



Active Hastings – Mid-Year Update 21/22

Aims of the project:

To improve health and wellbeing, and to reduce health inequalities in Hastings by increasing access and participation in physical activity interventions.

To utilise physical activity as a driver for community development and building social capital in Hastings

To develop the physical activity sector in Hastings through effective communication, networking, and capacity building.

To build the physical activity evidence base at a local level.

HBC Work to Date:

The first half of the 2021/22 period has continued to provide challenges related to Covid-19 that have had to be overcome. With the country starting to open up again, measures were put in place to reintroduce people to group physical activity outside of their homes. We were conscious that not everyone was ready to return to face-to-face activity, so an online presence was continued through Pilates and low intensity lunchtime sessions. On going discussions took place throughout the year with regular participants, to determine the feeling of the groups, and most of the face-to-face sessions have now resumed, but are being continually monitored and adapted to ensure that all participants and instructors feel safe. As well as revitalising previous projects that had to be put on hold or reduced during 2020/21, we also worked with some new partners to create new opportunities for residents to be active. This report will highlight some of the activities and projects that have been delivered so far in 2021.

Website Development

During this period we have worked with Hastings Borough Council's web team to redevelop the Active Hastings pages of the website. The new pages provide a searchable database of activities, which can be search based on activity type or target audience. The web pages were soft launched at the end of November and with 96 activities uploaded. A smartsheet for instructors and clubs to complete has been sent out to approximately another 150 delivery contacts to invite them to include their information on the website. It has also been promoted through the Hastings and St Leonards Coach Forum (facebook group), which was created last year as part of the workforce development project. The aim is that these web pages will be a comprehensive guide to sport and physical activity in Hastings. This will be a useful tool for local referral organisations, as well as individual residents. We have already received very positive feedback regarding the website from ESCC Children's Services and Hastings Men's Network. We will be doing a wider launch of the web pages, promoting to individuals and local service in the new year.

Physical Activity Workforce Investment Programme

Active Hastings has continued to develop and deliver the Active Sussex/Sport England funded Workforce Investment Programme, using the insight gathered from the resident and coach surveys that were carried out in 2019/20. The Workforce Investment Programme aims to develop a network of coaches and instructors who are fully equipped to support the most inactive residents of Hastings to become more physically active. The project aims to target specific groups who are less likely to be active, such as people with long term health conditions or people living in areas of high deprivation.

The funding provided by the Workforce Development programme in 2021 has enabled us to support more local instructors to gain new qualifications and develop new targeted session.

Funding provided to local personal trainer, Adam Shaw, enabled him to achieve his Level 4 qualification in Cancer Rehabilitation at the end of 20/21. In June, an initial 12-week Cancer Rehabilitation programme was launched, funded by an Orbit Housing grant, secured by Active Hastings. Following the initial 12-week course, Active Hastings has temporarily picked up the funding of the session, as it has proved invaluable to those attending. As well as the physical benefits associated with being physically active, participants have report significant benefits to their mental health through gaining a supportive group of people in similar situations to themselves, as well as through the physical activity itself. We have currently agreed funding for the sessions until March 2022, but are looking for longer term funding opportunities, and hope to be able to secure this in the new year. Adam is also keen to further develop his knowledge and work with people with other long-term conditions. We are currently assessing the gaps that exist locally and will then be supporting Adam to achieve the required qualifications to fill at least one of the identified gaps.



Two of the three instructors that were funded to do the Level 3 qualification in Exercise Referral have now completed the qualification and are utilising this within their current sessions. One of the instructors, Zara Riseborough, has used this as a stepping-stone to go on to start her Level 4 qualification in Cancer Rehabilitation. She has also started two chair-based exercise rehabilitation classes, which are fully booked each week and are hugely benefiting the people who attend them. The class supports participants with a wide range of conditions, such as arthritis, hip replacements and cancer. A video case study of this class is currently being produced by United Magic Studio, commissioned by the Workforce Investment programme. This will be available early in the new year. Zara will continue to work with Active Hastings in 2022, and we plan to continue investing in her to enable her to support participants with a wider range of long term conditions.

In 20/21 we funded an instructor, Catherine Taylor, to gain a qualification in Exercise for Older Adults. During this year, we secured funding from Orbit Housing to enable her to deliver a 12-week programme at Broomgrove Community Centre. These sessions launched in August and are gaining new participants each week. The sessions are funded by Orbit until Christmas. In the new year, the funding will be picked up by Big Local – North East Hastings, following a successful grant application which Active Hastings wrote on behalf of Catherine and her charity, Pindrop Theatre. Catherine is keen to further utilise her qualification and is hoping to launch a dance fitness session for older people at the Stade Hall in the new year. We have provided a small amount of match funding and supported her to write an application form for the Foreshore Trust grants programme, to fund these sessions from January to July 2022. We will find out if this funding application is successful in the new year.



In our previous report, stated that we had supported one of the leaders of the Hastings Run Talk Run programme to achieve a Run Leader qualification. We also

stated that funding was sourced to develop a second session in Hollington in June. Unfortunately, that session was not well attended, so was put on pause. We are hoping to utilise the remaining funding to launch a Running for Mental Wellbeing session in the new year.



The Workforce Investment fund also enabled us to upskill members of the Active Hastings team, which has allowed us to deliver new activities. Heidi Tambeh was funded to achieve her Level 3 Personal Training qualification, which qualified her to lead adult weight management sessions, discussed later in this report. We have also funded one of our causal sports workers, who is supporting the weight management programme, to do the same course. He will be qualified early in 2022.

Eugenie Demeza has also completed a Pilates for Injuries, and a Reformer course, which will enable her to offer new sessions to support people with injuries in 2022.

Eugenie and Cath Donovan were also funded to achieve a Level 4 qualification in Social Marketing from the National Social Marketing Centre (NSMC). Following the success of this course, a half day introduction to social marketing was

delivered by the NSMC specifically for Active Hastings, which was attended by a further 5 members of the Active Hastings team, and colleagues from Active Sussex, Wave Leisure and Hastings Borough Council Regeneration team. The learnings from these courses are being incorporated into the ongoing work by the teams.

The Hastings and Rother Coach Forum has continued to be a useful resource during 2021. The Facebook group provides a platform for us to share information with a wide range of instructors and sports coaches. Throughout the year we have used this to ensure that instructors are aware of training opportunities, funding opportunities, current campaigns and relevant news. Examples from November include promotion of the CIMSPA ReTrain to Retain offer, Diabetes UK article on childhood obesity, promotion of a job opportunity with Sustrans, promotion of Foreshore Trust funding and Big Local NE Hastings funding, promotion of the new Sussex Project 500 Coaching Network and the This Girl Can Sussex forum.

The Workforce Investment project will continue for the remainder of 2021/22, providing further training grants to instructors who are new to the programme, and supporting previous recipients to set up sessions. The focus on participants with long term conditions will continue. We are currently offering training grants for participants who wish to gain a qualification in Covid Rehabilitation, as we are keen that our local instructors are well placed to support people recovering from Covid-19 over the coming year.

Youth Activities

Relaxation of Covid-19 measures this year, has allowed our youth programme to return to full capacity. However, we have continued to deliver all our activities outside. Reduction of the risk of Covid-19 is one factor for this decision, but we have also found that the outdoor sessions are more successful at engaging with the young people from the most deprived areas. Funded through grants from Safer Hastings Partnership, Sussex Police Crime Commissioner, Hastings Opportunity Area and Optivo Housing, 7 sessions per week have taken place throughout the year in some of the most deprived areas of the town. We continue to work closely with partners to ensure that sessions are in the places that needed them the most. In particular, have worked with community safety partners to address issues around anti-social behaviour and drug dealing. The team have had good success with engaging young people who are known to the police and supported them to take part in more positive activities, at least on the nights that we are in the area.



Since April 2021, the team have engaged 312 young people, up to the age of 16 in neighbourhood sports sessions this year, with 1773 attendances at sessions. Of these participants, 29% live within areas that fall within the 1% most deprived SOAs nationally. 66% of participants live within the 10% most deprived areas nationally. 30% of these participants stated that they weren't meeting the recommended amount of physical activity each week (an increase of 3% from 20/21).

During the school Easter and Summer holidays, the team delivered 13 holiday activity and food (HAF) sessions, which provided 4 hours of sport and craft activities and a warm meal to young people in receipt of benefit-related free school meals. Meals were provided by Hands of Hope charity. 190 different young people took part in these sessions, and 291 free meals were provided. 78% of young people attending these sessions live within areas that fall within



the 10% most deprived nationally. These sessions were funded by ESCC's as part of the national HAF programme. As well as drawing down funding for our own sessions, we were also successful at drawing down funding for Project Rewild, who ran a further 12 sessions during the Easter and Summer holidays, engaging 147 young people and providing 213 free meals. During this period, we were successful securing funding for Active Hastings and Project Rewild to run 4 sessions over the Christmas holidays. We will also be applying to run during the February half term in 2022.

Funding from Hastings Opportunity Area in February allowed us to also work with young people in the most deprived areas of Hollington on a 1-2-1 basis. The children were provided with their own set of equipment, which included a throwing and

catching set, a frisbee and a football or basketball. They were also provided with lots of ideas of ways that they can keep active at home using this equipment and other things they will have around the house. Prior to the schools going back, these sessions were the only interaction that some of the young people had with others outside of their home, and their physical activity levels were very low. These 1-2-1 sessions continued after the schools went back, to support any families who were not ready to return to group sessions. These were funded until July 2021 and the team worked with 82 young people between February and July. Most of these young people were known to the team through previous street sport sessions and were targeted as they were identified as being the most in need.



Active Hastings Academy

The Active Hastings Academy, which provides a sport-based employability programme, has faced some challenges during 2021 and the future of this project is currently uncertain. Face to face delivery was required for this project, so no delivery could take place until social distancing rules were relaxed in April. The first course took place in April and May, with 5 participants and was a resounding success for those attendees. Participants went from needing constant reminders to attend, to fully committing to the course by the end, and all participants have since moved into employment. However, recruitment to the programme has been particularly challenging, despite engaging with several local organisations and agencies working with unemployed members of the community. This has been a problem for all the ESF funded CHART (Connecting Hastings and Rother Together) programmes; it is not unique to our project. The project was given a further challenge in August when the lead worker handed in his notice to pursue an alternative career pathway. We have since been unable to recruit a suitable replacement to deliver this project, and with the funding time limited, we are currently unsure as to whether we will be able to continue the programme. We are currently looking at our options and a decision will be made before the end of the year.



Adult Weight Management Programme



In June, Active Hastings took on the additional role of delivering 12-week adult weight management programmes in Hastings, working in partnership with One You East Sussex. Three programmes were created: Waistband of Brothers for men only; Flab-U-Less for women only; and a mixed session called Lean In To It. Being well established in the borough, we were quickly able to recruit to the programmes and the first courses launched in August. At this point, 5 courses have started with 81 people taking part. Two of the courses have finished, with 22 of the 28 starters completing the 12-week programme. The average weight loss for these participants was 6.4kg, equating to 5.7% of their starting body weight. The greatest weight loss

through the programme was a fantastic 20.2kgs which equated to 17.2% of the gentleman's starting weight, bring him down from a BMI of 33.3 to 27.5.

Three more courses are due to start in January, and an additional men's course will start in February. It is expected that approximately 150 people will have started the courses by the end of the year.



Additional Work Areas

- Regular weekly sessions delivered by the Active Hastings team that have continued throughout this year include walking football, over 50s aerobics, online pilates, online stretch and move, over 27s football, exercise for people with Parkinsons and girls football.

- A funding application to Sport England's This Girl Can fund was successful and will provide £3420 towards supporting new mums in areas of high deprivation to be active, through giving them the knowledge, confidence, resources, and support network needed to kickstart an active lifestyle.
- The SPICES (Scaling-up Packages of Interventions for Cardiovascular disease prevention in selected sites in Europe and Sub-Saharan Africa) pilot project, delivered in partnership with Brighton and Sussex Medical School (BSMS) was completed in September. 11 volunteers were trained in motivational behavioural change and healthy lifestyle skills and then provided one-to-one sessions to people within their own community, supporting them to set and achieve goals regarding their own health. A report regarding the outcomes of the project is being produced by BSMS and will be available in March. Aside from the specific outcomes of the SPICES project, in terms of supporting the project participants, there have been some additional benefits to Active Hastings' involvement. Four of the volunteers engaged through this programme, have gone on to work with Active Hastings as part of other programmes. Five took part in the chair-based exercise course, funded by the Workforce Investment fund. One of these was also the instructor previously mentioned, who went on to achieve the Exercise for Older People qualification and set up new sessions in Broomgrove. Another is currently completing the L3 Exercise Referral qualification through the Workforce Investment programme. One volunteer joined the Active Hastings Academy employability programme, and successfully went on to gain employment.
- Providing on-going support for other organisations. Examples of the type of support provided include:
 - Accessing funding on behalf of PURE FIT to deliver activities for girls in schools, as they were not eligible to draw down the funding themselves.
 - Supporting Sustrans' "Bikes for Job Seekers" project by linking them with CHART employability training providers.
 - Providing links between Active Sussex and local projects to deliver the Tackling Inequalities programme.
 - Signposting to instructors and clubs to appropriate funding opportunities and supporting with bid writing or checking where required.
 - Providing advise to other funding partners regarding Hastings based projects, e.g. providing advise to the Community Safety Manager for sport themed applications to the JAG fund.
 - Providing marketing support to local projects by connecting them with appropriate local services e.g. housing associations, mental health partners etc.

Plans for the remainder of 2021/22

As we continue to navigate the challenges brought about by the coronavirus pandemic, it is hoped that delivery of activities will be able to continue as they are currently, however, all plans will remain fluid to meet changing needs and requirements. Key focuses as we enter 2022 are as follows:

- Continue to facilitate and develop the Active Hastings Partnership and the Hastings and Rother Coach Network.
- Refresh of the Hastings Sport and Physical Activity Strategy.
- Continue to provide affordable and accessible opportunities for the least active groups to access sport and physical activity, with a particular focus on participants with long term conditions or other barriers to physical activity.
- Continue to develop the local physical activity workforce through training grants and support for session development, with a particular focus on participants with long term health conditions.
- Continually improve access to information through social media and expansion of the database on the new Active Hastings website. The aim is to provide a comprehensive database of physical activity opportunities in the borough by the end of the financial year.
- Reduce holiday inactivity and hunger in areas of high deprivation through a HAF funded holiday programme during the Christmas and February half term holidays.