfield Community Primary school

We had a Mother and son from Ukraine who joined us for the sessions. When she first arrived she was particularly shy and was very quiet. However, as the weeks went on she really came out of her shell and always gave me a big smile at school each morning during the week. We also noticed that her son began to speak more frequently to the two other children who were there and became less and less attached to his mum. We were also able to observe that her son was particularly good at all the activities and games we offered and we were able to pass this on to our PE coaches. In summary, it enabled a family to feel included and to participate in something really fun without language or culture being a barrier and to showcase a real sporting strength in a child in our school community.

Taunton East Development Trust

Child C is 8 years old and has cognitive and physical problems with balance and coordination. This has manifested in behaviour problems at school with numerous temporary exclusions. C has really enjoyed skateboard club and has shown significant improvement in his balance and confidence. He has mastered tricks and performed these in mini competitions we run at the club sessions. On some occasions he hasn't been allowed to attend club as he has behaved badly at school. However we have recent success in maintaining his good behaviour at school by reinforcing the reward of attending skate club and this has led him to him improving his behaviour and maintaining his club attendance.

Somerset Youth Theatre

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=UGBparmF_Lw



Culturally Diverse Communities

Research shows that the number of people taking part in sport and physical activity varies by ethnic group. The latest Active Lives Adult Survey shows that Mixed and White adults continue to have the highest activity levels whilst Asian, Black and those with Other Ethnic origins are the least likely to be active.² Whilst 96.4% of people living in Somerset are White³, we have a range of culturally diverse communities to support, and help get more physically active.



Types of activities:
Climbing, Cricket, Cycling,
Dance, Football, Keep Fit,
Orienteering, Paddle Sports,
Swimming, Volleyball,
Walking.



Participants



Projects

² Adult Active Lives Survey November 2021 - 2022
³ Census 2021

Culturally Diverse Communities Impact

On organisations

- Developed new relationships and/or partnerships
- Attracted new participants.

On participants

- Increased physical activity
- Enjoyed participating in activity
- Built new friendships
- More active with family.

“We were able to connect with a demographic that we haven’t historically worked with. (Ukrainian refugee families living in West Somerset)”

“It’s been a great experience not just for me as an individual, but for my family as a whole. My children accompany me to the get together and enjoy interacting with other children and trying out new African dishes.”



Culturally Diverse Communities

Recommendations when working with this group

1. Offer family sessions. Create space for people to bring the whole family, so everyone can enjoy the activity and not feel isolated.

2. Provide safe space for people to be themselves. Be warm and welcoming. Put in place Provide a safe space for people to come and join.

3. Create opportunities for community cohesion. Allow access to facilities for training, coaching, social fixtures, community engagement days



“The activities have helped Ukrainians to make friends, socialise more and become confident in the English-speaking environment. The parents were offered various options for spending their children’s free time and choosing activities to their liking (swimming, skating, climbing etc). They also had a chance to discover a local tourist destination (Dunster Castle) and explore local nature (Forest school).The Ukrainian refugees and especially their children have significantly improved their English speaking skills. They feel much freer to communicate with locals. Overall, activities have given Ukrainians and their children a sense of belonging to a local community.”

Culturally Diverse Communities

What next?

“As a result of the sessions that we have run, we are also looking at running a taster session with PureGym in Yeovil for a small number of Trans Masculine youngsters who are part of 2BU. This session is intended to give them an introduction to using weights but also to allow them the opportunity to talk to personal trainers about the best exercises to enable them to develop their physiques in ways that will help with their self-esteem and with how they view their bodies.”



Culturally Diverse Communities Stories

Polonia and Friends

We had a child with learning difficulties and special needs requirements whose parent kept them in close proximity most of the time, giving limited freedom and ability to decide for themselves. As a result the person who behaved as a child but was a grown woman had lack of confidence and was afraid to link up with others or have open conversation with other peers. Over the time when we run the Polish sessions they develop more social skills (especially when mum was not present) and were happy to speak with other kids and adults but also take active part in the session. Another individual was afraid of water so much they would not entertain to come anywhere close to the edge of lake or sea. Following the kayaking session as a group and with other kids they were happy to explore the river with the instructor and had enjoyed the session, even after returning completely wet! We were so happy to see the complete transition and happy smile on their face as well as surprise looks by the parents.



Yeovil Diversity Project

link to blog:

<https://yeovildiversityproject.co.uk/lgbt-youth-swim-session/>

Somerset Cricket Foundation

link to video:

<https://youtu.be/LY66VXsQIWc>



People with long term health conditions

People with a long-term health condition are more likely to be inactive compared to those without. Adults in Somerset are over twice as likely to be inactive if they have a long-term health condition and/or a disability (42.1%) than if they do not (17.6%).⁴ Many of us are not as physically active as we would like to be: 69% of people with a long-term health condition want to be more active (We Are Undefeatable Insight). However, fear of increasing symptoms or worsening long-term problems stops people from moving more.



Types of activities:
 Boccia, Dance, Deconditioning Games, Flexercise, General movement, New Age Kurling, Resistance Training, Seated activities, Table Cricket, Walking, Walking football



Participants



Projects

⁴ Adult Active Lives Survey November 2021 - 2022

People with long term health conditions Impact

On organisations

- Attract new participants
- Increased confidence delivering physical activity

On participants

- Increased physical activity
- Enjoying participating in the activity
- Managing physical health

“It gave our staff some additional time for self-development and learning with direct reference to expanding the physical moving offer to the people who use our services.”



“This has been a life changing experience for me as I’ve made friends and I’ve never played football before and I thought I would give it a try and it’s been really good for me I’ve learnt new skills and I now do an activity I enjoy.”



People with long term health conditions

Recommendations when working with this group

1. Encourage social interaction.

Spending the with people who have similar problems and can understand your feelings can be hugely valuable. A cup of tea and a chat always helps!

2. Listen to people. Try having a check in at the beginning and the end of the session, so people can see how they have progressed.

3. Create the right conditions. Spend time ensuring the facilities are in an accessible location, and that the environment and lay out of the room is conducive to the activity you are delivering. Invite carers to attend.

“By allowing carers to attend, also ensured that the person felt safe and free to take part in an activity when their partner was close at hand, but also developing new friendships with other carers. It also allowed couples to take part in a physical sport activity something that they rarely seem to be doing together.”



People with long term health conditions

What next

Developing the legacy of the projects, e.g. the Occupational Therapists have continued to promote and encourage the legacy of the Moving and Improving Games, through creation of activities Champions, employment of an Activities Coordinator and increased activity groups across the care homes



People with long term health conditions

Stories

Headway Somerset

GT has been attending a Headway Somerset Centre for rehabilitation for ten years following a haemorrhagic stroke. GT is often quiet and withdrawn, struggling with communication and interaction with others. GT takes part in all the rehab activities although at times he can become frustrated with himself and others. Since we have introduced dedicated exercise and activity sessions using the newly purchased equipment run by Rehab Assistants and Support Workers GT has developed a whole new interest and focus for seated exercise. GT is particularly keen on the new indoor curling activity and is keen to take part, working in pairs and collaborating with others. Staff have commented on hearing him laughing and communicating with a whole range of people. There is no doubt that in addition to encouraging physical activity using the new equipment has brought about an improved mood and mental wellbeing.

Reminiscence Learning

These sessions have had a big impact on myself and my husband and have become part of our life and routine. We come from wellington every Monday and my husband likes the activities and the games where he can have fun but do something active. It then gives me the chance to see other people in a similar situation where we can speak about our problems and communicate about other sessions or opportunities that will help support us. I have made friends here which now I speak to outside of the session! It has been a great thing to my life and we are thankful for the experience.



Disabled People

The latest Active Lives Adult Survey shows that disabled people in Somerset are over twice as likely to be physically inactive (42.1%) compared to those without a disability (17.6%). This inequality increases as the number of impairments a person has increases. The Activity Alliance found that 80% of disabled people say their impairment stops them being active, they have less positive and inclusive experiences and feel they have been hardest hit by the cost of living crisis. However, 77% of disabled people would like to be more active so it's important to understand their motivations and the barriers they face.



Types of activities:
Adventure activities, Cycling,
Football, Multi-sports, Soft
Play, Swimming, Wheelchair
Rugby



Participants



Projects

Disabled People Impact

On organisations

- Developing new relationships and partnerships
- Attracting new participants

On participants

- Enjoyed participating in the activity
- mixed with people from different backgrounds
- Managed mental and physical health

“It gave the opportunity for participants with additional needs to take part in cycling using adaptive bikes. This was many participants first time as it allowed local people who wouldn't normally be able to participate join in.”

“I suffer with depression and physical mobility issues and pain and the Gladiators Family have helped me manage these instead of them managing me.”



Recommendations when working with this group

1. Create space for family and/or carers to get involved too. Many welcome the time to be active with their families and carers.

2. Adapt activities for different physical and mental disabilities. Taking time to explain the session to those who need more time makes people feel the sessions are adapted to suit their needs.

3. Provide appropriate equipment and use accessible, and inclusive, facilities. Provide equipment that supports inclusion of disabled people (e.g. wheelchairs for rugby, adapted bikes) and use accessible, and inclusive, facilities (e.g. exclusive access of changing facilities, using a hoist, quieter spaces).

“It has been fantastic to access local community facilities, but in a context that is appropriate for the needs of my child. We have exclusive access of changing facilities which mean we can go straight in without waiting, are able to use the hoist to access the water when needed and numbers in the pool are lower than a normal community session which means it is not too overwhelming. We also feel that having exclusive use means there is no judgement from those who don't understand my sons condition.”

What next?

- Reviewing all classes to see how inclusive they are, so that people with SEND can access any class, rather than always waiting for something targeted to come along.
- Developing workforce, by training more staff to deliver activity sessions
- Exploring the possibility of delivering after-school, weekend and holiday sessions on a regular basis in more areas across Somerset



Disabled People Stories

The Hub

We have one trainee (LC) who is non-verbal the majority of the time. She suffers from OCD and anxiety. This can be demonstrated by her running out of rooms, screaming and switching lights on and off several times. Her behaviour can also trigger other trainees to react with one individual banging his head against a desk when he hears the screaming. LC has lots of energy and by involving her in sporting activities she can expend that energy and is less anxious. LC is happier, less anxious and 'a dream to be with' when she is doing sports and other external activities.

Taunton Gladiators

<https://youtu.be/CUMIEg2wue8?si=66DlubuASrLakHRI>

Minehead Merlins

These sessions have had a big impact on myself and my husband and have become part of our life and routine. We come from wellington every Monday and my husband likes the activities and the games where he can have fun but do something active. It then gives me the chance to see other people in a similar situation where we can speak about our problems and communicate about other sessions or opportunities that will help support us. I have made friends here which now I speak to outside of the session! It has been a great thing to my life and we are thankful for the experience.



Learning from the Together Fund

Both SASP, and the partners we funded, have learnt a lot from our experience of the Together Fund. We've been on quite a journey since phase 1, when Together Fund was emergency funding during COVID-19, and we've learnt a lot throughout that time.

What went well?

Building new partnerships. We were able to work with community organisations we had not worked with before. Not only this, but our community organisations were able to build relationships with each other. These new relationships started a new way of working, and a change in mindsets about what physical activity looked like, what it could do, and how they could embed it into their work.

Increasing capacity and provision. The funding was a game changer for many organisations. It enabled them to upskill staff and increase the confidence of those delivering physical activity, as well as deliver provision which otherwise didn't exist.

[This was] much needed provision in the community

Strengthening internal relationships. Working closely as an internal "Together Fund Team" and meeting regularly meant we got to know each others' work areas better, and could not only link our Together Fund projects, but also our wider work.

Robust process. By Phase 4, we had developed a robust, clear and thorough assurance process, with the help of our administrator, Abbie Barker. The process is so good we are using it for other funds we are administering, such as the Extra Care Housing Fund.

Learning from the Together Fund

What went less well?

Timing and internal capacity. Whilst our process was robust, it took a lot of time to check in with projects and chase organisations for documents. At times, it was a challenge keeping track of all projects, and one communication style did not suit everyone.

Connecting with our strategy and being data driven.

We could have used the Together Fund more strategically, and target organisations and areas based on where the inequality exists. To support this decision making, we could have been more data driven."

Ability to engage and connect parts of the community. Parts of the community that some projects were targeted at were more difficult to engage; some community organisations would have liked more time to encourage members them to take part.

I know that there are so many other people out there that would truly benefit from attending the sessions regularly.

Working with families who experience high levels of stress and anxiety means there is a constant challenge in terms of supporting them to engage with activities.



Learning from the Together Fund

What did we learn?

These four areas are not the only inequalities that exist. We received applications aimed at supporting a wide range of people who didn't neatly fit in to the four inequalities set out by the Together Fund. We worked hard to help these community organisations, and have reflected on what this means for inequality across Somerset, and how we define it.

Trusting our community organisations. We learnt that our community organisations know our communities best, what they need, and what they want. We learnt to trust them to do what was best for their communities.

Learning how to be inclusive. During the projects, community organisations learnt about what worked, and what needed to be adapted, for the groups they were supporting. This led to projects being tweaked and changed throughout.

“We are going to introduce times for different age ranges. This will also help to keep numbers smaller and keep a calmer atmosphere for those who have sensory needs.”

Short term nature of the funding means sustainability is an issue.

It was often unclear if there would be another round of Together Fund funding, which made it difficult to plan for SASP and our community organisations. The short term nature of the funding that did exist means it can be difficult to continue a project, particularly when working with vulnerable groups.

“The short term nature of the funding, you just get started and build a community and then have to stop. It would be great for longer term funds or signposting to help continue the projects.”

Learning from the Together Fund

What's next for tackling inequalities in Somerset?

The impact of the Together Fund has been great. However, we don't want it to stop here. We are exploring ways to build on our learning from this fund, and embed it into our work on tackling inequalities in Somerset. Key to this is ensuring sustainability: we are supporting organisations to build on what they have already done by developing workforce, signposting to funding, and using new relationships and partnerships. We are also working to do more research about what our communities want, and opening up more conversations about how to embed physical activity in organisations and their projects.

We'd like to thank all the community organisations we funded, our funders Sport England and the National Lottery, and our staff who helped deliver the Together Fund.





Together
Fund



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THE
NATIONAL
LOTTERY



**SPORT
ENGLAND**

