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THE ACTIVE THROUGH FOOTBALL PLAYBOOK: A GUIDE TO THE DEVELOPMENT AND IMPLEMENTATION OF PLACE-BASED PHYSICAL ACTIVITY INTERVENTIONS



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Section 1 – Introduction to the Active Through Football Playbook

This section provides you with an introduction to the Active Through Football (ATF) Playbook, a guide to its use, and an overview of each section.

1.1. What is Active Through Football?

ATF is a national physical activity intervention programme from Sport England, funded by the National Lottery, and delivered by The Football Foundation. The purpose of ATF is to increase participation in physical activity in areas of high deprivation in England through a place-based approach, managed in each locality by a lead organisation and a consortium of local stakeholders. The Football Foundation's ambition to 'do things differently' reflects the need to work in innovative and creative ways in order to address the persistent and complex challenge of reducing physical inactivity. Participation in football is a desirable outcome, but the programme embeds locally driven decision making which enables ATF in each 'place' to respond accordingly to the specific sporting and social needs of their selected target groups: there is not a one size fits all model.

1.2 Who is this Playbook for?

This Playbook is for anyone who is developing a place-based physical activity intervention programme. The aim is to help you encourage inactive people to adopt a more active lifestyle that will improve their health. The information provided will be useful for those delivering and/or managing those programmes, with specific sections likely to be more or less instructive depending on your specific role. The Playbook will be useful for those new to this way of working, as well as experienced practitioners looking for new ideas or validation for their existing practice.

1.3 Why should I use the Active Through Football Playbook?

'The Playbook' has been developed through extensive research and collaboration with existing ATF providers. Each section reflects key learning from ATF programmes throughout England and draws upon the experience and expertise of those 'on the ground' to provide an in-depth guide to support the development and delivery of your place-based physical activity provision. The Playbook is informed by practitioners' experience of 'what works' and the existing academic research evidence base, and therefore provides a trustworthy and authoritative combination of theoretical and practical guidance.

You may find the Playbook useful for the following reasons:

- A starting point for team discussion and planning.
- A resource to support you and your team to understand the key processes involved in place-based working to address physical inactivity.
- A tool that provides instruction and guidance developing place-based practice
- A guide to support you and your team to work through stages of programme design and delivery.
- A reference to explain and justify your approach to others.
- A source of evidence to ensure that you build on what has worked in the past.

1.4 How to use this Playbook

Ideally you would read the Playbook from start to finish, but if this is not possible you should select the section that is most useful in relation to your current stage of programme development. The Playbook is likely to be most instructive when specific sections are selected as a focus for wider team meetings and planning discussions.

The Playbook advocates a 'theory of change' approach ([see section 5](#)) underpinned by theories of behaviour change ([see section 4](#)). This will help you map and manage how your programme will achieve the desired outcomes through activities designed to enable behaviour change. The other sections of this Playbook address key elements of a theory of change central to place-based physical activity interventions. Below is a summary of the seven key processes and their corresponding section in the Playbook.

Process A – Establish a consortium ([section 2](#))

Process B – Conduct initial community engagement ([section 3](#))

Process C – On-going community engagement ([section 3](#))

Process D – Design your programmes for behaviour change (sections [4](#) and [5](#))

Process E – Workforce development ([section 6](#))

Process F – Participant retention and longer-term physical activity (sections [4](#) and [6](#))

Process G – Ongoing programme management (sections [6](#) and [7](#))

The Playbook does not provide a checklist of 'things you need to do' to increase physical activity, there is not a 'one size fits all' programme. Every community is different, which means your practice must be tailored to those local places and circumstances. The Playbook is the resource to support you in adopting a place-based approach.

In each section there are exercises, activities, and guidelines to support you in thinking through how you will tailor provision for your specific area and communities.

Tackling physical inactivity is complex and challenging, and the Playbook reflects the need to plan thoroughly and purposefully about programme development and delivery. It may pose challenging questions or introduce new ideas that take some time to get to grips with, but this is all part of 'doing things differently', as [Sport England's Local Delivery Pilots](#) demonstrate.

1.5 Playbook Sections

Section 2: How and why to adopt a consortium approach

The Playbook advocates a consortium approach, bringing together a group of key stakeholders to pool their expertise and resources. This section answers key questions you may have when establishing a consortium, the benefits of doing so, and how to manage its development as the needs of your programme change over time.

Section 3: How and why to adopt an asset-based approach to provision development

This section provides information and guidance on the use of an asset-based approach to the development of physical activity programmes in a geographically and socially identifiable 'place'. The section is structured in a way that answers common questions people have when

establishing and working in an asset-based approach.

Section 4: How and why to underpin your work with behaviour change theory

This section provides an introduction to how theories can help you to understand the factors which lead to behaviour change. The three theories of behaviour change outlined here provide a choice of frameworks that should underpin all aspects of your work.

Section 5: What a theory of change is and why you should you create one

This section provides an introduction to the principles and practicalities of developing a theory of change for your programme. It provides an example theory of change as a template for place-based physical activity programmes using on an asset-based approach.

Section 6: Dealing with ongoing programme management

The focus of this section is on three aspects central to an asset-based approach, rather than routine project management. It covers ongoing community engagement; recruitment, training and deployment of volunteers; and retaining participants.

Section 7: How and why to monitor and evaluate you work

This section is designed to enable you to undertake your own monitoring and evaluation of your programme. It provides a broad guide to the type of information usually collected, but the final decision about relevant information is yours.

[Glossary](#): A handy reference list of key words and their definitions used in the Active Through Football Playbook.

Section 2: How and why to adopt a consortium approach

This section addresses the key questions you may have when establishing a consortium, the benefits of doing so, and how to manage some common challenges. Many working in community sport and physical activity programmes may be unfamiliar with working with a consortium, so in this section we offer guidance to help you build a productive one.

2.1 Context

The Playbook advocates a consortium approach, bringing together a **partnership of stakeholders and pooling their resources (knowledge, networks and finances)**. Such a consortium might include local organisations from the worlds of football, local government, health and third sector groupings within the selected place collaborating to work towards a common goal.

The expectation is that by working together mutual benefits can be delivered for the various organisations involved as well as the communities that have been identified. These benefits would come from making best use of their varied resources and the different perspectives that different these organisations can provide.

It may be possible for you to build on established partnerships between organisations already working together, in which case relationships of trust may already exist; in other cases the consortium will have to be built from scratch.

Figure 1: Questions When Establishing the Consortium



Exercise 1

Consider the questions raised by the thought bubbles in the consortium meeting represented in Figure 1. We will go through these in turn in 2.2, but see what issues are triggered in your own mind first.

Remember, people in the consortium need to feel reassured that the issues they reflect have been resolved.

2.2 The Nature of the Consortium

This section provides a discussion of common questions identified in Figure 1.

2.2.1 'What are we doing here?': Clarity of purpose

- A benefit of a consortium approach is that it encourages partners to see challenges from a different perspective. Different stakeholder perspectives mean it is important to resolve key questions at the start, always recognising that they may need to be re-evaluated throughout the course of the project.
- This is especially important if you are accountable to an external funding agency. Two common dilemmas are whether the provision needs to be:
 - 'All about football' (or whichever sport you are working with) or persuading people to become physically active by any means necessary ('more than football'). This is where a consideration of the mechanisms in your theory of change should prove particularly helpful ([see Section 5](#)).
 - Meeting the needs of your funder or those expressed by the different members of the community who you are trying to get physically active. It is these voices from the community that need to be central to your initial community engagement ([Section 3](#)).
- It is common for a consortium to encounter dilemmas like this, so do not worry; you should worry if you cannot get the partners to discuss them and reach agreement!

2.2.2 'What are we going to get out of this?': Shared Purpose

Whether it is for funding, influence, PR, or a range of other reasons, organisations usually get involved in an initiative because it appears to be a good way of achieving their priorities.

When establishing a consortium, all partners need to feel that the programme is contributing to their own strategic objectives in some way. Without this motivation their contribution to the initiative is likely to be undermined and they may become token members.

However, partners should not just feel that the initiative is purely about their own organisation's agenda. All should ensure that the needs of the community are well understood and provide a clear direction when making decisions.

- Keep all members up to speed with information from your community engagement exercise (see [Sections 3](#) and [6](#)).
- Periodically revisit your strategic outcomes (more on this in [section 4](#)) to avoid 'mission drift'.

Exercise 2: Moving Towards a Clear and Shared Purpose

It is a good idea to ask consortium members for their support in resolving difficult issues rather than simply asking them to 'sign-up' to a prepared plan. Central here are their ownership (of the strategy) and trust (between members of the consortium). So, some of the questions you might ask them to address are:

- Have the most appropriate 'places' been chosen?
- What is known about the different communities in the area? What are the known resources?
- What can consortium members contribute, not just in terms of finance, but communications, networks, and experience?
- Who is best positioned to take what decisions?
- Who is prepared to take what role? Try to win their commitment to more than simply attending periodic meetings of the consortium.
- How can fair representation and accountability be demonstrated?
- How can trust be built with local communities?

It is also a good idea to encourage people on the consortium to promote the benefits of this collaborative approach to others within their own organisation to encourage buy-in. They may be better able to do this if you invite them to join in one of the sessions once they start running.

2.2.3 'What am I doing here?': Contributing and Representing

- **Contribution** – It should be clear what each member is contributing to the success of the initiative in the target area. It is not just individual contributions that need to be considered, but what is provided by the collective mix (see Exercise 3 below for examples of what you might want to make sure are offered by members).
- **Changing Inputs** – Over the timespan of the initiative, it may become evident that the people able to win the bid, address the broad strategic challenge set by the funders, engage with people in the targeted communities and deliver provision on the ground are not necessarily the same. So, as the project evolves it may be necessary to re-evaluate the membership of the consortium to ensure a fit with changed requirements. It might be easier to raise matters about the makeup of the consortium if it is agreed at the outset that it should be an item for discussion at an annual meeting.
- **Clarity of Roles** – It may become necessary to modify the membership of the consortium and resolve who is doing what. This relates not just to individuals, but to the consortium itself and whether it has a strategic or operational function. Beware, too much of the latter may compromise the role of the programme manager, but consortium members who have local delivery skills are invaluable. So ensure that you consider how the consortium can best facilitate the role of the programme manager rather than restrict their autonomy.
- **Representation and Inclusion** – The question regarding 'why Sunita' is not in the meeting (exercise 2.1) is not to criticise them for not turning-up, but to raise the issue of who is invited to be part of the consortium.

Membership

Simply being vocal should not be a good enough reason for someone to be included on the consortium, but for example, if a member grew-up in the community, has a network of connections there and runs a CIC (community interest company) they might be extremely valuable to the consortium. Their appointment would not only help provide insight to inform strategy and delivery but may also positively influence the way the programme is regarded in the community, promoting trust between the consortium and the community. Be aware of local divisions that may upset some other members of the community who regard those on the consortium unfavorably.

Exercise 3: What do you expect a partner to bring to the consortium?

Here are some of the things people have said they want partners to contribute to the consortium. Consider how important each of these is to your initiative and who can provide it. Have you got a good balance?

- Political influence to win approval for the project and funding.
- Ability to conduct community engagement.
- Understanding of the target place and community groups
- Financial support
- Strategic vision
- Management skills/support (including mentoring the programme manager)
- Facilities/venues to host participation
- Ready-established networks and associated legitimacy
- Credibility in the community and help in building trust
- Referrals of potential participants
- Advice on effective means of delivery
- Skills development for workers, volunteers and participants

Don't forget there is a difference between the organisation and a person from the organisation.

Each partner may have a different mix of those attributes, but it is important that all should be buy into the way you are developing place-based approach.

- Which of the partners is best placed to secure the outcomes and impacts that are identified in your theory of change (see sections [4](#) and [5](#))?

- **Flexibility and Transition** – Consortium membership is not just a matter for consideration at the beginning of the initiative, but should be reviewed periodically to make sure it is evolving in line with the initiative itself.
- Some members of the original consortium may have been there because of what they thought it would deliver for their organisation or for members of the community. If they either achieve that or realise it is unlikely to happen, they may drift away. That is not necessarily a bad thing if they have already contributed and now gained the benefit they had hoped for.

2.2.4 'Who can I trust?': Organisational Trust

- The asset-based community development approach ([section 3](#)) has been developed in the knowledge that in disadvantaged communities there is often widespread lack of trust in local and national institutions, e.g. the council. So, discuss with your team how the organisations involved in your initiative are regarded in the local community and the implications this has for programme delivery.
 - Setting out with a community engagement plan that has been carefully thought through should go some way to improving levels of trust by showing a genuine interest in local people. Ultimately, your credibility will only come subsequently with successful delivery.
 - It may be possible to reduce a lack of trust by changing the membership of the consortium to make room for respected local people and organisations.
 - Seeking out well known members of the community capable of playing the role of activists/champions/influencers and provide information and contacts, may facilitate communications and help with programme delivery.
 - Choosing the right people will promote trust and oil the wheels of winning acceptance for the programme.
- Trust (see Section 3) is also vital within the consortium; members need to feel able to trust the other members (and of course the funding agency).
- Trust improves and speeds up organisational decision making. Circumstances in which some of the partner organisations see themselves in competition with each other, or operate with a different mindset, may undermine the building of trust.
- Remember that trust between individuals may not be accompanied by a similar level of trust between their respective organisations. So even if the representatives on your consortium know and like the individual representing another organisation, be prepared to:
 - understand that they may not always be able to persuade 'their' organisation to act in line with what was decided in a consortium meeting; and
 - work to re-establish trust if that person moves to another job.

Feedback from some of the ATF projects seemed to suggest that trust between partners was increased if not all the key roles lay within one organisation. Whether or not you think that would work for you, it would be a good idea to make sure at the outset that all partners are clear about their role (with the understanding that roles should be reassessed through the programme). This should help to ensure continued commitment.

2.2.5 'Who's making the decisions around here?': Decision Making

- The Asset-Based Community Development Approach introduced in [Section 3](#) requires at least some commitment to the idea of co-production (see [Section 6](#) for more on this). Some co-production is achieved simply by bringing different organisations together in the consortium. However, in community development practice the term typically refers to encouraging 'the community' to engage in shaping provision.
- Typically in initiatives like yours there is tension between:
 - having key decisions made by a smaller executive group within the partnership reporting back to the wider consortium (highly centralised); and
 - on the other hand where local steering groups including community representation in each target place make decisions appropriate to that community (highly decentralised).
- These approaches can both work, but both require clarity of purpose. Make sure you address this early on or you are likely to end-up with your programme manager complaining about not

being allowed to get on and meet the needs of the community.

2.2.6 'What have we learnt?': Organisational Learning

- Many sports projects in the community receive only short-term funding. Those that receive longer term funding may have the benefit of being given time and space to make mistakes. The challenge is to make sure that there is a process in place to allow lessons to be learnt from those mistakes.
- An extended timescale offers great potential for organisational learning as long as there is some form of review built into the consortium's processes to reduce the chance of repeating those mistakes by refining practice.
- Funders tend to require monitoring procedures to be followed throughout the programme. Rather than seeing this as a burden, try to reframe those procedures so that they play a greater part in encouraging positive questioning of practice. This kind of tracking, reviewing and questioning will be a recurring theme throughout the Playbook.

Exercise 4

As a consortium, discuss how you will create a culture of continuous learning throughout the implementation of different stages of your programme development. The focus here is not just 'if' your programme appears to work, but 'why'. You could:

- Have a standing agenda item to discuss what you can learn from your successes and failures, and how this should guide future actions. This item could be on the agenda for your consortium meeting, but also local delivery staff meetings
- Reviewing your monitoring data in consortium meetings and invite comments.
- Invite delivery staff or other stakeholders to a consortium meeting to share their experience and lessons learnt. This may provide another perspective on programme implementation successes and challenges
- Encourage or request staff to complete a periodic reflection log to capture what has been learnt. Such information can be incorporated into your theory of change [\[Section 5\]](#) and monitoring and evaluation plans [\[section 7\]](#)
- Plan for how you will use events and staff development days to highlight how reflection and learning have shaped the development and success of provision. It's not just about celebrating success, but also how you can learn and adapt following a failure
- Ensure that your reflections on learning lead to clearly defined actions for individuals and organisations.

2.3 Ensuring Productive Consortium Meetings

Everyone has their own ideas on this, but here are some commonly made points for you to consider:

- Getting the 'right' people involved. This can be awkward as if it is a consortium based on organisations, each organisation will choose who to send. You may have to live with a composition that you have inherited but you may be able to recruit other individuals directly.
- Invite suggestions for agenda items. Even if there are none, people have been offered a share in shaping the format of the meeting.
- Make sure everyone has their say. You might go formally round the table so no one individual feels they are being put on the spot.

- Encourage others to air their concerns. This is particularly hard for you and them if their concern implies a criticism of you. You could adopt the approach: ‘Let me understand what your concerns are and any suggestions you have for how I might address them’.
- Review what is and is not working well in the project, always with a view to ‘how can we make the whole project better’.
- Don’t let people leave without agreeing actions and deadlines.

2.4 Summary

- Consortiums offer the chance to pool resources with other organisations in order to achieve mutual benefits.
- For these benefits to be realised it is important that all members of the consortium agree on the purpose of the initiative and the outcomes.
- Partners need to be persuaded that they can all achieve their own objectives at the same time as securing the collective goals of the initiative. If a partner’s objectives are at odds with the collective goal, you may consider their role in the consortium.
- The consortium should clarify what each partner is going to contribute and encourage them to take a clear role so they identify more closely with the initiative. Because the needs of the project will evolve over time the membership of the consortium needs to be reviewed periodically to make sure it has the right mix.
- One of the most important challenges for a new consortium is to increase levels of trust, internally between the various organisations and the individuals representing them, and externally with local people in the target area.
- Make clear the basis for making decisions so that members know which will be taken centrally and which should be devolved towards the community.
- Make monitoring and evaluation your friend and use it to learn what works and why so that progress towards strategic outcomes can be kept under review ([see section 7](#)).

Further resources:

Greengage Consulting / IDEA (2009) Making Partnership Work Better in the Culture & Sport Sector: successful partnership working – a simple guide to improving how your partnership works. London: IDEA. <https://sportengland-production-files.s3.eu-west-2.amazonaws.com/s3fs-public/making-partnerships-work-better.pdf>

Or this from Get Doncaster Moving: <https://getdoncastermoving.org/uploads/gameplan-collaboration-kick-off-agenda-template.pdf?v=1676373316>

Learning from mistakes – Leila Jancovich and David Stevenson have written about learning from failure: Leila Jancovich & David Stevenson (2023) ‘Failures in Cultural Participation’ is published by Palgrave Macmillan. It can be downloaded free at: <https://link.springer.com/book/10.1007/978-3-031-16116-2>

Section 3 – Asset-based community approach

This section provides information and guidance on the use of an asset-based approach to the development of a physical activity programme in a geographically and socially identifiable 'place'. This section uses headings that reflect common questions people have when first encountering an asset-based approach. Like other sections, the [importance of trust](#) is emphasised throughout. An asset-based approach is typically seen as innovative way of working that overcomes many of the [limitations of traditional deficit-focused delivery models](#).

3.1 What do you mean by a community 'asset'?

Assets are the resources, skills, and capacities of individuals, organisations, and institutions within a particular place.

Assets are already 'there', but may need to be identified, recognised, uncovered, or fostered. Examples of common local assets could include a local religious leader, an allotment group, a local sports club, community centres, the high street, and a local park.

Assets can be social or material.

- Social:
 - the skills, knowledge and connections of local residents
 - the collective influence of local informal groups and clubs
 - public, private and not-for-profit organisations
 - the shared community stories, culture, and heritage
- Material:
 - the facilities and economic resources of public, private and not-for-profit organisations
 - the physical built and natural environment

3.2 What does an 'asset-based' approach mean?

Definition:

An asset-based approach is a guiding ethos and set of practical tools, providing a way to identify and mobilise community assets towards a shared vision of change

- An asset-based approach is a 'relationship-driven development path'
- The role of professionals on this path is 'identifying and connecting local people, capacities and skills in order to magnify their power and effectiveness for sustainable change'
- This is sometimes referred to as a strength-based approach, and contrasted with a deficit-focused approach ([see section 3.3](#))
- An asset-based approach starts from the perspective that communities are best supported by recognising, celebrating, and developing the assets that are already there.
- This requires practitioners to 'look again' at the people and place, and challenge their own understanding and perspective
- Practitioners' initial role is to identify existing and underutilised community assets (individual and collective, social and material)
- Because assets are already 'there', they potentially provide the ingredients for change that are

not reliant on external professionals or resources – a potentially more sustainable foundation for longer-term community change

- Professionals support processes whereby the capabilities of individuals and the community can come together around a shared vision for change and capitalise on new and existing networks and resources.
- Professionals support the strengthening of new and existing social connections.
- Communities come to define themselves as professionals become increasingly understanding of peoples' everyday lives, lived experiences, and social relationships.
- Working to connect multiple and varied assets means a focus on social relationships and relationship building is central.

Adopting an asset-based approach involves asking question like:

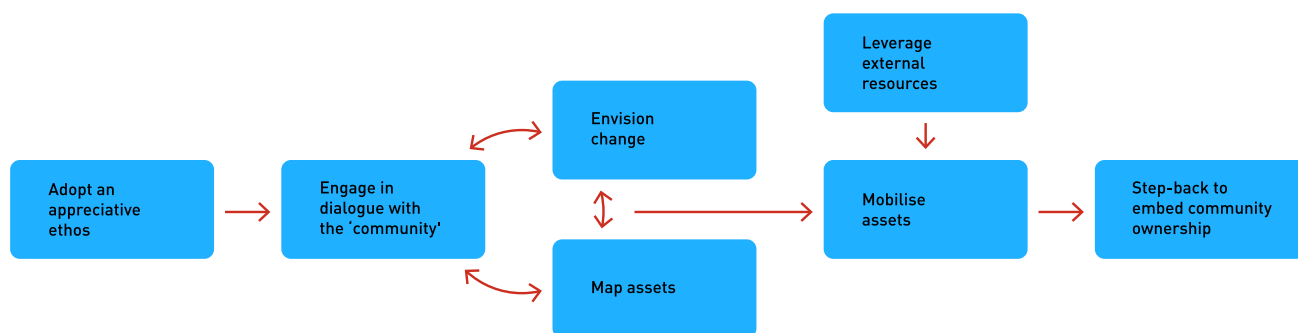
- What do people like about their community?
- What are people proud of in their community?
- In what ways do people interact and socialise?
- Who are the well-known, well-connected, and/or well-respected people?
- What groups and events already exist?
- What organisations and services are already active in this community?
- What social groups and networks are there?
- What are people proud of or have a strong sense of connection to?
- What places and spaces do people currently use?
- What places and spaces would community members be comfortable to use?

3.3 How do I adopt an asset-based approach?

- An asset-based approach can be broken down into a number of key processes and activities, these are illustrated below in Figure 2¹. The following sections provide detail on each of these processes.
- It is important to remember that this is not a one-way process. These activities should be continuously used and refined over the duration of provision.

¹Bates and Hylton (2021)

Figure 2: Key processes in an asset-based approach



The processes in Figure 2 are outlined below:

3.3.1 'Adopt an appreciative ethos'

- Adopting an appreciative approach means trying to see things from the perspective of local people.
- Understanding what residents view as important and valuable.
- It means seeking to understand the challenges that people may experience in becoming more socially and physically active
- It means recognising that professionals' expertise is not the only knowledge that counts when trying to improve the situation
- It also means recognising that professionals' traditional ways of working (a deficit approach) may actually be part of the problems encountered by residents.

3.3.2 'Engagement in dialogue with the community'

- Remember that there will probably be more than one community in a particular place
- Engaging with local people will help build a clearer picture of community life while also supporting practitioners to become trusted by local people.
- Building rapport and connections with people is essential in becoming trusted by local people and supporting them to change.
- There is no set number of conversations, time spent in the community, or number of people that you should engage with. Instead, view this process as an ongoing learning exercise for you and the team.
- Engaging in a non-judgmental and open-minded way is essential to help people feel comfortable and to talk about their experiences and perspectives.
- Focus on getting local people to 'tell their story' as a way for you to better understand their lived experience and perspective on being physically active.
- Use 'open-questions' to enable a flowing conversation (rather than 'closed-questions' that can be answered with a Yes or No). For example,
 - What is it like living in [place]?
 - What are the good things about [place]?
 - How does [issue or topic] affect you?
 - Help me understand [issue or topic]?

- You can seek clarification and deeper insight with follow up questions. For example,
 - It sounds like you feel...why is that?
 - What makes you say that?
 - Has that been tried before?
 - How do you think that could happen?
- You should engage with existing community groups as well as people in other community spaces (e.g., post offices, pubs, religious centres, or on the street)
- Consider how you can make yourself visible and active at existing community groups and events to help build relationships and become known as someone who genuinely cares about the community.

3.3.3 'Map assets'

- Asset mapping is a way to identify what is already 'there' in a community or place.
- The purpose of asset mapping is to identify the people, groups and resources that could contribute to sustainable physical activity provision
- An asset mapping activity can be completed by professionals but should be informed by insights throughout your community engagement work.
- Remember to tap into the insight and connections that your consortium partners provide (see [section 2](#))
- Your understanding of community assets will be stronger if you can tap into residents' knowledge and perspectives during the mapping process.
- Asset mapping should be done early in the community engagement process but be seen as an ongoing activity to better understand the community.

Asset Mapping exercise A:

- Create an inventory of physical assets. These could be dedicated sport and leisure facilities, but also parks and green space, schools, village halls, and religious centres.
- At this stage it is important to take the broadest possible view of where social and sporting activities do and could take place (e.g. car parks, cul-de-sacs, vacant buildings)
- You could even locate these physical assets on a large printed map of the local area to help you understand their distribution and the distances and journeys residents would take to access them.

Asset Mapping exercise B:

- Create an inventory of local groups and institutions operating in that place.
- These should be conventional physical activity stakeholders and those with no current connection to a physical activity agenda. Again, these could be located on a large printed map of the local area to help identify areas with more or less activity. When identifying these assets, note the following:
 - What is the purpose of that group or institution?
 - What activities or services do they offer: when, where, how, and why?
 - What is the best way to engage with that group or institution?
 - Are there any specific communities or population that they are trusted by?
 - How can you develop 'an ask and an offer' to ensure that working together would be mutually beneficial?

Asset Mapping exercise C:

- Identify well-known and trusted individuals in the community. These could be religious leaders, people who already deliver welfare, social, or sporting services, or simply someone who is well thought of and trusted. When mapping, note the following:
 - How is this person active in community life?
 - What skills, knowledge, or capabilities does this individual possess?
 - What would be the best way to engage with this individual?
 - How could this individual support you to engage with and become trusted by the community?
 - How could you support this individual to complement what they already do well?
 - How could they help with envisioning community change?

3.3.4 'Envision change'

- Envisioning change is the process of understanding what, if anything, local people would like to change in relation to social and physical activity opportunities.
- This requires practitioners to be sensitised to peoples' readiness to engage in particular types of social and physical activity.
- Use the information provided alongside the theories of behaviour change ([section 4](#)) to help understand what may motivate people to change and why.
- Pay attention to the language people use when talking about change. Consider change-orientated questions like:
 - What would make [place] better?
 - How would you like things to be different?
- For larger groups, consider running your own World café event to bring people together and stimulate a collective desire for change. Consider questions like:
 - Who are we as a community?
 - What do we value most as a community?
 - What social and physical activity opportunities would we like our community to have in 1/2/5 years?
 - What could you do to make this happen?
- During such activities it is essential to maintain a balance of power between 'external' professionals and the community. Simply imposing a view or decision will likely undermine your efforts to build trust and community ownership.

3.3.5 'Mobilise assets'

- Once the previous processes are well established, it is time to try to make things happen.
- Using your knowledge of what people would like and the existing assets, figure out how to create new opportunities to socialise and/or become more physically active
- Remember: for those most disaffected from physical activity it is likely the opportunity to socialise and have fun that will motivate them in the first instance ([see section 4](#)).

Exercise 5

- As a team, plan how you can create opportunities for people to begin socialising as part of the process of creating opportunities for them and groups to become more physically active.
 - For those most disaffected or disengaged from physical activity, simply expecting them to join a physical activity group is may be unrealistic.
 - Instead, you should support people to become socially active before they can become physically active.

- Consider how you can create social and sporting opportunities at the right time, in the right place, in the right style.
- Identifying 'the right person' to deliver activities is key to creating an opportunity that people feel is 'for them' with someone who is 'like them' (see below and [section 4](#)).
- Consider how you can connect those in the community with existing groups and institutions that they may benefit from engaging with.

Exercise 6

- Consider how you can get people talking about a group or new opportunity.
- Discuss and decide how you will create a 'social buzz' around provision, online and through word-of-mouth, will help to attract participants whilst also helping physical activity be perceived as a normal thing for people in that community to do.

3.3.6 'Leverage external resources'

- This is the point at which professionals' expertise and networks can help bring together additional resources and people to support the creation of social and PA opportunities.
- Consider what support and resources your consortium can provide to help realise locally driven programme design.
- Consider how other local partnerships can or should contribute to the sustainability of the programme

3.3.7 'Gradually step back to consolidate community ownership'

- Different programmes will require differing levels of support. However, the overall ambition of an asset-based approach is to help to establish groups and activities that are largely self-sustaining, owned and driven by the community.
- With an asset-based approach, ongoing professional support and resources are 'on tap' rather than 'on top'.
- Encouraging enthusiastic participants to support your session delivery or organisation may be a way to reduce their reliance on you and your team.

3.4 A word of warning about some of the ways an asset-based approach has been used incorrectly

- Asset-based approaches emphasise the potential power of communities and their assets in stimulating desirable community change

- However, a focus on assets should not detract from or present a ‘rose-tinted view’ of the severity and depth of social problems.
 - Professionals should continue to identify and try to alleviate material and social inequalities
 - An asset-based approach offers an alternative way to understand and work to address these social issues, often contrasted with a deficit approach.
 - An asset-based approach is not a way to simply pass the responsibility for change to those least able to instigate it and most in need of ongoing professional support
 - An asset-based approach is also not a justification for reductions in externally managed public services upon which many communities depend.

3.5 What are the main difference between an asset-based approach and deficit-focused provision?

Table 1 below provides summary of some key differences.

Practice may not purely reflect one or the other, but may embody some aspects of both to greater or lesser degrees.

Table 1: Moving from a deficit approach to an asset-based approach	
Deficit-focused provision	Asset-based approach
← ----- →	
Professional identification of problems to be solved	Creating a shared community vision for change meeting their needs
External agencies have the solution	Local knowledge is essential in shaping response
Practitioners as sole experts	Different stakeholder expertise valued
Instigated by those ‘outside’ the community	Community-driven change, supported by ‘outsiders’ with access to resources
Success defined by professionals	Community defined success
People and places identified as lacking or deficient	Identification of ‘what’s good’ in the place and its underused resources
Residents as service consumers	Residents as active citizens
Communities defined by outsiders	Communities define themselves
Agenda determined by outsiders	Agenda co-produced with communities
Power remains with professional agencies	Decentralised decision making and community ownership through co-production

3.6 Some limitations of the commonly used deficit-focused approach?

- Addressing community issues and needs should still be at the forefront of professionals' minds. However, a focus purely on community needs can also cultivate a deficit-view of communities, whereby people and places are understood as lacking, deficient, or even problematic.

Exercise 7

- Think about the way you and your team talk about the identified 'place', the community and people you hope to work with.
- During meetings, make a list of commonly used words or phrases and consider how this (often unintentionally) characterises the people you hope to engage.
 - For example, when we talk about 'deprived' communities we can stigmatise and over-simplify the complex situation people experience, and as a result, our understanding of people and place.
 - Or as another example, consider the common phrase 'hard to reach'. Who is actually hard to reach, community residents or policymakers?
- As a team, decide what language you think is appropriate and accurate to use

Exercise 8

- You should make use of official data (e.g. Indices of Multiple Deprivation, Sport England's Active Lives survey) as a valuable tool in narrowing down and understanding your place and population focus, but be aware, they cannot provide insight into the detailed realities of life in different communities. Data can also present a simplistic view of the situation and lead practitioners to view people and places as deficient and a long list of problems to be solved.
- Plan for how you will ensure that you complement data-driven insights with localised asset-based forms of insight (see community asset mapping exercises below).

- In the process of intervening, professionals may unintentionally 'play-up' or exaggerate the nature of problems in the pursuit of scarce funding and resources (a funding version of 'squeaky wheel gets the oil').
- Longer-term reliance on professional interventions also has the potential to create a culture of dependency on external provision as residents only view themselves as powerless, passive recipients of professional support.
- So, it is not so much a focus on community needs that is problematic, but the positioning of those communities as deficient and powerless.
- A degree of 'intervention fatigue' or suspicion of external professionals is a common feeling within communities that have been 'targeted' and 'consulted' for many years, often with very few perceived tangible changes to show for it.
- In this context, building trust is essential. See below for more information and guidance on how and why building trust is so important ([see section 3.8](#)).

Exercise 9

- Mistrust of external professionals can be common, and first impressions can determine whether things get off to a smooth or bumpy start.
- When conducting community engagement, plan for how you and your team can engage with residents in an approachable and informal way
 - Consider how reducing the formality of your clothing and the accessibility of the language you use can make you more approachable for local people.
 - Consider how you may be viewed when wearing club kit or sports clothing by those who consider themselves 'unsporty'.

3.7 Who are the right people to deliver the physical activity programme?

- Finding the right people to deliver physical activities is fundamental to ensuring that participants connect with the session leader and continue to have a high degree of ownership over the session.
 - The choice of the session leaders is centrally important because of the experience of observing others who are similar to them (age, sex, race, body shape) successfully performing activities. If there is a strong similarity between the role model and the learner, this can lead to greater self-efficacy expectation - "if she/he can do it, so can I".
 - This is explained in further in section 4.
- The 'right person' could be a conventional community sport coach, but equally they could be a previously non-sporting individual identified during the [asset mapping exercises](#).
- What matters most is that they are a 'people-person', with the social skills that enable them to build rapport and trust with participants.
- Knowledge and experience of delivering sport activities is a desirable attribute. However simply having a coaching badge, for example, does not equip you with the soft skills required to empathise and connect with people who are not typically physically active.
- It may be easier and more effective for an individual with the right social skills to gain sports qualifications and knowledge, compared to a qualified sports coach developing the soft social skills.
- The following five 'Cs' can be used to think about the attributes and qualities that the 'right person' could embody:
 - *Competence*: the individual needs organisational and practical skills to deliver engaging and suitably styled physical activity opportunities.
 - *Culturally-close*: an individual who understands the lived experiences of specific community groups is likely to be more easily able to empathise with participants and be sensitised to respond to culturally-specific needs ([see section 6](#)).
 - *Caring*: an individual who has a genuine interest and commitment to the betterment of the community is likely to be perceived by residents as someone who has their interests at heart and make session attendance more attractive.
 - *Consistency*: being trusted by residents is dependent on being reliable; doing what you said you would, week in, week out. [Changing behaviour](#) can be a long-term process for some, so being there for the long run will ensure a degree of stability to enable people to change.
 - *Connected*: opportunities developed and delivered by trusted, familiar and well-known people may improve residents' perception of any new opportunities, as well as creating a 'social buzz' through word of mouth. A connected individual can also link residents to other services and support to help meet their needs.

Advice:

- When recruiting staff and volunteers, ensure that the person specification includes the skills and experiences, beyond narrow sport qualifications, that the 'right person' would have in order to engage empathetically and enthusiastically with the community.
- You may also need to think about how you challenge your organisation's policies on recruitment and minimum qualifications; an individual may not have a sport coaching award (an essential requirement for some organisations), but they might be the 'right person'.

Advice:

- For some groups the opportunity to socialise, perhaps a 'brew and biscuit' before or after the session, may be just as meaningful as the session itself.
- Your staff being engaged in facilitating these social opportunities will help them build rapport and relationships as well fostering a sense of group identity and ownership.
- When budgeting for staffing costs and session delivery, consider how you can include 'time to connect'. It is quite unconventional to fund delivery staff for time beyond session delivery, but building in time to connect can make a significant impact on the overall popularity, longevity, and overall impact of a programme. This is potentially money well spent.

3.8 Trust: an essential mechanism

- **Trust is a significant mechanism throughout all aspects of the programme: how the Consortium works ([see section 2](#)); how the community views the programme and its representatives, how participants view the session leaders ([see section 4](#)).**
- Mechanisms are about how people think, and refer to how participants interpret and act in specific situations. For example, the degree of trust that they have for others with whom they interact will influence their behaviour and responses and is regarded as a "mechanism".
- When setting up a new initiative, professionals and programmes are often met with mistrust or suspicion by communities who have been consulted and subject to external interventions in the past, often with little to show for it.
- Being trustworthy means being reliable and consistent. Doing what you said you would do, and acting in a predictable manner with other people's best interests in mind.
- Residents may be out of their comfort zone when engaging in new activities, so empathising with their concerns or the risks as they perceive them, communicating clearly with them about what to expect, and finding ways to reduce anxiety will all help in residents' decision to trust.

There will be a number of factors that contribute to residents' ability and decision to trust². These are detailed below along with some practical tips for encouraging trust between residents and programme staff.

²Hurley (2012)

Table 2: Participants' decision to trust to denote possessive

If this factor is low...	Then you should...
<p>Their belief that any perceived risks are worth taking</p> <p>Attending a new group or going to a new place can be a big step for some residents, even anxiety inducing. The more steps required to make this change and the perceived likelihood of failure, being embarrassed, or feeling uncomfortable will all lessen their willingness to trust.</p>	<p>Take time to explain the options, reduce steps involved, and identify positive and predictable consequences of the decision. Offer some sort of safety net or get out option.</p> <p>Example: Offer the opportunity to come 'come and see' with no obligation to take part.</p> <p>Prioritise activities with the appropriate level of skills required, enabling participants to take part easily with low consequences for failure.</p> <p>Tip: try to shape the group culture that celebrates 'getting involved' and 'giving it a go' rather than 'doing it right'.</p>
<p>The cultural-closeness to the individual seeking their trust</p> <p>A session leader who does not empathise socially and culturally with a community is more likely to be perceived as an 'outsider' and find building rapport more challenging. This may reinforce potential participants view that such activities are for 'others' and not them.</p>	<p>Being able to see 'someone like me' taking part or leading the activity may help convince residents that the activities are doable and appropriate for them. See section on getting the right people.</p> <p>Example: For session leaders, be yourself and take chances to talk about shared interests and experiences. For example: discuss local issues, TV and music, family life and parenthood, sports teams and other hobbies.</p>
<p>Their perception that you are acting in their interest</p> <p>A new project or organisation operating in the community can often be viewed with a degree of suspicion or scepticism. Remember, you may not be the first organisation to try and improve things.</p>	<p>Operate in a way that demonstrates a genuine concern for others' wellbeing and health, and wider community betterment.</p> <p>Tip: make yourself visible and actively contribute to community groups and events as part of your wider community engagement work to help demonstrate that you are someone who cares about the community.</p>
<p>Readiness to trust</p> <p>Residents and communities will be more or less open to trusting, based on previous experiences and the other trust factors.</p>	<p>Think about your project needing to move at the speed of trust. Things may take longer than you or your organisation would like, but a consistent and persistent presence in the community provides a foundation for trust.</p> <p>Tip: the word of other trusted individuals in the community can make all the difference in people being willing to start trusting you. This is called 'trust transfer'. See 'asset mapping activity' and 'getting the right people' section for more guidance on ensuring trusted community members are central to your work.</p>

<p>Relative power</p> <p>Residents and communities may have experienced a degree of powerlessness; being unable to make choices to positively change their situation.</p>	<p>Provide choices where possible and avoid imposing decisions. Communicate decisions that are made about the sessions and why they serve the interests of the group.</p> <p>Tip: where appropriate, use social media groups like WhatsApp to facilitate collective decision making and communicate updates so that people can keep in the know.</p>
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3.9 Summary

This section has outlined what community assets are and how you can adopt an asset-based approach in developing your provision. The importance of building trust has been emphasised as centrally important within an asset-based approach. The theory of change approach which the Playbook advocates [\[see section 5\]](#) is underpinned by an asset-based approach of this kind. The importance of trust is also emphasised when working as a consortium [\[section 2\]](#) and underpinning behaviour change [\[section 4\]](#).

Further resources:

Bates, D. and Hylton, K. (2021) Asset-Based Community Sport Development: Putting Community First. **Managing Sport and Leisure**, 26(1-2), pp.133-144.

Brown, J. and Isaacs, D. (2005) **The World Café: Shaping Our Futures through Conversations That Matter**. California, Berrett-Koehler.

Hurley, Robert. (2012) **Decision to trust: How leaders create high trust organisations**. San Francisco, Wiley

Kretzmann, J. and McKnight, J. (1993) **Building Communities from the inside Out: A Path Towards Finding and Mobilising a Community's Assets**. Chicago, ACTA.

Rippon, S. and South, J. (2017) **Promoting Asset Based Approaches for Health and Wellbeing: Exploring a Theory of Change and Challenges in Evaluation**. Project Report Leeds Beckett University. Available from: <https://eprints.leedsbeckett.ac.uk/id/eprint/4497/>

StreetGames: 'right time, right place, right price, right style'. Report available from https://www.streetgames.org/wp-content/uploads/2022/12/DSC-Lessons-A4-Full-Report-web-version_1_0.pdf

For more asset-based community development insights see: <https://www.nurtureddevelopment.org/>

Section 4: Theories of behaviour change

The importance of theories of behaviour change is made clear in Sport England's Tackling Inactivity: Design Principles 2: Use Behaviour Change Theories.

"When seeking to change behaviour it is advisable to use a theory as a guide.... because theories are based on evidence".

4.1 The purpose of this section

- This section provides an introduction to how theories can help you to understand the factors which lead to behaviour change – in this case increased physical activity. The three theories of behaviour change outlined here, provide frameworks to enable you to address the following strategic issues:
 - Identify the **assumptions** that can be made about people's motivation to change their behaviour.
 - Create a theoretically informed **engagement plan** to identify community and individual needs ([See Section 3](#)) and how factors influencing behaviour change are experienced by the local population: e.g. perceived constraints; understanding of the benefits of exercise; current attitudes to physical activity; type of preferred exercise; and the type of communication strategy required.
 - **Design a programme** based on a general understanding of the processes which are presumed to underpin and sustain behaviour change for different groups.
 - **Provide ongoing support for behaviour change** (Principle 8 of Sport England, Tackling Inactivity).
 - Use the chosen theory to provide the basis for on-going **formative evaluation of** programme implementation. This is undertaken during the delivery of the programme to assess the extent to which the programme is being delivered as intended, intermediate outcomes as predicted by the theory are being achieved, and the basis for sustainable physical activity is being developed. Such data can help you to identify any adjustments that might be required to the programme ([See Section 7](#)).
- **The choice of the theory** will depend on your understanding of the community context ([see Section 3](#)), the nature of target groups (e.g., current non-participants, low frequency participants or those wishing to participate more frequently), the programme resources (e.g., nature and experience of managers, session leaders and volunteers) and the desired strategic outcomes (e.g. regular and sustained PA, or health and wellbeing). You may find that all three theories in combination can contribute to your planning and provision.

4.2 Why theory?

- Community-based programmes aimed at increasing levels of physical activity are concerned **to change people's attitudes and behaviour** – either to develop a positive attitude to the potential personal benefits of physical activity and to start participating, or to increase current participants' levels of participation.
- This means that any approach to increasing people's levels of physical activity needs to be based on **an understanding of the factors which are presumed to lead to behaviour change**.
- Theories provide frameworks during the various **stages of community engagement, planning,**

- promoting, implementing, and evaluating interventions and ‘introduce rigour to the process’³.
- By identifying the behavioural factors to target, **theory provides the means for selecting and refining intervention and communication techniques.**
- Theory can provide insight into **how to shape programme strategies** to reach people and change their behaviour.
- Three recent reviews of research on promoting physical activity concluded that ‘**messages are more promising when grounded in psychological theory**’⁴.
- Theory can also help to identify **what should be monitored, measured, and compared in a programme evaluation.**
- Using theory to inform intervention development can **aid understanding of why interventions are effective or ineffective**, thus facilitating an understanding of mechanisms of change⁵

4.3 Theories of behaviour change

- Given the complexity of human behaviour, it is not surprising that there is **no single definitive theory of behaviour change.**
- This section outlines the **three most commonly used theories in relation to physical activity.**
- Although we will outline three theories, because they are all concerned with socio-psychological processes, there are **substantial overlaps and broad similarities:**
 - Potential participants’ personal assessment of their **capabilities** (perceived self-efficacy),
 - the nature of any perceived **obstacles** to participation,
 - the nature of **costs/benefits** of any activity and
 - the **value placed on activities and potential outcomes.**

The three theories of behaviour change are:

- **Social Cognitive Theory.**
 - This provides guidance about how programmes should be presented to potential participants and how programmes should be designed and delivered to **develop and/or reinforce participants’ perceived self-efficacy.** It places strong emphasis on the nature of session leaders and role models.
- **Transtheoretical Theory of Behaviour Change / Stages of Change Model.**
 - This illustrates the need to recognise that **participation in physical activity is a process,** with changes in participants’ self-perceptions, needs and wants as the programme develops. It provides a framework with **clear strategies** for programme design and delivery.
- **COM-B**
 - COM-B is short for **Capability, Opportunity, Motivation and Behaviour.** This model identifies what needs to change in an individual and their circumstances for an intervention to be effective and how you can influence this.

4.4 Perceived self-efficacy: its importance.

- Perceived self-efficacy (PSE) refers to individuals’ **beliefs that they can perform a specific task in a specific context** (e.g. a specific activity in your programme).
- A review of self-efficacy and a range of health-related behaviours (including exercise) concluded that there were strong relationships between self-efficacy, health behaviour change and maintenance.
- The three theories outlined in this section all emphasise the **dual importance of perceived self-efficacy:**

³Sport England (nd) ⁴Williamson (2020) ⁵Michie and Johnston (2012)

- In terms of the **decision to take part** and sustain participation.
- The need for programmes to **develop or strengthen** it to achieve sustained participation.

Perceived self-efficacy is defined as:

- *people's beliefs about their capabilities to produce designated levels of performance that exercise influence over events that affect their lives. Self-efficacy beliefs determine how people feel, think, motivate themselves and behave*⁶

So, the concept of perceived self-efficacy is central to a **person's belief that they can change their behaviour**. Consequently, it **should be central to how you design, promote and deliver your programme**. Before we look at its specific role in each of the theories, we will outline this centrally important concept.

4.4.1 What is perceived self-efficacy?

- Perceived self-efficacy (PSE) is one of the **strongest factors related to exercise behaviour** across age groups and cultures, which is why it's included in most theories of behaviour change related to physical activity.
- This is often referred to as 'confidence', but it is not as general, because it usually relates to a belief in the ability to perform a **particular activity or task** (e.g., football, dance, aerobics - or **meeting new people**).
- It is important to note that the use of the term 'perceived' means that this **is not an objective measure of ability, but a personal belief**. It also relates to specific activities and contexts – e.g., a fitness class at a local leisure centre, with particular types of participants ('people like me').
- Importantly, as a personal belief, PSE is **potentially influenced by negative experiences or comments**, but also can be **reinforced positively through experiences and support**. Because an individual's expectations that they will be able to perform the activity successfully are subjective, and are based on that person's perceived, rather than actual capabilities, **it is essential that positive support and experience of success is provided early in the programme to strengthen these beliefs**.

The notion of PSE and how to develop and strengthen it are central to our first theory of behaviour change: social cognitive theory.

4.5 Social Cognitive Theory: Enhancing Perceived Self-efficacy.

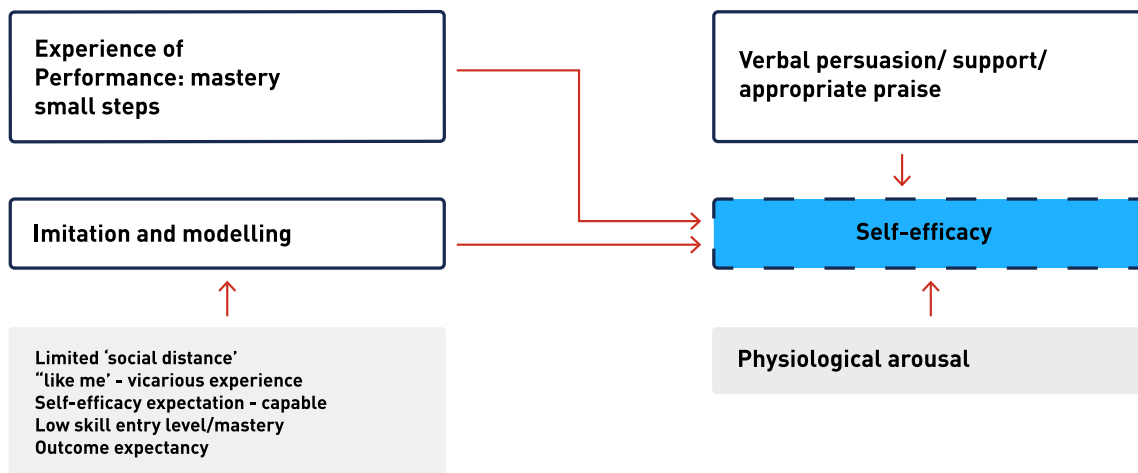
Active Through Football Experience

Although not developed systematically, most ATF programme managers and session leaders worked within the basic principles of this approach.

- This theory proposes that **learning occurs through observation, imitation and modelling**, which places a strong emphasis on the nature and competence of session leaders (Figure 3).

⁶Bandura, 1994

Figure 3 Social cognitive theory and perceived self- efficacy



- The elements outlined in Figure 3 are processes which are central to the design and delivery of effective physical activity programmes – especially if participants with initially low PSE are to undertake the offered activity.
- Building and strengthening participants’ PSE should be emphasised in the selection and training of session leaders and the design of programmes.
- The approach emphasises that the success of programmes is highly dependent on being delivered by appropriate people with the right social and communication skills. [\[See Section 3.7\].](#)

Social Cognitive Theory:

Implications for programme planning and delivery.

Potential participants’ perspective: ‘If he/she can do it so can I’

- You need to understand a potential participant’s belief about their **physical and social ability** to attend a session and undertake the activity. Is the activity for **‘people like them’**? What is the balance between the activity and social aspects and what are the participant’s desired outcomes?
- **Because learning is based on imitation and modelling** – the choice of the session leader is really important. The experience of observing others, who are similar (e.g., age, sex, race, body shape) successfully perform the activity helps to develop or strengthen PSE, especially for those with no previous experience of the activity. A strong similarity between the session leader/role model and the learner can lead to **self-efficacy expectation** – ‘If he/she can do it so can I’ [\[see Section 3.7\].](#)

An ATF example

Two examples of how participants viewed a session leader positively:

'She is not a stick insect'

'She is a single mum with two kids'.

In other words, the session leader was 'like them' and understood the nature of potential constraints that they faced.

- Appointing people who are **'similar' to participants**, to run activities provides a supportive environment for the development of PSE. You need to consider how the **images used for marketing and social media** reflect the type of people who you are trying to engage - this may be particularly important for women.

Imitation, learning and modelling.

- Once participants are attracted to the programme by a reassuring role model, providing an activity that requires a low level of skill and with high expectations of positive outcomes will enable them to develop their PSE by imitating and modelling their behaviour on the appropriate session leader.

An early experience of successful performance and mastery

- This is a **key source of PSE** and should be central to your programme processes.
- Activities should require a **low skills entry point and emphasise the development of personal competence**, stressing individual task achievement and skill development, rather than competitive comparisons with others, which can have negative outcomes, reducing PSE and possibly ending participation.
- **When an individual experiences success it raises PSE** and can convince participants that they have what it takes to achieve increasingly difficult tasks.
- Throughout the programme consider how to ensure that **all tasks are within the current capability of participants** to enable them to experience success and avoid repeated failure.

Praise and affirmation of achievement

- Although positive role modelling and experience of achievement are the key influences on PSE it is also important that participants are encouraged to perform tasks and are praised when they succeed.
- Praise needs to be related to task achievement and not empty, meaningless praise- which may seem patronising.
- Negative comments on performance can undermine PSE, so it needs to be moderate and constructive and delivered by someone that the participant views as trustworthy and generally supportive ([See Section 3](#)).
- Negative comparison with others' performance should be avoided.

Physiological states: 'That effort was worthwhile'.

- Strong positive emotions in relation to a successfully performed task can reinforce PSE. Although this may be temporary, it may be a reason to return.
- One way to raise PSE is to improve physical and emotional wellbeing and reduce negative emotions such as stress and anxiety. This is achieved by providing an experience of successful performance supported by positive praise from the session

leader and peers. It can be reinforced by making sessions friendly and welcoming.

Exercise 10 for Team Planning Meetings

With regard to the Social Cognitive Theory

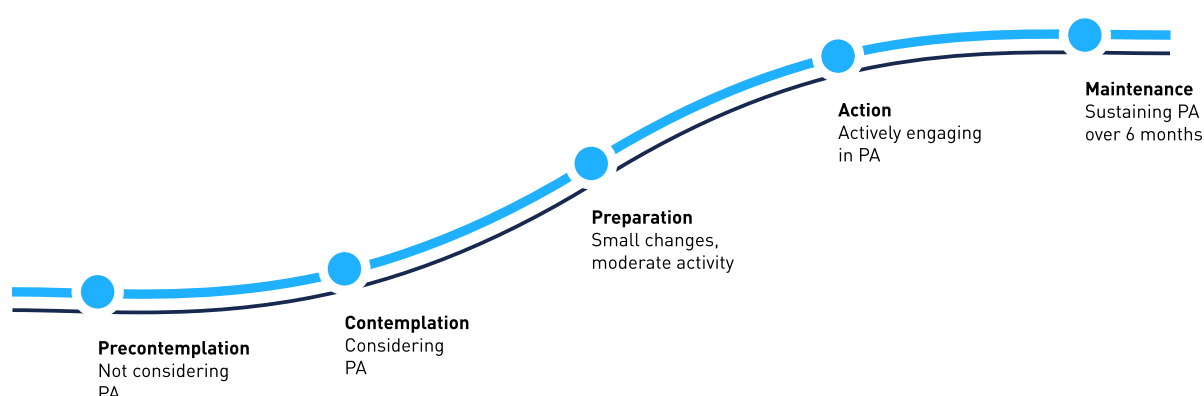
- What implications does it have for the type of programme that you need to design?
- What implications does it have for how you promote the programme?
- How can you promote opportunities in a way that reduces participants' anxieties about attending?
- How can you recruit session leaders who are 'like' the targeted participants?
- How can you ensure that session leaders with the required skills deliver your programme?
- What activities will you provide to develop participants' skills over time?
- How do you ensure that positive and constructive feedback is provided without it being patronising?

- Research indicates that the **early strengthening of PSE** may promote PA. Then a positive experience of PA (Figure 3) can in turn **strengthen PSE**. This process is a central component of the next theory of behaviour change.

4.6 The Transtheoretical Model of Behaviour Change (also known as Stages of Change)

- The Transtheoretical Model of Behaviour Change (TTM) (see Figure 4) illustrates that the **simple distinction between non-participation and participation is too simplistic**.
- The **beginning of participation is only the start of an on-going process of developing and sustaining participation**, with the participants' perspectives and needs changing throughout the various stages (Figure 4).
- It also has the **identification, development and strengthening of PSE** at its centre.

Figure 4: Transtheoretical/Stages of Change Model



4.6.1 The appeal of the TTM

The TTM is useful because it can provide you with:

- An approach to **market segmentation** based on attitudes to PA
- **An understanding of how to intervene for each stage of participants' on-going development** (see Figure 4.3)
- **Clear strategies** for programme design and delivery
- The TTM emphasises that different individuals in the community will be at **different stages of thinking about, or participating in, physical activity**. Consequently, appropriate interventions must be developed for different groups of people or even individuals (See Figure 5)
- For example, in the early stages, information about **costs and benefits** may be important, while in the later stages, participants become more focused on the development of plans of action to support **maintenance of physical activity**
- **In marketing terms**, such a perspective can assist you to identify market segments based on attitudes to physical activity and the nature of the support and encouragement that may be required, with different approaches possibly needed for each stage i.e., **one size will not fit all**.

Figure 5: Transtheoretical Model of Behaviour Change

Precontemplation Processes	Contemplation Processes	Preparation Processes	Action Processes	Maintenance Processes
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Raising awareness • Supportive relationships • Social acceptability 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Raising awareness • Supportive relationships • Social acceptability • Raise aspirations • Positive decision-making 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Raising awareness • Supportive relationships • Positive decision-making • Self-re-evaluation • Raising aspirations 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Raising aspirations • Healthy habits • Positive reinforcement • Reducing temptation • Supportive relationships 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Healthy habits • Positive reinforcement • Reducing temptation • Supportive relationships
Costs and benefits Pros < Cons	Costs and benefits Pros <_ Cons	Costs and benefits Pros > Cons	Costs and benefits Pros > Cons	Costs and benefits Pros > Cons
Self-efficacy Lowest	Self efficacy Increasing	Self-efficacy Increasing	Self Efficacy Rapid Increase	Self Efficacy Peaks
Temptation to be inactive Highest	Temptation Decreasing	Temptation Decreasing	Temptation Rapid decrease	Temptation Lowest

Source: adapted from Nigg et al (2011).

4.6.2 Guide to TTM model and implications for programme planning and delivery.

Precontemplation: not recognising need for change

- People at this stage are **not exercising and/or not intending to** soon (usually measured as the next six months).
- Many living in deprived areas are of course constrained by lack of income, domestic responsibilities, including childcare, transport problems and other material circumstances.
- However, in the current context, people may be in this stage because they are **uninformed** about the **negative consequences** of their sedentary behaviour, or the **possible benefits** of physical activity. They may also lack supportive and encouraging family or friendship networks and do not want to step outside the 'social norms' in the community, which accept sedentary behaviour.
- Also, they may have previously **made unsuccessful attempts** to change and became demoralised about their ability to change, with accompanying low PSE.
- Or, they may have a view that physical activity and/or current provision is '**not for people like me**'.

Pre-Contemplation Stage: Approaches to encouraging behaviour change.

Raising awareness

- Plan how you will provide **information about the immediate benefits of PA** (fun, sociability, fitness, wellbeing). You can increase awareness via education, media campaigns, community meetings, social media or the work of community champions.
- Use '**gain-framing**' messages about programmes, highlighting **immediate gains and short-term positive outcomes** (sociability and fun) rather than '**loss-framed**' (i.e. the negative consequences of non-participation).
- The **issue of low PSE must be addressed** via an emphasis on the accessibility of the programme based on low skill entry activities and undertaken with people of similar age, sex, body shape, race, culture - 'people like them' (See Figure 5).

Supportive relationships

- **Plan for how you can build social support** and encouragement from friends and family, peers and programme personnel - or personal contact with programme personnel who might encourage friendship networks to take part, or stress that this type of support can be found in the session.

Make activity socially acceptable 'for people like me'

- You can **increase relevant social opportunities** especially for people who are relatively deprived, who may have seen previous opportunities as 'not for people like me'.
- **Appropriate and relevant provision** can produce increased opportunities for marginalised groups. Such initiatives indicate that **society/community is supportive** of healthy behaviour/forms of physical activity. **Community champions** have an important legitimating role to play here.
- **Encourage awareness and acceptance of lifestyles that include physical activity.**

Costs and benefits

- An individual's decision to participate will depend on the balance between their evaluation of the **costs (cons)** e.g. time, price, work commitments, clothes, weather, travel, others' disapproval and the **benefits (pros)** of engaging in a particular activity - e.g. health, new friends, reduced social isolation, improved self-efficacy, others'

approval, improved self-esteem.

- This may vary between activities, their location, peer groups and the various costs and effort involved.
- When planning provision, you need to have an **in-depth understanding of potential participants' assessment of the pros and cons** of taking part in your programme.
- As illustrated in Figure 5, when a decision to participate is made, the **balance gradually** shifts from cons to pros as the participant moves through the various stages and experiences the desired benefits.

Contemplation: thinking about the need for change

- At this stage people, either non-exercisers or casual low-level exercisers, are intending to increase their physical activity in the next six months, so **may be open to appropriate programme messaging about immediate benefits and accessible provision**.
- They may be aware of some of the longer-term pros of changing their behaviour but are **also aware of the short-term cons**. This balance between the costs and benefits of changing behaviour can produce hesitation about the effort required that can keep people in this stage for long periods of time.
- It is unlikely that such people are ready for traditional competitive or highly skilled programmes. So, low skill level mastery activities which develop participants' PSE are required.

Contemplation stage: Approaches to encouraging behaviour change.

Raising awareness

- **Discuss with your team how existing opportunities and facilities could be improved to provide non-threatening** taster sessions and promotional events using appropriate role models [see Section 4.5]. Also, where relevant, advice from GPs might be available, and a programme phonenumber or website or social media or local on-line networks.

Supportive relationships

- As the potential participant might be hesitating at this point **you need to plan for how you can build social support** and encouragement from friends and family, peers and programme personnel, or alternatively through personal contact with programme personnel who might encourage friendship networks to take part.

Social acceptability: 'Opportunities for people like them'

- The programme should emphasise that **'people like them'** are benefitting from the programme. This can be done via the use of appropriate images in promotional material and marketing.
- Capitalise on local opportunities that indicate that the **community is supportive** of healthy behaviours for 'people like them'.
- Community champions can play this legitimating role.

Raise aspirations: 'I want to be an active person'.

- This refers to people's changing attitudes regarding inactivity and developing a more positive self-image – **'I want to be an active person'**.
- When considering community engagement [Section 3] plan how you will incorporate active relevant role models and messaging to improve peoples' understanding of the

benefits of physical activity. This should encourage people to re-evaluate how they currently think about themselves and their levels of PA.

Positive decision making

- Sessions should be **socially focussed and supportive of positive attitudes**. Make sessions attractive so that potential participants think that 'I really want to be part of that'.
- Pre-contemplation potential participants may experience and express intense feelings/emotions about risks of not engaging in physical activity- '**I really would like to join this programme**'- reinforced by your affirming behaviour.

Preparation: making small changes

- At this stage people may be exercising at a low, irregular level and are intending to **take action to increase physical activity in the immediate future**, usually measured as the next month. They have typically taken some significant action in the past year and are clearly **one of the easier groups for physical activity programmes to attract**.
- These individuals **may have a plan of action**, such as joining a gym class, talking to their doctor, downloading an app or simply relying on a self-change approach.

Preparation stage: Approaches to encouraging behaviour change.

Raising awareness

- Such people might be viewed in terms of *frustrated demand* and need to be provided with accessible opportunities to participate, discussion with health professionals or exercise providers and, following the Social Cognitive approach, given **positive feedback on ability to participate**.
- Discuss and plan with your team how you will ensure that your provision offers participants **clear and easy opportunities to participate**, reducing any perceived obstacles.

Supportive relationships

- As the potential participant might be hesitating at this point (e.g., being more aware of constraints) **you need to plan for how you can build social support** and encouragement from friends and family, peers and programme personnel - or **personal contact with programme personnel** who might encourage friendship networks to take part.

Positive decision-making

- At this stage those preparing to participate may experience and express intense feelings/emotions about risks of not engaging in physical activity - '**I am so glad that I decided to join this programme**'.
- **Sessions should be socially focussed**, welcoming and supportive of developing positive attitudes, and reduce possible continuing doubts about participating.

Self-re-evaluation

- Having decided to participate, the preparing participant is likely to be changing their view of themselves and accepting that **adopting healthier behaviours is part of who they want to be**.
- You should promote the programme and develop the social climate of the session to affirm that **participants have made a good choice**.

Raising aspirations. 'I can do it if I try'.

- This is both the belief that they can change and, reflecting increased PSE (see Figure 5) the commitment to act on that belief – 'I can do it if I try'. **Social support and small initial, supportive steps are required.**
- Consider how you can create opportunities to contact participants (on-line or face-to-face) to develop your understanding of how you can **reduce any constraints on attendance.**

Action: getting started

- At this stage people have **made specific modifications to their lifestyles** within the past six months and some may be on your programme.
- They may have only recently started to exercise regularly and may **need support and encouragement to strengthen PSE.**
- The Action stage is also the stage where **vigilance against relapse is critical**, so you should focus on providing support, praise and affirmation whenever PSE needs to be boosted to deal with obstacles and emphasise both short and long term benefits (see Social Cognitive Theory in [Section 4.5](#)).

Action Stage: Approaches to supporting behaviour change.

Raising aspirations: 'I have done the right thing'.

- This is both the belief that they can change and, reflecting increased PSE (see Figure 3), the commitment to act on that belief – 'I did it'. **Social support and small initial, supportive steps are required.**
- Consider how you can create a **supportive environment** in which the positive nature of the decision to participate is affirmed – 'you have done the right thing'.

Healthy Habits

- Consider how you can encourage participants to identify and remove cues for unhealthy habits and add **prompts for healthier alternatives** (e.g. discussion of activity beyond the programme like walking to and from the sessions). This can be integrated into the activity programme and social interaction and discussions around the sessions.
- Peer support groups (other participants and WhatsApp groups) can provide encouragement and reduce risks for relapse. For example, **aim to create an environment in which participants feel safe and are encouraged to walk to and from physical activity sessions.**

Positive Reinforcement

- Reflecting Social Cognitive Theory (Figure 3), positive reinforcements (e.g. praise, other rewards) are emphasised by positive self-statements – 'I have made the right decision'. **Praise from session leader and group recognition**, or WhatsApp group can increase reinforcement and the probability that healthier responses will be repeated. These processes can also encourage positive self-reflection on improved well-being or PSE. For example, consider how you could include an enjoyable social opportunity with a healthy snack after the session.

Reducing temptation

- This requires the learning of healthier behaviours that reduce the temptation to return to problem behaviours, i.e. sedentary behaviour like walking to and from sessions.
- **Physical activity outside sessions (e.g. walking to and from sessions) should be encouraged by session leaders.**

Supportive relationships

- **Peer support groups** (other participants and WhatsApp groups) can provide stimuli that support change, reinforce a sense of belonging and reduce risks of relapse.

Maintenance: regular exercise for more than 6 months

- This is your strategic aim. Longer term participation in physical activity rarely occurs the first time and relapse to earlier stages is expected. Individuals respond to their environment and learn from their failures, possibly returning to physical activity, with encouragement and support.
- Encourage your delivery team to be aware of this and continuously monitor participants and contact dropouts.

Achieving maintenance

- At this stage **the processes underpinning the Action stage are present** – e.g. the importance of peer support groups providing supportive social relationships and perhaps developing a commitment to others in the group i.e. ‘I don’t want to let them down’. Some programmes might even have a club membership to reinforce commitment.
- Also, by this stage **intrinsic motivation will have** strengthened (i.e. they take part in the activity for its inherent enjoyment and not for other benefits (e.g. health). This can be strengthened by reminding them that **what they have done is personally worthwhile and meaningful**. You can support and encourage this thinking.
- **PSE is at its strongest now and should be reinforced by praise from peers and leaders).**

4.6.3 Gaining insights into participants’ transition through the various stages of change

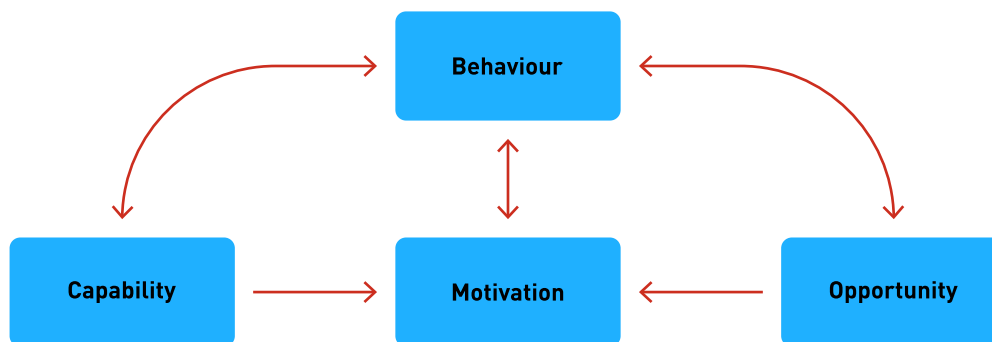
The TTM outlines **a process and clearly includes a set of interim outcome measures** that are sensitive to a full range of psychological, emotional, and behavioural changes in participants. The model can help you to understand the changing nature of participation and guide the modification and improvement of your programme. For example, collecting data on aspects of the transition from one stage to another (e.g. strengthening PSE, changing view of self) can indicate if the intervention was more successful with individuals in one stage and not with individuals in another stage ([See Section 7](#)).

4.7 COM-B

- COM-B is short for **Capability, Opportunity, Motivation and Behaviour**. This model is used to identify what needs to change in an individual for a behaviour change intervention to be effective (Figure 6).

- The COM-B model suggests that the **more capable a person believes** they are in undertaking an activity (i.e. PSE) and the more **conducive the environment** is to undertaking the activity the more likely they are to do it.
- The framework can be used as a **tool to identify barriers and facilitators** and enable the development of a behaviour change strategy.
- The COM-B model (Figure 6) suggests that a particular behaviour will occur only when an individual has the Capability (i.e. both physical and psychological PSE) and Opportunity (physical and social) to engage in the behaviour and has the Motivation (beliefs, values, emotions, impulses relating to the activity) to perform that behaviour. So, any **behaviour change will require one or more of these components to be modified**.

Figure 6: COM-B Model



Source: [Social Change UK](#)

4.7.1 Guide to COM-B model and Implications for programme planning and delivery.

Capability:

- This requires the person to believe that they have the knowledge, skills and psychological and physical abilities required to plan for and participate in a particular activity, which is similar to PSE (Figure 3).

Opportunity:

- This relates to the barriers and facilitators around undertaking PA. This raises issues about the accessibility, relevance and affordability of provision – all of which you can influence

COM-B: Implications for programme planning and delivery.

- In this model the **easiest intervention for providers is the provision of social and physical Opportunities requiring low skill entry levels which match the Capability of the target group.**

(i) Physical opportunities:

- These are provided by the local environment - time, location (i.e. hyper local and community-oriented venues) and resources (e.g. sports clothing, money, cost of participation) and accessibility of relevant sessions.

(ii) Social opportunities: 'It is OK for someone like me to attend physical activity sessions'

- These comprise of social factors such as community **cultural norms** that either encourage or discourage physical activity. For example, friends and family can be more or less supportive of someone like them beginning to take part in a physical activity programme. **Programme promotion and imagery** which emphasise the social aspects of provision, can **legitimate community approval**. **Community champions can play a role in legitimating PA and your programme.**

Capability plus opportunities:

- These two components in combination are viewed as 'switches' which **must be present for motivation to generate behaviour.**
- The **more capable potential participants believe they are** (i.e., PSE) to enact a behaviour and the more **accessible and attractive the environment**, the stronger the motivation to participate.
- Again, community engagement and programme promotions can emphasise that **accessible provision is for all types of participants.**
- Capability and opportunity may be reinforced via **initial discussions and instruction classes by appropriate role models** (age, sex, body size, ethnicity) to address issues of perceived Capability (PSE) and emphasise that skill, strength and stamina will improve over time.
- Also, individuals can be encouraged to recognise both the **short-term and long-term benefits** of physical activity and use these benefits to make PA seem a more desirable option than inactivity

Motivation

- COM-B suggests that the combination of perceived capability and relevant opportunities together impact on motivation to take part.
- Motives are **feelings of wants and needs** and lie at the heart of all goal directed human behaviour.
- **Wants** are feelings of attraction we get from **anticipated pleasure or satisfaction**. This clearly can be influenced by programme design, promotion, and relevant personnel so that the activity will produce the desired outcomes.
- **Needs** are generated by **anticipated relief from mental or physical discomfort**. This can be encouraged by programme design, promotion and programme personnel. However, research indicates that **positive messages ('gain framing' – fun, enjoyment) are more effective than negative messaging ('loss framing' – the negative aspects of sedentary lifestyles).**
- To improve motivation and sustained behaviour change, it is necessary to turn a desired behaviour (e.g., increased physical activity) from something that they need to do to something that they want to do and feel that they have the capability to do (i.e. PSE).
- This relates to a shift from **extrinsic motivation** (e.g. doing the activity for health reasons) to **intrinsic motivation**, doing the activity because they enjoy it and get personal satisfaction from doing it.
- Motivation involves all the internal processes that trigger or inhibit a particular behaviour. The processes can be **reflective or automatic.**

(i) Reflective motivation:

- **This refers to positive or negative beliefs and values relating to PA.** This involves a sense of self-identity and the role of PA in this (e.g., 'I am/am not a 'sporty person'') and the ability to do things - PSE and current intentions and ability to take part in PA and priority accorded to it.

- **Reflective motivation** (beliefs and values) can be achieved through **increasing knowledge and understanding of PA and the type of people who take part**, producing positive (or negative) feelings about PA.
- Such beliefs and values can be **influenced by programme publicity and the actions of programme managers and session leaders**.

(ii) Automatic motivation:

- **Emotional responses, habits, impulses and inhibitions regarding forms of PA.** This may well reflect previous positive and/or negative experiences (e.g. memories PE at school).
- Automatic motivation can be achieved through **experiences that produce positive (or negative) feelings and impulses relating to programme activities**. For example, relevant and encouraging role models can generate a sense of safety, trust and the development of the habit of attending PA sessions [\[see Section 3.8\]](#).

4.7.2 Using the COM-B framework

- The COM-B assumption is that **the more capable we believe we are** in doing an activity (PSE) and the **more attractive and supportive the environment** is to facilitating it, the more we tend to want to do it.
- The Social Cognitive and TTM approaches also state that **practising the activity will improve Capability and that will increase Motivation** to engage in that activity. Conversely, when an activity is difficult, or we believe it to be so, we are less motivated to do it (unless the difficulty is itself part of the attraction).
- In this model the **easiest intervention for providers is the provision social and physical Opportunities requiring low skill entry levels which match the Capability of the target group** [\[see 4.8.2\]](#)
- The Opportunity may be reinforced via **initial discussions and instruction classes by appropriate role models** (age, sex, body size, ethnicity) to address issues of perceived Capability (PSE) and emphasise that skill, strength and stamina will improve over time.
- So, the key to behaviour change would be to **establish PA as something the individual not only ‘needs’ but also ‘wants’ to do**.
- This can be done by encouraging the individual to recognise both the short-term and long-term benefits of physical exercise and use these benefits to make PA seem the more desirable option rather than inactivity.

4.7.3 Insights into COM-B

- Behaviour change will require **modifying at least one of the COM-B components** – capability, opportunity or motivation. To assist in this process, consider the questions in Appendix 1 as a way to help you and your team to ‘navigate the model’. The key to many of these questions is **the extent to which you as a provider has the capacity to influence any of these factors**.
- To use this model of behaviour change you will need substantial amounts of information. This can be gathered via your community engagement work [\[Section 3\]](#). The nature of the issues to be covered and suggested questions are outlined in Appendix 1.

Exercise 12

With regard to the COM-B Model

Capability

- How will you **assess** whether potential participants want to increase their levels of PA?
- How will you **design** a programme that they feel that they have the physical and social

capabilities to take part in?

- How will you **promote** your programme to assure them that they have the capability to participate?

Opportunity

- How will the provision of the programme take into account potential participants' **perceived obstacles**- e.g timing, cost and access?
- How will you provide **social support**?

Motivation

- What short and long-term **benefits** will you emphasise?
- How will you **guarantee** the benefits?
- How will you assist them to balance **costs and benefits**?
- How will you present that activity as '**normal**' and **commonplace**?
- 'If it appears that they do not want to take part, how can you persuade them to get involved

4.8 Summary

- The three theories of behaviour change provide frameworks and guides for the various stages of engagement, planning, promoting, implementing and evaluating interventions.
- You can use theories to develop an understanding of **why** people are not being physically active and help to pinpoint **what needs to be known before developing and implementing a physical activity programme**.
- By identifying attitudes and beliefs to target, the **theories provide the means for selecting and refining intervention and communication techniques**. They can provide insight into how to shape strategies to reach people and achieve a change in their behaviour.
- Although there are many common elements, each of the theories addresses different issues.
- The **Social Cognitive Theory** with its central **concern with PSE**, underpins the other two theories. It emphasises the importance of a **relevant session leader/role model** and provides guidance as to how programmes should be presented to potential participants and how programmes should be designed to develop and/or reinforce PSE.
- The **Transtheoretical Model** illustrates an approach to market segmentation based on attitudes and intentions to be physically active. It also illustrates that programme providers need to recognise that **participation is a developing process**, with changes in participants' self-perceptions and needs as the programme develops.
- The **COM-B model** emphasises the role that providers can play in **developing potential participants' motivation** through the provision of accessible and appropriate opportunities and emphasising that people '**like them**' have the capability to participate in relevant activities.
- Importantly, research indicates that you should not emphasise risk or threat and should promote programmes to such groups on the basis of '**gain framing**' i.e. positive short-term outcomes such as fun, sociability and well-being, rather than '**loss-framing**', emphasising the negative consequences of not participating.
- In general, you should **understand what benefits potential participants are looking for** and how this might affect your messaging and promotion:
 - Sport might be seen as negative activity. For example, it might be associated with previous negative experiences e.g. school sport and requiring certain levels of skill and competition.
 - They might want to meet new people or 'people like them'.
 - They might want a fun way to relax after work.
- Potential participants need to believe that they are **capable** of participating in your activity

and that it is **accessible**, for **'people like them'** (reinforced by relevant role models) and it will **deliver the outcomes** they want.

Further resources:

Bandura, A. (1994). Self-efficacy. In V. S. Ramachaudran (Ed.), Encyclopedia of human behavior (Vol. 4, pp. 71-81). New York: Academic Press. (Reprinted in H. Friedman [Ed.], Encyclopedia of mental health. San Diego: Academic Press, 1998).

Sport England provide a range of tools and resources on behaviour change. These are accessible here: https://www.sportengland.org/research-and-data/research/inactive-people?section=tool_and_resources

Williamson, C., Baker, G., Nanette Mutrie, N., Niven, A., and Kelly, P. (2020) Get the message? A scoping review of physical activity messaging International Journal of Behavioral Nutrition and Physical Activity 17:51 P.9

Section 5: Logic Models and Theories of change

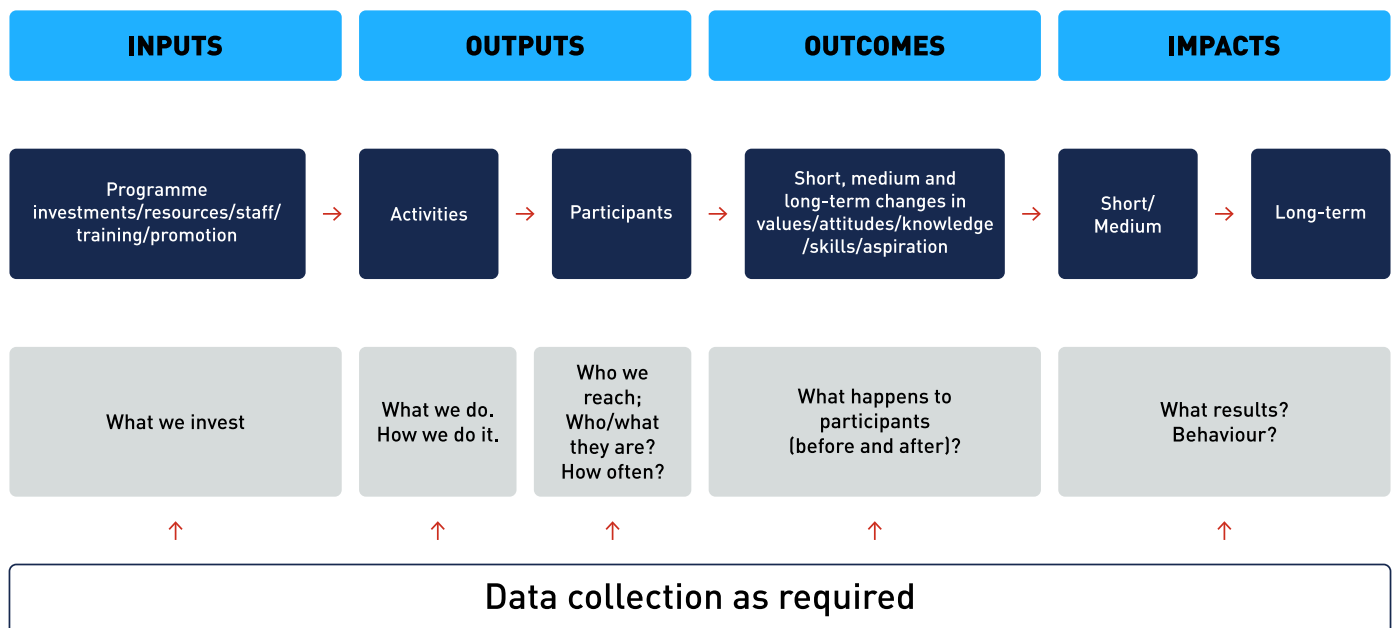
5.1 Introduction

- In this section we will examine the strengths and weaknesses of the widely used logic model (sometimes referred to as a log frame).
- Having outlined its shortcomings we will then explore the principles of a Theory of Change (ToC) which compensates for these shortcomings.
- We will then provide an example ToC for a community-based programme to promote physical activity based on the ABCD principles [\[See Section 3\]](#) which we hope will provide you with a template to enable you to develop a ToC for your own programme.

5.2 Logic Models

- A logic model provides a **graphical presentation of the broad components** of a programme and the order of their implementation, with a basic structure of inputs, outputs and outcomes (see Figure 7).

Figure 7. A simple logic model



The characteristics of the logic model (Figure 7) are:

- It is **output-led** and describes the broad components of a programme.
- It provides a **descriptive framework and timeline** for: planning, resource allocation; implementation, management, monitoring and evaluation (M&E).
- It helps to **guide and monitor programme implementation** and maintain focus.
- It identifies where to **collect data** to assess implementation of the programme.

- It establishes targets, milestones, **necessary conditions** for programme implementation. For example, how many of what type of participants are recruited and retained, how many sessions were delivered, what desired outcomes have been achieved?
- It provides the basis for **summative evaluation**, i.e. measuring the final outcomes or impacts of the programme.
- It provides a **basis for accountability**, as it indicates when and if you do what you said you would do.

5.2 Limitations of a Logic Model

However, there are important limitations with such an approach:

- Descriptive logic models are based on **unexplained/assumed casual relationships**- especially regarding the relationships between outputs and outcomes. **They do not explain how and why** what type of outputs/activities are presumed to be effective in achieving the desired outcomes.
- Logic models start with **means** (i.e. what you do) and not ends (i.e. what you achieve). It describes what the programme does and **the nature of the outcomes are presumed**. It simply projects outcomes from activities with limited explanation of **why** the outcomes are / are not achieved.
- Logic models do not capture the quality or detailed content of a programme i.e. the **components/mechanisms/experiences that lead to change** [\[see section 4\]](#). They contain unexplained 'causal arrows', which confuse programme activities – outputs – with the mechanisms which may cause change (outcomes). You may provide an activity but why do you think that it will lead to a desired outcome?

To address these limitations we now turn to consideration of a theory of change perspective.

5.3 How to use a theory of change to inform your planning and implementation

A ToC, sometimes referred to as a programme theory, is different from a logic model in that:

- Fundamental to a ToC is the outlining of the **assumptions underpinning the programme** – how and why will the programme outputs generate the required outcomes? It is concerned not just with what you do, but **why you do it**.

An example of 'why'

We provide low skill entry, mastery-oriented activities delivered by an appropriate role model, to ensure that participants experience an early sense of achievement reinforced by verbal persuasion and support because we need to develop or strengthen participants' low perceived self-efficacy [\[see section 4\]](#)

- A ToC is explanatory rather than simply descriptive. **It explains how and why** a desired change is expected to happen in a particular context.
- It does not simply map out what a programme does (its activities) but **how and why these activities lead to the achievement of the desired outcomes**.
- A ToC has at its centre the notion **of mechanism**, i.e. how the programme achieves its desired

outcomes. As outcomes relate to a change in human behaviour, mechanisms are about how people think and feel in response to the programme.

*'It is not programmes which work but the resources they offer to enable their subjects to make them work. This process of how **subjects interpret** and act upon the intervention stratagem is known as the programme "mechanism"'. (Pawson and Tilley, 2004, p. 6)*

- **Programmes offer a range of resources:** materials (e.g. free access, equipment), social, (peer groups) and emotional (praise, support often from session leaders) to participants. The interaction between these resources, and how **participants interpret and act upon them**, is known as a 'programme mechanism'.

Example of programme mechanisms

As outlined in [Section 3](#) on-going processes of community engagement and a co-produced programme can build **trust and a sense of ownership** between the community and the programme, which serve to legitimate the programme and encourage wider participation.

Appropriate/relevant role models and a supportive social climate can lead to **participants' increased commitment to the programme as they realise that it is for people 'like them'** [\[see section 4\]](#)

- The ToC approach shifts the focus from the implementing of programmes (projects promoting physical activity) to the implementation of **mechanisms**, with the key issue being the programme mechanisms which should inform the design and delivery of the programme. Many of these mechanisms are found within the various theories of behaviour change outlined in [Section 4](#).
- Consequently a ToC provides an **effective basis for the development of grant and funding applications**, as it explains to potential funders **how** your programme will achieve desired outcomes.

5.4 Theory of Change and the importance of your assumptions

- Organisations need to consider **how and why** their programme will maximise the possibility of achieving desired outcomes based on the following considerations:
- **Necessary and sufficient conditions** It is important to make a clear distinction between **necessary conditions** i.e., providing a programme which gets the target group to take part and **sufficient conditions**– i.e., the **experiences/ processes/ relationships** which bring about changed attitudes, values and sustained behaviour change.

Example sufficient conditions:

- - Low skill requirements
- - Session leaders being culturally appropriate/relevant role models,
- - Participants have an early experience of success,
- - A supportive social climate and appropriate praise [\[See Section 4\]](#).

⁷Cronin (2011)

- **The nature of the sporting/PA experience.** Sport or physical activities do not automatically produce positive outcomes (except perhaps for health outcomes), but in terms of achieving ongoing participation it is the *process of participation*, how it is experienced and the combination of a variety of factors which explain the nature of outcomes [\(see Section 4\)](#).
- **Critical success factors.** A ToC requires the identification and awareness of critical success factors, the *key features of the programme which enable the outcomes to be achieved*. For example, how important are the social climate and trust-based social relationships, compared to the choice of activity? Such a perspective enables a much more informed approach to programme design, delivery, management and evaluation.
- **Managing for outcomes.** An understanding that participation is a process [\(see Transtheoretical Model in Section 4\)](#) means that there is a need to manage for outcomes, i.e., proactively managing the programme to maximise the possibility of achieving desired outcomes (e.g., better health, a positive attitude to PA, development of intrinsic motivation and sustained participation). Without a ToC, it is difficult to establish what elements of a programme might deliver the intended outcomes. It also means that where no outcome is achieved (e.g. no increase in perceived self-efficacy), this may be because the intervention was not actually focused on delivering this⁷.
- **Basis for M&E.** A clear statement of critical success factors and how they will be reflected in the design and delivery of programmes is essential to the design and implementation of a process-led approach to M&E [\(see Section 7\)](#).
- **Monitoring Change.** A ToC provides the basis for on-going formative, rather than simply final summative evaluation and thereby **contributes to the improvement of interventions**. M&E becomes developmental, as on-going monitoring is concerned with examining ways of improving and enhancing the implementation and management of interventions. As a result of such formative M&E the ToC may be amended as lessons are learnt about the relative effectiveness of various components [\(see Section 7\)](#).
- **Training.** An understanding of the above issues is central to the processes of training programme/session leaders and increasing the effectiveness of how its components are delivered.

5.5 Using a theory of change approach for programme development

- The benefits of a ToC are maximised if it is **developed collectively prior to or as part of the development of the programme**. However, it is still possible and useful to apply ToC thinking to an existing programme, especially if there is an opportunity to adjust and revise the programme.
- More generally a ToC approach is more effective and developmental if it is a **participatory process involving as wide a range of stakeholders as possible**.
- As a **collaborative exercise** it contributes to **capacity-building, to developing a greater sense of ownership, understanding, integration** and an organisational ability to reflect on and analyse attitudes, beliefs and behaviour.
- The process of formulating a ToC has advantages for a range of interest groups. These are⁸:

⁸Weiss (1997)

Programme designers are encouraged to think harder and deeper about their assumptions and the programmes they design. Such thinking will help to identify the kinds of activity that produce positive outcomes and help to identify the mechanisms by which those activities work.

Practitioners. It may be that members of the same organisation or programme have different theories about how the programme works. If they can work through their differences and agree on a common set of assumptions about what they are doing and why, they can increase the coherence and effectiveness of the intervention.

Programme Managers. A major advantage is that the monitoring can provide feedback about which chain of reasoning breaks down and where it breaks down.

Programme evaluator. A ToC approach helps evaluators to focus the study on key questions and stages of development. It provides information on short-term and intermediate outcomes, which are linked to the long-term outcomes of interest.

Exercise 13

On the basis of your agreed programme outcomes (eg target groups, increased activity, improved attitudes to physical activity, psychological health, physical health, sustained participation) have a team **discussion** to identify how your programme tries to achieve them:

(i) What are the **key activities and participant experiences** needed to achieve which outcomes and why?

(ii) What is the **relative importance** of sport, PA, social relationships and other parallel activities to the achievement of specific outcomes and why?

(iii) **Is there a hierarchy of outcomes?** Do some outcomes need to be developed before others (e.g. perceived self-efficacy, participants' motivation)? If yes, why? How will your programme develop such outcomes?

5.6 An example of a Theory of Change

- In [Section 3](#) we presented an asset-based community development (ABCD) framework to illustrate the general components of a community programme to promote PA. Here we present it as an example of a **theory of change**.
- We present it here as a **template to assist programmes** to develop a strategic view of their programme – its context, relevant activities, the mechanisms underpinning each of the 7 stages and the desired resulting outcomes.
- Remember that the key feature of a theory of change is that it reveals your **assumptions which underpin the programme**, it is **explanatory** rather than simply descriptive and it outlines the **mechanisms** by which the programme seeks to achieve its desired outcomes.
- The **broad template provided here will be relevant to any programme adopting a similar ABCD strategy** [\[see Section 3\]](#), but, of course, the content may change to reflect local contexts and circumstances.
- It can be used for an **in-depth dialogue** among programme colleagues and stakeholders, clarifying possible different ideas about how and why desired outcomes can be achieved.
- **Outcomes and Impacts.** Figure 7 concentrates largely on outcomes because of difficulties of

definition, measurement and attribution of cause in relation to impacts (e.g. reduction in crime, economic development).

- **Outcomes** refer to specific and measurable short/medium-term effects largely related to programme participants (e.g., changed attitudes, increased self-efficacy, regular and sustained PA, improved mental and physical health).
- **Impact** refers to broader social and long-term effects (e.g., reduction in crime, improvement in community health). While outcomes are relatively easy to define, measure and attribute to participation in the programme, wider longer-term impacts are more difficult to measure and difficult to attribute directly to the programme. Consequently, if you wish to claim wider impacts (e.g., to attract funding) you need to think about (i) how you will define and measure such impacts and (ii) how you will attribute them to your programme.

Below we have provided an example ToC template (Figure 8) to illustrate its broad components and stages.

Figure 8: A guide

- It consists of 7 stages or processes, each of which contains the following components:
- The **Context** of the programme, i.e., the political, social and economic nature of the 'place' and levels of physical activity and attitudes to such initiatives. This of course will vary depending on the location and aims of a programme.
- The **nature of programme Outputs** – ranging from the Consortium, community engagement, programmes, participant engagement, workforce development. These have been dealt with in depth in other sections of the Playbook.
- The potential **Mechanisms** which enable the outputs to work effectively to achieve the Outcomes.
- **Outcomes** which are assumed to result from the Outputs and Mechanisms at this stage.

Figure 8: A ToC Template

	Context	Outputs	Potential Mechanisms	Outcomes
	The nature of the community needs and social issues	Activities within your programme to deliver Outcomes	Cognitive processes i.e. how people react to experiences in the programme	What you are hoping to achieve via the various outputs
Process A Establish a Consortium [Playbook Section 2]	The cultural and political nature of the community and levels of trust	The membership of the consortium, knowledge of the community and relevant expertise	How will the consortium function? How important is trust and communication?	Effective collaborative consortium, performing strategic role

<p>Process B Initial Community engagement (Playbook Section 3)</p>	<p>Nature of community needs and social issues to be addressed.</p>	<p>Community assets identified. Broad framework agreed with community to provide relevant PA opportunities</p>	<p>Trust and positive relationships established with community.</p>	<p>Trust-based relationships underpin participation in relevant programmes.</p>
<p>Process C On-going Community Engagement (Playbook Section 3)</p>	<p>Increasing levels of PA and trust</p>	<p>Assets developed and strengthened. Community champions and potential volunteers identified. Co-production processes established</p>	<p>Trust and legitimacy of programme and personnel strengthened.</p>	<p>Community develops a sense of ownership of programme.</p>
<p>Process D Programme delivery (Playbook Sections 4 and 5)</p>	<p>Connected community, increased PA.</p>	<p>Close cooperation with local voluntary organisations</p>	<p>Gain-framing messaging. Social aspects emphasised. Relevant theory of behaviour change informs programme design and delivery.</p>	<p>Increased PA by target groups, reducing social isolation</p>
<p>Process E Workforce/ volunteering development plan (Playbook Section 6)</p>	<p>New staff and volunteers need upskilling to deliver programme</p>	<p>Recruitment and retention of volunteers and training</p>	<p>Recruits have a desire to contribute to community and programme</p>	<p>Programme embedded in community, strengthened human capital</p>
<p>Process F Work toward retention and long-term PA (Playbook Section 4 and 6)</p>	<p>Increased PA and positive attitudes to PA</p>	<p>Socially and culturally relevant session leaders. Strong social component to programme</p>	<p>Strong peer groups developed and positive social relationships. Developing perceived self-efficacy</p>	<p>Improved mental and physical health of participants. Reduced social isolation</p>
<p>Process G Ongoing programme (Playbook Sections 6 and 7)</p>	<p>Community-owned PA programme</p>	<p>Participant-defined and community-led programme with strong social content</p>	<p>Positive social relationships, relevant role models and strong intrinsic motivation</p>	<p>Sustainable increase in PA and social; networks</p>

5.6 Developing your Theory of Change

- Having provided a broad explanatory outline of a ToC in Figure 8, in Figure 9 below we provide a more fully developed ToC based on our and others' research. We provide this as a **framework for your programme team** to work through to establish the relevance of each of the 7 stages of the ToC to your programme. The contents of each process are only examples – to assist you to think through the various issues and stages. You may need to change or delete elements to reflect your own circumstances.
- We believe that such a **collaborative exercise** will encourage you think systematically about your ideas underpinning your programme. Such thinking will help to identify the kinds of activities that produce positive outcomes and help to identify the mechanisms by which those activities work.
- As a collaborative exercise it should contribute to **team capacity-building, to developing a greater sense of ownership, understanding, integration** and an organisational ability to reflect on and analyse attitudes, beliefs and behaviour.

Figure 9: An Illustrative ToC Template

	Context	Outputs	Potential Mechanisms	Outcomes
<p>Process A Establish a Consortium (Playbook Section 2)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Disempowered and deprived communities with low levels of trust in external interventions 	<p>Establish a Consortium</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Expertise relevant to developing PA in community and community development Access to network of community organisations Access to local influencers. Ability to identify community assets and local facilities If possible, previous experience of working together Ability to play strategic and operational role Clear terms of reference. Outcomes framework for clear responsibilities Members should have 'on the ground' presence in target area. Cross promotion of activities and sharing of best practice Regular communication/ updates and co-produced activities/events Prioritised attendance (or deputised) at steering group meetings 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Trust and transparency between stakeholders May be based on previous experience of working together and can be reinforced by agreed clarity about roles and open communication 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Effective collaborative consortium performing strategic and operational functions and providing direction and support for programme managers
<p>Process B Initial Community engagement (Playbook Section 3)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Disempowered and deprived communities with low levels of trust in external interventions Low level of provision Low level of physical activity Poor mental health Social isolation High unemployment 	<p>Initial community engagement</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Indices of deprivation (IMD) Via consortium community organisations Consortium members with local presence should play a role Consult local influencers Community Champions/ trusted leaders lead face-to-face community conversations Might use 5 Rights Approach: place, style, time, price and people. Where possible face-to-face meeting Identify desired activities. Identify target groups: Only small groups might be possible Identify barriers Use COM-B and TTM as frameworks to explore issues and understand responses (Section 4) Identify relevant local facilities 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Establish trust and expressed sense of empathy with community members Role of programme manager central in building trust and relationships within community Bottom-up approach to programme agenda setting by community and not top-down approach 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Community needs identified and potential processes of behaviour change understood via relevant theories of change (Section 4) Individuals and community begin to trust/ value the initiative and its personnel

<p>Process C On-going Community Engagement (Playbook Section 3)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Low levels of physical activity • Poor provision • Improving levels of trust 	<p>Commit to on-going community engagement</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Asset-based community development and not simple sports development • Asset mapping consultation and relationship building with local organisations, community groups and events • Identify 'key connectors'. • Identify 'territoriality' and implications - Different provision • Might establish a very local Working Group (local delivery staff, community champions etc) • Whole systems approach embedding in community via relevant local partners (not necessarily sport) • Recruit volunteers with a good knowledge of the neighbourhood and respected by residents • Neighbourhood networks to decide on nature and location of provision. • Mobilise social and physical 'assets' • Establish local need and wants. Use relevant theory of behaviour change as frameworks • Use of Facebook for feedback/suggestions • Programme team actively engaging with and supporting delivery of community/partner events, activities, programmes and initiatives to build trust • Continued discussion with participants and wider community to develop new/more desirable community-led initiatives to develop sense of ownership • Develop an understanding of co-production 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Project manager has established trust, legitimacy, sense of community ownership within programme • Community-led practice-professionals are 'on tap' and not 'on top' • Long term funding reinforces trust and legitimacy 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Community develops a sense of ownership of programme • Social and physical assets mobilised • Trust strengthened between programme staff and community.. • Social capital of participants strengthened via new networks
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<p>Process D Programme delivery (Playbook Sections 4 and 5)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Connected community • Increased physical activity. • Growing sense of ownership 	<p>Programmes delivery via:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Close cooperation with existing voluntary organisations • Informed by 5 Rights: Place, Price, Style, People, Time • Appoint staff culturally and physically similar to target groups (Social Cognitive Theory) • Inclusive marketing, with appropriate images. • Variety of types of programme/activities • Social aspects of activity emphasised. Short -term gains. Gain-framing messaging • Low skill entry mastery orientation • Use hyper-local, social/ community facilities • Go to where potential participants meet • Not always football • Health by stealth? • Social prescribing? • Turn up and play sessions 	<p>To be tailored for specific target groups</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Gain-framing messaging • Select most appropriate theory of behaviour changes and relevant mechanisms to consider (Section 4): • Consider implications for programme promotion and activities <p>Transtheoretical Theory and 'target groups'</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pre-contemplation and consciousness raising, pros and cons and relevant provision • Contemplation Diverse and accessible provision. • Preparation: Self re-evaluation and address perceived self-efficacy • Action: self-liberation, • Relevant provision and increased perceived self-efficacy <p>Social cognitive theory</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Perceived similarity with coach • Outcome expectancy • Experience of performance • Persuasion and support • Perceived self-efficacy <p>COM-B</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Capability/ perceived self-efficacy • Relevant opportunity • Want/need to participate 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increased physical activity by target groups • Increasing sense of community ownership • Reducing social isolation via social and PA opportunities
<p>Process E Workforce/ volunteering development plan (Playbook Section 6)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • New staff and volunteers need upskilling to deliver programme. • Widespread unemployment in community 	<p>Develop a workforce/ volunteering development plan</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Recruitment and retention of volunteers • Coach/leadership training: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (i) Health and well-being (ii) Theories of behaviour change (iii) First Aid (iv) FA Playmaker award 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Recruit those with desire to contribute to community and/or to repay the programme. • Desire to increase own employability • Seen to be delivered by the community for the community 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Programme embedded in community • On-going refinements and improvements to programme • Strengthening of social bonds within community • Strengthened human capital and possible employability
<p>Process F Work toward retention and long-term PA (Playbook Section 4 and 6)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increased physical activity and positive attitude to physical activity, reflecting programme activities. 	<p>Work towards retention and long-term PA;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Socially and culturally relevant session leaders • Strong social component • Flexibly responding to changes in expressed wants • Development of physical literacy perceived self-efficacy and enjoyment 	<p>To be explored for specific groups</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Community ownership • Positive social relationships/ commitment • Loyalty to programme, leaders and peers • Transtheoretical Model • Maintenance stage; shift to pros and benefits. supporting relationships strong perceived self-efficacy. strong intrinsic motivation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Strengthened positive attitudes to physical activity. • Improved perceived self-efficacy • Reduced social isolation. • Improved mental and physical health of participants

<p>Process G Ongoing programme (Playbook Sections 6 and 7)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Community -owned physical activity programme 	<p>Ongoing programme via</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Participant- defined and community-led sustainable programmes with a strong social content plus training opportunities 	<p>Mechanisms</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Presumption is that the outcomes are a highly probable result of participating in participant- defined and community-defined programmes led by appropriate role models and a strong social content developing widespread intrinsic motivation 	<p>Strategic Outcomes</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Improved participant health Strengthened positive attitude to PA Strengthened sense of belonging/social connectedness Reduced health inequalities Strengthened social capital
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We hope that the above exercise provides you with a strategic view of your programme and serves to develop a collective team understanding, with a strong **sense of ownership, understanding, integration** and an organisational ability to reflect on and analyse attitudes, beliefs and behaviour.

Further resources:

Cronin, O. (2011) **Mapping the research on the impact of Sport and Development interventions**, London: Comic Relief.

Ward, S. (2023) **Using theory-based evaluation to understand what works in asset-based community development**, Community Development Journal, Volume 58, Issue 2,, Pages 206–224

Weiss, C.H. (1997) **‘How can theory-based evaluation make greater headway?’**, Evaluation Review, 21(4): 501-524.

Section 6: Management of the Programme

- In The Playbook we are not concerned with routine project management, but focus instead on three of the aspects central to Asset Based Community Development (ABCD – see [Section 3](#)). So, this section will cover:
 1. Community engagement and continued consultation
 2. Recruitment, training and deployment of volunteers
 3. Ensuring medium term participation and desired outcomes.

6.1 Community Engagement and Continuing Consultation

Co-Production

This involves ‘participatory programming’ in which a range of stakeholders, including participants and other local residents are involved in design, implementation, monitoring and evaluation. This should make it more likely that the needs of local people are met and the project achieves its outcomes.

See The Sport for Social Cohesion Lab: <https://www.sportanddev.org/research-learning/guiding-toolkits/co-creation-sport-development-living-lab-approach>.

- The ABCD approach requires those intending to develop programmes for communities to conduct an exercise to engage local people. The challenge is to extend the engagement beyond those easiest to involve and, in this case, find people at the [pre-contemplation stage](#).

More Than Consultation

Just as one of the ATF programmes adopted the strapline ‘More Than Football’, so community engagement is ‘more than consultation’. Rather than putting the consortium’s plan to local people and asking them if they would like to get involved, it means implementing ideas of co-production. There are many reasons for embracing this broader process. A project undertaken for the Joseph Rowntree Foundation identified the advantages of getting the community to participate in this kind of engagement exercise.

- It allows policy to be relevant to people living in the area.
- It increases effectiveness because communities bring understanding, knowledge and experience of the processes underpinning participation or non-participation. Community definitions of need, problems and solutions are often different from those put forward by planners and providers.
- It can enhance social cohesion as communities come to recognise the value of working in partnership with each other and with statutory agencies.
- It adds economic value by mobilising voluntary contributions to deliver physical activity opportunities and through skill development which may increase opportunities for employment and community wealth.
- It gives residents the opportunity to develop skills and networks that will help them to challenge health inequalities.
- It may promote sustainability because community members have ownership of their communities and can develop the skills to sustain projects when the original funding

has ceased.

- Active involvement of local residents is essential to improved democratic accountability. *(Adapted from Burns et al. 2004: 2/3)*

These may help you persuade members of your consortium and your own organisation of the value of this style of approach.

- A further reason for continued community engagement (see Fig. 11) is that the context (social/cultural/political) for your [theory of change](#) is likely to shift, e.g. from being dominated by Covid19 restrictions to the constraints imposed by the cost of living crisis. While financial and health matters are always likely to feature, your theory of behaviour change needs to be informed of other shifts.

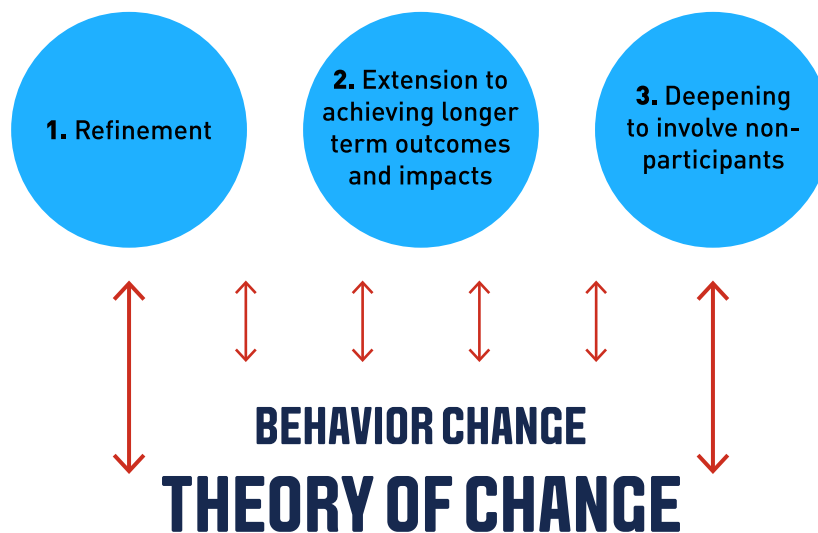
Figure 10: Principles of Community Engagement

The key principles adopted for Leeds Physical Activity Ambition for community engagement through co-production are summarised here. **Discuss with your team how to incorporate those six principles:**

1. Valuing the experience, skills and knowledge of others (Valuing)
2. Capitalising on those attributes and giving individuals opportunities to develop and grow (Abilities)
3. Encouraging everyone to be an equal partner, active in planning, running, evaluating and delivering the programme (Sharing Roles/Power)
4. Removing barriers and developing skills to join-up people and resources (Enabling)
5. Everyone should gain benefit from working together (Mutuality)
6. Improve connections between and support for all participating (Networks)

- Now that your programme is up and running you should be in a better position to consider the possibility of encouraging more of those at the pre-contemplation stage of the Stages of Change model ([Section 4](#)) to participate, which requires some consideration of why they have so far not engaged. **Remember, it is getting the least active to start participating that has the greatest health pay-off.**
- This **continuing community engagement** is an opportunity to review and refine your [Theory of Change](#). There could usefully be three elements to this stage of engagement (Figure 11):
 1. Working with deliverers and participants to identify the mechanisms they see as successfully securing the desired outcomes such as increased participation and attitude change.
 2. Looking beyond those outcomes to the longer term impacts in your theory of change ([see Section 5](#)), which may have proposed some difficult challenges like reducing crime or increasing community cohesion. What are the mechanisms that might take you beyond purely increasing participation to securing such social impacts?
 3. Working with community experts and those who still resist the attractions of your provision to try to establish what might persuade them to participate.

Figure 11: Community Engagement and Continuing Consultation



- By now you should have developed a clearer idea about effective ways of achieving the desired outcomes and even be giving thought to the desired impacts that were originally proposed in your theory of change.
- Ask yourself, 'Have I now got the knowledge and experience to ensure mechanisms likely to deliver those outcomes and impacts, and indeed to demonstrate them to the satisfaction of others?' A review of those can go hand in hand with refining your theory of change.
- Often, when sports programmes have been set-up in deprived communities it has been a case of 'this is what we can offer a group like yours'. Consider whether it can become 'what would you like us to deliver?' Blank cheques are rarely an option. Deciding between alternative suggestions/requests may be more difficult; that is where your Theory of Change is useful again. You can use it to work out which requested activities can most easily accommodate the mechanisms that you have identified as likely to secure the outcomes (and later the impacts) you are aiming for.

If you ask a question, though, you have to be prepared for the answer. One response from a participant explaining what he would like from the ATF programme was 'Go to London so we can see Buckingham Palace'. That seemed to be a misunderstanding of the principles of Active Through Football, pointing to a need to frame such questions more carefully.

- There are several ways you might get useful information, for example:
 1. It is probably easiest for you and them to start by simply establishing their pathway to participation:
 - a. previous participation and non-participation
 - b. assuming they were not participating immediately prior to your initiative try to establish why;
 - c. finding out about the programme;
 - d. what persuaded them they should take part;
 - e. how they felt about it when they did get involved;
 - f. what their programme would look like if they were designing one (this will support efforts

to secure co-production).

2. Rather than asking for a score to rate their experience it might be better to ask them about what they get out of taking part. In the Active Through Football project it was most commonly health improvements (physical, mental and general fitness), socialising and fun, but try not to put ask leading questions or put words into their mouths.
 3. It is likely to be less awkward for them if instead of asking about what is wrong with the programme you ask them if they can suggest any improvements. Or “What would your programme look like if you were designing one?”
- If you are consulting deliverers (coaches and others running the sessions) rather than participants it is fairly straightforward to ask instead about what they have observed relating to (1) and (2), and they may be perfectly aware of how delivery could be improved.
 - Armed with this detail you will be able to continue to refine the practical matters of ‘what, where, when, with whom?’ and link it all together through your theory of change.
 - You will also need to think carefully about the means by which you are going to collect the information. These could include questionnaires, one to one exchanges, group discussions, public consultation events, even observation; each have different dynamics. Whichever you choose it makes sense to:
 - » Conduct them at a convenient venue in the area where your target population lives, because of:
 - ease of access
 - those taking part are more likely to feel comfortable ‘on their own turf’ and hence be more forthcoming
 - it demonstrates a commitment to the place and the people living there
 - » Think carefully about who will do it. Are you going to do it yourself? Is there anyone in the community with the skills to do it? Local residents may find it easier to be open with them.
 - » Ask participants to suggest key stakeholders who are not yet involved. Whose views are you missing out?

6.2 Recruitment, Training and Deployment of Volunteers

- The ABCD approach and associated models of co-production carry a commitment to deliver workforce training. This makes good sense not just regarding employees but also participants.
- For employees of one of the partners in the consortium, approaches vary depending on whether recruitment is before delivery starts or once participation is under way. People will have been appointed because of the skills they possess, but training should in any case be part of workforce development already in place for third sector organisations, local authorities or sports bodies.
- So, for training on the job:
 - Remember, employees may not be familiar with this kind of project where a particular sport is not the be all and end all, but instead a vehicle for achieving other outcomes. It may not be the best vehicle for engaging people who have previously been inactive. This may require a different skill set from the elements most commonly considered in sport development.
 - Your programme may have identified enhanced employment skills as one of the intended impacts in the target area. Even if that is not the case there are obvious advantages in

providing training for volunteers if the project is to become sustainable by continuing to operate after your input has come to an end. Generally, the more skilled people have become in their volunteer roles, the more likely it is that they will be able to continue the session once you have withdrawn.

- Some of the points worth considering relate both to employees and volunteers, but we focus here on volunteers from the local area. The first challenge lies in encouraging people to want to volunteer. Some may have been identified during your initial assessment of the local asset base, others may be identified through the continued engagement and consultation exercise discussed earlier in this section, and others will emerge from among the participants. These individuals then become the best way of recruiting other volunteers.
- Many participants just want to turn up and 'play' so it may be difficult to incorporate training into what you deliver; that is just the way it is. However, the number of willing volunteers is likely to be increased if people feel they are being supported. Providing training can be part of that support.
- If someone has been prepared to invest in them by providing training it is likely to enhance self-esteem as well as boosting their self-efficacy and increasing loyalty to the project so that they feel more motivated to commit to ensure its future. For programme managers, identifying people with the ability and willingness to contribute to delivery is more important than spotting sporting talent.

Keeping Your Volunteers Onside

Don't forget, the volunteers should be able to get something out of the experience as well. So...

Provide them with the support they feel they need to do a good job. This may include offering peer mentoring from more experienced staff/volunteers.

Make them feel valued. Give them recognition by acknowledging their contribution.

Consider incentives and make sure they do not end-up 'out of pocket'.

Try to generate a collective identity so they feel they are part of a larger whole whether or not they literally end-up 'wearing the shirt'.

And beware burnout, so don't overload them.

- Most of the larger national governing bodies of sport provide training opportunities working toward coaching awards. Valuable as those can be, there is also a need for interpersonal, organisational and communications skills.
- A word of warning: recognising that such skills are important for the programme is one thing, persuading HR departments to overlook a lack of a particular formal qualification in order to appoint the person best able to operate in the community can be quite another. We have already stressed the importance to potential participants of seeing people 'like them' involved in the project. Procedural approaches can make it difficult to appoint the very people who could help to build trust between those running the project and local people.
- One of the key attributes needed in this style of work is having the flexibility to be able to change what is delivered and the style in which it is delivered, both on the day and as the programme develops.

Exercise 14

1. In the place where you are delivering, what training will provide the skills most likely to persuade local people they are able to deliver the kind of sessions that are needed?
2. If the training is successful and volunteers become capable of leading sessions or otherwise working in the community to develop the programme, is it then appropriate to pay for what they deliver?
3. What are the implications for your programme's budget?
4. What are the implications for that session when you eventually withdraw support?

Getting Help

You don't have to do it all yourself. In most places there is some kind of umbrella group for the voluntary sector (they may well have been identified when putting together your consortium) that can direct you to courses that might be useful to your volunteers. For example, Voluntary Action Leeds (VAL) has advertised training sessions around the city covering:

- Encouraging Participation in Community Groups
- Starting your organisation from scratch
- Safeguarding for adults
- Safeguarding for children and young people
- Introduction to project planning
- Finding and applying for grant funding
- Understanding leadership
- Measuring outcomes and impact
- ...and much more

Across the country the National Council for Voluntary Organisations (NCVO) organises training events, a large proportion of which are online: <https://www.ncvo.org.uk/training-events/#/>

UK Coaching is not just about sport skills and tactics, they also address important skills like building rapport, supporting special needs, and organising and planning: <https://www.ukcoaching.org/resources>

6.3 Ensuring Continued Participation and Delivering Outcomes

- As [Doncaster's Gameplan](#) advises: "Take the time to reflect on successes and possibly re-examine some mistakes too." This should be bound-up with reviewing the participant journey. What are the mechanisms that underlie people's decisions to move from inactivity (pre-contemplation in the model of the stages of behaviour change in [Section 4](#)) to being prepared to consider it (contemplation) to getting themselves ready to take part (preparation) and then stepping into your activity programme (participation)? As the model of the [stages of behaviour change](#) makes clear, it is not a case of 'job done' by recruiting people to sign-up for one of your sessions. Getting people to carry on participating (maintenance) is a necessary condition for securing those outcomes established in your Theory of Change ([Section 5](#)).

- **Critical reflection** can be enhanced by calling on members of your consortium, mentors inside or outside your organisation, the people delivering the sessions, community champions/ influencers, and of course the participants themselves, to question whether what you are planning to provide will deliver the desired outcomes (e.g. continued participation, the adoption of active lifestyles, inclusion, improved fitness, physical health and mental wellbeing).

It is also worth trying to involve others in the local area who so far have not participated. This may mean going to where they are rather than waiting for them to come to one of your events.

- Retaining your participants is obviously helped if you can keep track of people's involvement, but it's not just a numbers game. This is a chance to use your Theory of Change to shape [formative evaluation](#). Whereas summative evaluation is done retrospectively, formative evaluation is conducted to allow stakeholders to track whether the goals of the initiative are being, or are likely to be, fulfilled, and to identify the barriers and facilitators that are operating. This is the bit about learning from your mistakes as well as from your successes.
- The goal of formative evaluation should be to identify strengths and weaknesses so that you can modify the programme to improve its quality and effectiveness. Formative evaluation can be difficult if you only have a short term project; correspondingly easier if you have a longer timescale in which to adapt. Some of the key issues are discussed here, and more practical detail is provided in the following [Section 7 on monitoring and evaluation](#).

Keeping Your Participants Onside

To be successful in retaining participants you need to be able to see things from their point of view, not just how they see your project, but how they see their life circumstances.

It is important to emphasise the social dimension, make people welcome so they feel they belong and make it fun so that they want to return each week. Were they not to, they might then feel they were letting others down.

Work on communications between the project team and the participants about activities and between the participants themselves about shared interests.

Encourage co-creation whereby members of the local community have a say in shaping the programme so that people feel they have a stake in staying with it.

Table 3: Potential Uses of Formative Evaluation

- Understand the nature of the local implementation setting
- Help to understand how complex the phenomena of interest really are
- Document continual progress
- Understand the experience of those directly affected by the programme
- Understand the usefulness, context, and quality of a programme
- Understand the nature and implications of local adaptations
- Detect and monitor unanticipated events (and adjust if appropriate)

⁹Adapted from Stetler et al. (2006)

- Foster an understanding of events that cause change and the specific components of the programme that most influenced it
 - Assess whether the programme is really addressing the need that was identified by the original engagement and consultation exercise and modify as needed
 - Obtain up to date inputs for adjustments to improve the potential for success
 - Inform future similar implementation efforts, e.g., within other project sites or a larger system
 - Assist interpretation of programme outcomes in terms of the effort required to achieve them
-

- The type of information needed might include straightforward monitoring data, psychometric scales within a questionnaire, 'talking heads' to elicit individual reactions and suggestions for future improvements, or videos of sessions. These might help to establish:
 - ✓ Are you attracting the participants expected, not just in terms of numbers, but more importantly in terms of the segments of the local population they come from?
 - ✓ Are they staying with the project?
 - ✓ Are they physically more active beyond the programme?
 - ✓ Have they changed their attitudes to physical activity, health and football (or your chosen sport)?
 - ✓ Has suspicion of and distrust in large organisations been dispelled?
- To ensure the productivity of a formative evaluation it should be guided by the mechanisms identified within the theory of change, particularly those that were presumed to underlie converting inactivity to activity and participation to outcomes. So you need to work out what kind of data/information/evidence you need. That may not be the same evidence funders will be expecting, but if you operate within the framework of your theory of change it will help you shape a more robust methodology.
- At some stage funding for any group/activity is likely to come to an end, either because funding for the initiative dries up or because a decision is taken to move on to another area or group of people who are currently inactive. If the original group are to avoid relapsing into inactivity you need to identify exit routes for them:
 - Provide signposts to other providers – this may already have been appropriate for some as they acquire skills and outgrow the kind of activity that has been designed for previously inactive people.
 - Equip participants to take responsibility for running their own session through skills training (discussed above).
 - Alternative funding – some of your groups may be in the fortunate position of being able to attract alternative funding to support their continuation (the wider consortium may be able to help here) or they may be willing/able to pay an agreed amount each to cover the cost of a venue and a 'coach' (perhaps from their own number).
- Continuing to play sport is more likely if participation has encouraged people to adopt a more active lifestyle that extends beyond coming to one session a week with you. If you can demonstrate that that has happened, you will have secured one important outcome.

Further resources:

A useful explanation of **co-production** and how to do it effectively is provided by: Get Set Leeds (n.d.) Leeds Physical Activity Ambition Co-Production. Leeds City Council.

Although designed to address the conduct of large events much of the guidance offered is useful for longer term initiatives. For example, it has a planning template for community engagement: <https://getdoncastermoving.org/uploads/gameplan-community-engagement-planning-hand-template.pdf?v=1676373484>

...and another for shaping provision to engage the intended audience: <https://getdoncastermoving.org/uploads/gameplan-physical-activity-co-creation-template.pdf?v=1676373418>

Burns, D., Heywood, F., Taylor, M., Wilde, P. and Wilson, M. (2004) Making Community Participation Meaningful: a handbook for development and assessment. Bristol: Policy Press. <https://www.jrf.org.uk/sites/default/files/jrf/migrated/files/jr163-community-participation-development.pdf>

'Gameplan: A guide to maximising the social impacts of big events' was produced by Get Doncaster Moving and Leeds Beckett University as part of Sport England's Local Delivery Pilot.

<https://getdoncastermoving.org/gameplan#:~:text=Gameplan%20is%20a%20free%20handbook,major%20events%20in%20local%20communities.>

Stetler CB, Legro MW, Wallace CM, Bowman C, Guihan M, Hagedorn H, Kimmel B, Sharp ND, Smith JL. (2006) The role of formative evaluation in implementation research and the QUERI experience. Journal of General Internal Medicine. 2006 Feb; 21 Suppl 2: S1-8. doi: 10.1111/j.1525-1497.2006.00355.x

Victoria State Government – Change Our Game (2023) The volunteer capacity of community sports clubs to support women and girls in sport. https://changeourgame.vic.gov.au/data/assets/pdf_file/0010/203014/The-volunteer-capacity-of-community-sports-clubs-to-support-women-and-girls-in-sport.pdf

Section 7: Monitoring and Evaluation

Sport England's Tackling Inactivity: Design Principles:

Principle 9: Measure Behaviour change and impact.

- This section is designed to assist you to undertake your own monitoring and evaluation of your programme. It provides a broad guide to the type of information usually collected, but the final decision about relevant information will be yours.
- Depending on the nature and amount of data that you decide to collect you may require computing capacity and data analysis expertise. If you do not have the expertise to process and interpret the data there are many commercial organisations who can help you, for example, Upshot (<https://www.upshot.org.uk/>) assisted the Football Foundation and Sport England with the Active Through Football project. However, such organisations will charge for this work.

7.1 Data Protection

- Before you collect information from participants you need to be aware of your legal responsibilities under the Data Protection Act 2018, which controls how personal information is used by organisations, businesses or the government.
- Everyone responsible for using personal data has to follow strict rules called 'data protection principles'. They must make sure the information is:
 - used fairly, lawfully and transparently
 - used for specified, explicit purposes
 - used in a way that is adequate, relevant and limited to only what is necessary
 - accurate and, where necessary, kept up to date
 - kept for no longer than is necessary
 - handled in a way that ensures appropriate security, including protection against unlawful or unauthorised processing, access, loss, destruction or damage.

For full details see <https://www.gov.uk/data-protection>

7.2 Types of information

- Programmes aimed at increasing and sustaining physical activity among defined target groups will normally collect three types of information:
 - Registration data**
- Socio-demographic and personal data about participants will be required:
 - To identify if you have recruited **the targetted social groups**.
 - To understand **the participants' motivation** for joining the programme.
 - To understand how **they heard about the programme** and the **effectiveness of your approaches to promotion**.
 - For **health and safety purposes**

ii. Session attendance data

- For **health and safety** purposes
- Permits you to monitor the **frequency of attendance and for how long they attend** which is important if you have **desired health outcomes** which will require regular attendance
- Monitoring **how many and what type of participants have been retained by the programme.**

iii. Ad hoc surveys

- The data collected in these surveys will depend on your choice of theories of behaviour change and your **desired outcomes**. Such surveys can be used to collect information on:
 - **participants' experience and assessment of the programme**
 - **any changes in their attitudes and behaviour** since enrolling on the programme
 - changes in **health and well-being.**

The timing of these surveys will depend on your theory of change and when you will expect measurable changes to have occurred- either during or at the end of the programme.

7.3 Defining Monitoring and Evaluation

In the Playbook monitoring and evaluation (M&E) are understood as follows:

Monitoring

This is the regular, systematic, collection and analysis of information related to a planned and agreed programme of action (some organisations will do some of this via regular staff meetings and the use of work plans, session attendance sheets and various feedback mechanisms - e.g. ad hoc surveys). This provides evidence of the extent to which the programme is being delivered as intended, meeting its targets, achieving its intermediate outcomes and making progress towards the achievement of its final outcomes (e.g. sustained participation).

Monitoring information can also identify the extent to which changes and adaptations to the programme may be required (e.g. if there is irregular attendance, a high drop out, or drop out of particular types of participant).

Evaluation

This is the process of undertaking a systematic and objective examination of monitoring information in order to make judgements based on agreed criteria (e.g. specified outcomes). Concerns may relate to

- **efficiency** (number of participants related to cost of programme),
- **effectiveness** (your ability to attract and retain your target groups) and
- **sustainability** of a programme (e.g. developing volunteers, degree of commitment of participants).

The intention is not simply to assess what outcomes have or have not been achieved, but **why, what lessons can be learnt** and if and **how the programme might be improved**. Evaluation is also an ongoing, if less regular, process and **provides the basis for learning and organisational, staff and programme development** as it enables a critical understanding of how and why the programme is operating .

7.4 Misunderstanding M&E

- It is not unusual for organisations to be resistant to monitoring and evaluation (M&E) – especially if it is viewed as disruptive of programme delivery and places pressure on **limited administrative resources**.
- This reaction is often also based on a belief that M&E relates solely to **accountability**, providing largely quantitative evidence about what programmes have been provided, what type and number of participants have been attracted and how many have achieved the outcomes desired by sponsors and partners. It is not suggested that accountability and these measures of performance are not important - they are.
- However, the Playbook is based on the belief that **M&E is about much more than simple accountability** and, properly integrated into the programme, it can make a **developmental contribution to programme delivery, team building, organisational effectiveness and long term sustainability**.

7.5 More than accountability: Formative M&E

- There are two broad approaches to evaluation – summative and formative.

Summative evaluation is usually undertaken at the end of a programme i.e. measuring final outcomes and any hypothesised impacts (e.g. reduced crime). This is closely associated with a logic model [\[see Section 5\]](#) and tends to **provide funders with descriptive information** such as the number of participants enrolled and maintained, the number of sessions provided and the achievement of any agreed outcomes.

Formative evaluation is undertaken **during the delivery of the programme** to assess the extent to which the programme is **being delivered as intended and intermediate outcomes are being achieved**. It tends to be associated with a **theory of change** perspective, which identifies a developmental pathway [\[see Section 5\]](#).

It permits consideration of **adjustments to the programme** if required. Many organisations adopt such an approach via monitoring attendance records to assess if the programme is retaining the required target groups (if not why not?) and ad hoc surveys to assess participants' experiences and attitudes.

- The Playbook proposes a **formative approach to evaluation**, with its associated benefits for organisational, programme and staff development. Formative evaluation can contribute to the following (adapted from Stetler et al. 2006):
 - Document the nature of progress.
 - Understand the experience of those directly affected by the programme.
 - Understand the usefulness, context, and perceived quality of a programme.
 - Understand the nature and implications of local adaptations.
 - Detect and monitor unanticipated events (and adjust if appropriate).
 - Foster an understanding of events that cause change and the specific components of the programme that most influenced it.

- Assess whether the programme is really addressing the need that was identified by the original engagement and consultation exercise and modify as needed.
- Inform future similar implementation efforts.
- Assist interpretation of programme outcomes in terms of the effort required to achieve them.

7.6 Deciding what data to collect

- Organisations should collect only **relevant data** – so you need to ask: how you will use it and if the cost and effort involved are worth the information obtained.
- This should be decided on the basis of the theory or theories of behaviour change favoured, the nature of the target groups, the **agreed interim and final outcomes** and a theory of change approach [\[See Section 5\]](#) which will identify what relevant outcomes are to be achieved by which activities and when this is likely to occur in the programme.
- If participants view some data as **intrusive** (e.g. education qualifications, current work status, income, ethnicity or sexual orientation) you should **reconsider if it is essential to collect it**. If you decide that it is essential you will need to persuade participants that they can trust you with such information.
- The data outlined below are **only illustrative** and will vary depending on differing contexts and programme aims.

7.7 Collecting the data

Training data collectors

- It is essential to **train**, encourage and support those required to collect the data and to **emphasise the importance of the data** for both formative and summative evaluation.
- It will be necessary to train them on **how to explain and 'sell' the necessity of such information to possibly reluctant participants** and assure them that all personal information will remain within the programme and not be shared with anyone else [\[see 7.1 above\]](#).
- If you are using **external partners to deliver sessions**, they must be made aware of the necessity of collecting data and keeping attendance records. Such a requirement should be written into service level agreements.

7.7.1 Basic registration information

These relatively standard data relate both to health and safety regulations (who is and how many are attending each session) and identifying how successful you have been in attracting the **social groups being targetted by the programme** (which will determine the type of information you require).

- **Participants might be reluctant** to provide information which they regard as intrusive, so you **may have to 'sell' the data collection** by explaining its importance – e.g., that you want to ensure that programmes are designed to meet the needs of participants; if externally funded and free or highly subsidised, the funders require such data to ensure continued funding of the programme; that some of the information is required for insurance purposes.
- Do not simply hand out the form and ask them to complete it – **everyone must be given an**

explanation and, if required, **support to complete the form**.

- Tell participants that their **information will not be shared** with anyone outside the programme and that they will remain anonymous ([see 7.1 above](#))
- Use staff who are **familiar to and trusted by participants** to collect this data.
- Put the **programme brand and any funders' logos** on the questionnaire to add legitimacy.

7.7.2 How to collect the information

- Using **digital links to questionnaires** is the most labour efficient way of collecting and recording such data. Where digital approaches are possible this provides greater flexibility, with participants not required to eat into activity time because they can complete the form at home- after you have explained to them the importance of the data and how to complete the questionnaire.
- However, depending on the age of participants and level of deprivation in the community there might be a **danger of digital exclusion**. Also some participants with disabilities, learning difficulties or non-English speakers will need assistance with completion. In such circumstances **paper copies** may have to be used. This will require administrative resources to enter the data into a computer for record purposes and analysis.

7.7.3 When to collect the data

- Ideally the **registration data should be collected at the first session. Alternatively the survey form can be** handed out, explained and participants asked to return it at the next session. If you require participants to complete a paper copy at the first session you will need a supply of pencils or pens.
- **Much will depend on the number of participants at the session.** If it is relatively small then you should be able to complete the data collection before the session starts. However, if not, you may ask some people to remain after the session to complete it or ask them to turn up slightly earlier to the second session to do it then.
- As you will **need names for the subsequent attendance sheets** (to track participation and retention) it is important to get the registration information as early as possible
- However, if you are using hard/paper copy you might decide to reduce the amount of data to be collected – e.g., just basic descriptive personal data and leave more evaluative data (or that which might be regarded as intrusive) until the second or third session when **a degree of familiarity and trust between session leaders and participants has been established**.

The questions outlined below are examples and you may remove them or add others depending on your local circumstances and the aims of your programme.

It is also important to be clear about what information is essential e.g. name and emergency contact details, and what information is not essential. Where suitable you should always provide the option 'prefer not to say'.

7.7.4 Registration data

This type of data is relatively standard and will probably be familiar to most participants

Name	
Date of Birth	
Sex	
Postcode	
E Mail address	
Telephone number (preferably mobile)	

Disability	
Medical Conditions	

Emergency Contact details

Contact name	
Contact number	

There are some other questions which might be relevant to your project and target groups.

Q. What is your ethnic group?

These questions are based on the Census and will enable you to estimate how representative your participants are of the local community.

Choose **ONE** section from A to E, then tick **ONE** box to best describe your ethnic group or background.

A – White	<input type="checkbox"/> English/Welsh/Scottish/Northern Irish/British <input type="checkbox"/> Irish <input type="checkbox"/> Gypsy or Irish Traveler <input type="checkbox"/> Any other White background, please detail: <hr style="border: 0; border-top: 1px solid black; margin-top: 10px;"/>
B – Mixed/multiple ethnic groups	<input type="checkbox"/> White and Black Caribbean <input type="checkbox"/> White and Black African <input type="checkbox"/> White and Asian <input type="checkbox"/> Any other Mixed/multiple ethnic background, please detail: <hr style="border: 0; border-top: 1px solid black; margin-top: 10px;"/>
C – Asian/Asian British	<input type="checkbox"/> Indian <input type="checkbox"/> Pakistani <input type="checkbox"/> Bangladeshi <input type="checkbox"/> Chinese <input type="checkbox"/> Any other Asian background, please detail: <hr style="border: 0; border-top: 1px solid black; margin-top: 10px;"/>

D – Black/African/ Caribbean/Black British	<input type="checkbox"/> African <input type="checkbox"/> Caribbean <input type="checkbox"/> Any other Black/African/Caribbean background, please detail: <hr/>
E – Other ethnic group	<input type="checkbox"/> Arab <input type="checkbox"/> Any other ethnic group, please detail: <hr/>

- The data in the question below will help you to understand information channels in the local community and evaluate your approach to promoting the programme.

Q. How did you hear about this activity/session?

- | | |
|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Through a friend

<input type="checkbox"/> Through a partner/family member

<input type="checkbox"/> Through someone I work with

<input type="checkbox"/> Online/social media | <input type="checkbox"/> Medical referral

<input type="checkbox"/> Community event/noticeboard

<input type="checkbox"/> Other – please specify:
<hr/> |
|---|--|

- It is important to understand participants’ motivation as it will help you to improve your approach to promotion and amend the programme to meet participants’ desires.

Q. Why did you decide to come along today?

(Please choose a **maximum of 3**, in order of importance - with 1 being your top reason)

- | | |
|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Something fun to do | <input type="checkbox"/> Wanted to play more football |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Lose weight | <input type="checkbox"/> Seeking a new challenge |
| <input type="checkbox"/> My friends come | <input type="checkbox"/> Learn new skills |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Chance to meet new people | <input type="checkbox"/> Improve my appearance |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Improve my health | <input type="checkbox"/> Improve my chance of getting a job |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Encouraged by someone else | <input type="checkbox"/> Activity is free |
| <input type="checkbox"/> To volunteer/enquire about volunteering | <input type="checkbox"/> Other_____ |

- The next question can provide an indication of the stage in the Transtheoretical Model that your participants are in, with implications for the type of programme and support required (see Section 5).
- It may be regarded as intrusive but you can emphasise the importance of the information to tailor the programme to participants' levels of activity.

Q. In the past week, on how many days have you done a total of 30 minutes or more of physical activity, which was enough to raise your breathing rate?

Please don't feel you have to impress us. The correct answer is the most accurate one as it is important to us to know who is attracted to our programme.

- | | |
|---------------------------------|---------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> 0 days | <input type="checkbox"/> 4 days |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 1 days | <input type="checkbox"/> 5 days |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 2 days | <input type="checkbox"/> 6 days |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 3 days | <input type="checkbox"/> 7 days |

7.7.5 Additional information: issues to consider

- The need for any additional data will depend on your **definition of target groups and what outcomes you hope to achieve**.
- Participants who simply come along to do an activity and/or have fun might be **suspicious about why seemingly personal questions are being asked**.
- Also some direct-delivery session staff may be **reluctant to ask too many questions during the registration process**. You might consider whether the collection of information which is regarded as more personal and intrusive could be done **some weeks into the programme** when positive relationships and a **degree of trust has been established** between participants and session leaders.
- Further, you need **to consider how you will use any data** which might be viewed as overly personal to people who just wanted to take part in PA. **How necessary is the information?**
- However, although such a pragmatic approach might be attractive, where the data refer to **presumed outcomes related to participation** in the programme it is **essential that such data are collected as early as possible** ([see Section 7.7.6 below](#)).

Some **examples** are listed below. If you collect such data you must know in advance how you will use it.

- **Educational qualifications**

Q. What is your highest level of educational qualification?

Fewer than 5 GCSEs

Post-graduate degree

More than 5 GCSEs

Other – please specify:

A Levels or equivalent

Degree

Work status.

- This may be important if you are targetting the unemployed or want to understand possible time or other constraints on attending sessions.

Q What is your current work status?

<input type="checkbox"/> Full Time	<input type="checkbox"/> Part Time	<input type="checkbox"/> Self Employed	<input type="checkbox"/> Freelance	<input type="checkbox"/> Unemployed
<input type="checkbox"/> Zero Hours	<input type="checkbox"/> In full time education	<input type="checkbox"/> Parent or carer	<input type="checkbox"/> Retired	<input type="checkbox"/> Other

- The following question could be asked at a time that you think is appropriate. It clearly requires participants to have been taking part in the programme long enough to have formed their own opinions.

Q What are the main aspects of the programme that you find most attractive?

(Please choose a **maximum of 3**, in order of importance – with 1 being your top reason)

- | | |
|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> The chance to be more physically active | <input type="checkbox"/> I have noticed an improvement in my mental health |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Everyone is at the same level as me | <input type="checkbox"/> I am getting better at the activity |
| <input type="checkbox"/> The social aspects – meeting people | <input type="checkbox"/> Seeking a new challenge |
| <input type="checkbox"/> The friendly session leaders | <input type="checkbox"/> Improve my appearance |
| <input type="checkbox"/> The chance to develop new skills | <input type="checkbox"/> Other (please write in) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> I have noticed an improvement in my physical health | <hr/> |

7.7.6 Baseline information: measuring programme outcomes.

- If you are concerned to understand the **effect that participation in your programme has on participants** – e.g., strengthened perceived self-efficacy, changed attitudes to PA, improved sense of well-being, reduced sense of isolation - the most robust way of doing this is to undertake a ‘before and after’ comparison. To do this you would need to collect ‘baseline data’ i.e. the status of the issue that you are interested in when participants join the programme, so that it can be compared with later assessments.
- To **reduce possible reluctance** to answer ‘personal questions’ you could explain to the participants that you require the information to enable you to **provide a programme and social climate related to their needs**.
- You would then collect similar data at **specified follow-up points** to understand any change which has or has not occurred. The timing for such follow-up surveys should be based on the resources available, your knowledge as to how the programme has been developing and when you would expect any changes to occur **among regular participants**.
- Collecting data in follow-up surveys should meet less resistance as positive relationships and trust should have been developed between the participants and session leaders.
- However, you should be aware of the possibility of ‘**social desirability bias**’ i.e. participants having establish a positive relationship with the session leader might give the answers that they think the session leader wants, or simply seek to affirm someone that they have grown to respect.
- This danger might be lessened by getting someone else to distribute and collect the questionnaires – e.g. a work colleague who they do not know, or someone from a local college or university (student or staff). Digital completion and associated anonymity might also reduce the danger of bias.
- **Adopting an after-only approach**. If you are reluctant to ‘overload’ participants with questionnaires at the start of the programme it is possible to seek to assess the effect of

Kroll, T. et al (2007)

the programme later by asking participants **what changes they think that the programme has caused in them**. Do they have a different attitude to PA? Has their sense of well-being improved?

- However, this will depend on a participant's ability to recall their attitudes and competencies at the start of the programme. Also, such questions might be '**leading questions**' which lead to positive responses - e.g. has participating in the programme improved your sense of well-being?
- The use of before and after measurement scales (see below) which make no reference to the programme or session leader should serve to reduce the possibility of desirability bias.

We would recommend that you decide on your desired outcomes, explaining to participants the value of such information and **undertake before and after surveys**.

The Exercise Self-Efficacy Scale (ESES)

- [Section 4](#) highlighted the **central importance of perceived self-efficacy** (PSE) in the decision to participate (Social Cognitive Theory and COM-B) and the importance of developing and strengthening it to maintain participation (Transtheoretical Model).
- Consequently, monitoring the development of PSE is **central to understanding the effectiveness of your programme** and the extent to which you are **establishing the basis for long term participation**.
- You will have to use your judgement about when to use this 10-item questionnaire. Given its centrality to the three theories of behaviour change, the optimal use of it would be **very early in the programme** and then (say) 6 months later. This would let you understand whether the experience of the programme is leading to increased PSE and, hopefully, reflecting a commitment to long term participation.
- You need to **relate your results to the regularity of attendance** as the programme is likely to have its most positive impact on regular participants.

Q Thinking about the obstacles that you might have to overcome to undertake physical activity, please state how true you believe the following statements to be (place a tick in the relevant box or circle the relevant number).¹⁰

I am confident....	Not always true	Rarely true	Moderately true	Always true
that I can overcome barriers and challenges with regard to physical activity and exercise if I try hard enough	1	2	3	4
that I can find means and ways to be physically active and exercise	1	2	3	5
that I can accomplish my physical activity and exercise goals that I set	1	2	3	3
that when I am confronted with a barrier to physical activity or exercise, I can find several solutions to overcome this barrier	1	2	3	4
that I can be physically active or exercise even when I am tired	1	2	3	4
that I can be physically active or exercise even when I am feeling depressed	1	2	3	4
that I can be physically active or exercise even without the support of my family or friends	1	2	3	4
that I can be physically active or exercise without the help of a trainer	1	2	3	4
that I can motivate myself to start being physically active or exercising again after I've stopped for a while	1	2	3	4
that I can be physically active or exercise even if I had no access to a gym, exercise, training or facility	1	2	3	4

- The total score is derived by summing the scores for the individual items; possible scores range from 10 to 40. Although it is usual to use a total score it might be interesting to examine any changes in scores for individual statements to enable you to understand how the programme works for individual participants.

Mental wellbeing

- Many programmes seek to improve participants' sense of 'wellbeing'. This is a rather vague and multi-faceted term which is difficult to measure precisely. Consequently, we suggest the use of the World Health Organisation's questionnaire (see below) as it has a relatively limited number of statements to respond to.

Q We are seeking to understand how participating in our programme might have an influence on how you feel about yourself and life in general. To help us understand we would be grateful if you would respond to the 5 statements below, **indicating for each which is the closest to how you have been feeling over the past two weeks.**

Over the past 2 weeks	All the time	Most of the time	More than half the time	Less than half the time	Some of the time	At no time
I have felt cheerful and in good spirits	5	4	3	2	1	0
I have felt calm and relaxed	5	4	3	2	1	0
I have felt active and vigorous	5	4	3	2	1	0
I woke up feeling fresh and rested	5	4	3	2	1	0
My daily life has been filled with things that interest me	5	4	3	2	1	0

Scoring:

- The raw score ranging from 0 to 25 is multiplied by 4 to give the final score. 0 represents the worst imaginable **wellbeing** to 100 representing the best imaginable wellbeing.
- Care must be taken in interpreting the wellbeing data as a range of factors in the broader lives of participants will also be contributing to their sense of wellbeing. The effect of the programme could be explored in group discussions with participants.

7.8 Using the data

Data should not be collected unless it is used. We suggest that the data have two broad purposes.

i. Team development and programme improvement

- » The **registration data** should be discussed with the management and delivery team (including community champions) to assess the extent to which the programme has attracted the desired target groups and their reasons for attendance. This will enable an assessment of the effectiveness of your promotion of the programme and the need for any adjustments to this and the content of the programme.
- » **Attendance data** should be examined not just to track adherence/retention and drop out, but whether these vary between different demographic groups. You clearly will need to consider why this should be and what you can do about it.
- » **Survey data** indicate the nature of participants' experience of the programme. Any changes in their PSE and wellbeing should be discussed in detail with the management and delivery team (and community champions). The data could also be used as a basis for focus groups among

participants to strengthen their sense of ownership of the programme and its contents.

ii. Accountability

- » Most funders will have provided support on the basis of agreed outputs and, more importantly, **outcomes**. So an evaluation report is centrally important to the process of accountability and could form the basis for bidding for continued funding. Consequently, such reports should not simply present a description of the project but should address the concerns of the major funders and partners. A tale of unqualified success is often unconvincing, so it is better to report all challenges, mechanisms and outcomes and how any problems encountered were identified and addressed – this will contribute to more general learning about how to design and deliver such programmes successfully.

Summary

- The guidance in this section is offered in the context of your **obligations under the Data Protection Act 2018**
- **Be clear about what data you need to collect, why and how you will use it.** This refers to initial registration as part of continuous recording and what will require to be collected in a purpose-built survey
- **M&E** should not be viewed as a burden but as central to improving your programme and developing team coherence and understanding of programme aims and objectives.
- The importance of M&E means that you need to **train your data collectors** to ensure quality and relevant data
- **Monitoring** involves regular, systematic collection and analysis of information to track whether the programme is progressing as planned towards specified outcomes
- **Evaluation** involves questioning why outputs are or are not achieving desired outcomes and if required, what improvements need to be made
- **Summative evaluation** refers to measurement of final outcomes and **formative evaluation** is undertaken during the programme with a view to improving practice
- Just as you have to plan for delivering activities, so you should **have a plan for data collection** that sets out how you are going to collect what data from whom, when and how
- There is **no need to design your own questionnaires** as these are normally available from other research and have usually been validated via use in research. We have identified in this section those that we think are most likely to be helpful in research on promoting physical activity.

Further resources:

Kroll, T. Kehn, M. Pei-Shu HO, Groah, S (2007) The SCI Exercise Self-Efficacy Scale (ESES): development and psychometric properties International Journal of Behavioral Nutrition and Physical Activity Vol 4 No 34

Sport England also provide a range of useful information to help you think about evaluation:

<https://evaluationframework.sportengland.org/>

Glossary

Activities: the community engagement or sessions delivered as part of your programme.

Assets, community: assets are the resources, skills, and capacities of individuals, organisations, and institutions within a particular place.

Asset-Based Community Development: the process whereby community assets are identified and harnessed in the pursuit of community change.

Asset Mapping: an exercise conducted to assist you in identifying community assets.

Assumptions: the main underlying beliefs on which your programme and theory of change is based.

Active Through Football (ATF): the Football Foundation initiative to promote healthy lifestyles by using football to encourage physical activity in deprived areas.

Community: a geographical area or grouping of people who share particular characteristics.

Community Activists/Champions: people from the local area selected to provide insight regarding the community, promote the project and help with delivery of activity sessions. Projects may use variants of these titles and some may differentiate between titles to indicate particular roles.

Community consultation: the act of seeking information from the community.

Community engagement: involves more than consultation, requiring immersion in the community to allow a more informed understanding of the needs of local people and starts to build trust.

COM-B: short for Capability, Opportunity, Motivation and Behaviour. This model is used to identify what needs to change for an individual for a behaviour change intervention to be effective.

Consortium approach: involves bringing together a partnership of stakeholders pooling their resources (knowledge, networks and finances) to secure common goals.

Contemplation stage of behaviour change: a stage of the Transtheoretical model of behaviour change that identifies non-exercisers or casual low-level exercisers who are intending to increase their physical activity in the next six months.

Co-production: the bringing together of different stakeholders to be involved in making the decisions that shape provision.

Enabling factors: those things that help local people overcome the barriers they have previously encountered in getting physically active.

Evaluation, formative: undertaken during the delivery of the programme to assess the extent to which the programme is being delivered as intended and intermediate outcomes are being achieved.

Evaluation, summative: is usually undertaken at the end of a programme to measure final outcomes.

Health Inequality: those living in affluent areas are more likely to experience better health and to live longer than those living in poorer areas.

Impact: the sustained changes you want to see in your target group.

Mechanisms: the process of how participants interpret and act upon the various components of your programme, leading to changes in attitudes and behaviour.

Mentoring: when someone acts as an experienced guide and shares their knowledge, skills and experience to help another person learn.

Monitoring: this is the regular, systematic collection and analysis of information related to a planned and agreed programme of action.

Outcomes: changes in your target groups that you believe will contribute to impact.

Outputs: the immediate result of programme delivery e.g. number of session participants.

Participatory Programming: when a range of stakeholders, especially local people, are given a say in the design, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of the project.

Perceived self-efficacy: an individual's subjective belief that they can achieve a specific task.

Performance management: routine data collection to check on delivery and learn how to improve.

Place: a defined geographical area.

Place-based approach: operating in a defined geographical area, often identified as an area scoring highly on the Index of Multiple Deprivation and benefiting from tailored and targeted provision.

Pre-Contemplation stage of behaviour change: a stage of the transtheoretical model of behaviour change that identifies people who are not exercising and/or not intending to soon (usually measured as the next six months).

Problem: a summary of the issue or challenge your work is aimed to tackle.

Social Cognitive Theory: a model that provides guidance on how programmes should be presented to potential participants and how programmes should be designed and delivered to develop and/or reinforce participants' perceived self-efficacy. It places strong emphasis on the nature of session leaders and role models.

Social Cohesion: when people feel bound together by social relationships that provide a sense of solidarity through shared values within the community.

Stakeholders: individuals or organisations who have an interest in your programme.

Sustainability: in this context it takes two main forms: the continuation of physical activity sessions

after your involvement has ceased; people's ability to maintain active lifestyles irrespective of whether they are involved in those sessions.

Target group(s): the group(s) of people and/or community identified to benefit from your programme

Theory of change: a process for thinking about and describing the change your programme will make, and your plans for achieving that change.

Transtheoretical model of behaviour change: a model for identifying where different individuals in the community will be at different stages of thinking about, or participating in physical activity. It provides guidance for designing appropriate interventions for those at different stages of change.

Trust, individual: when one person is reasonably confident that another will do as they say they will.

Trust, organisational: – often used in academic literature to refer to the trust that employees have in the organisation they work for, but here used to refer to the trust that stakeholders have in the organisation running the project (e.g. local authority or sports club).

Appendix 1 COM-B questions

(Source: Public Health England 2019)

Notes

- Note that **not all questions will be relevant**. For example, in many cases it will not be necessary to check that people have the physical capability to do the behaviour.
- In every case it is important to **specify the context of the target behaviour**.
- These example questions are all framed in terms of doing a behaviour, but they can be adapted to address stopping a behaviour, or changing the frequency, duration or intensity of the behaviour.
- Note that in the COM-B model, the C, O and M components interact so that, if a problem is identified in one area (e.g. insufficient control over their behaviour), it can be addressed by targeting another (e.g. restricting opportunity).

Capability: psychological

1. Do they know that the behaviour needs to change?
2. Do they know what achieving this requires?
3. Do they fully understand why it is important? for example Do they understand the benefits of increasing physical activity?
4. Do they fully understand what will happen if they do (or don't do) the behaviour?
5. Do they know how to do it? for example Do they understand effective ways to lose weight?
6. How easy or difficult do they find performing the behaviour?
7. Will they have to pay attention to doing the behaviour?
8. Are they likely to remember to do the behaviour?
9. Do they have sufficient control over their behaviour?
10. Do they have the mental skills needed for the behaviour? for example Can they understand what is required?
11. Do they have the mental strength and stamina? for example Can they maintain their concentration for long enough?

Capability: physical

1. Do they have the physical capacity and skills needed for the behaviour? for example Do they have the balance or dexterity?
2. Do they have the physical strength and stamina? for example Do they have muscle development required for demanding physical work?
3. Are they able to overcome any physical limitations they might have?

Opportunity: physical

1. Do they have the time to do the behaviour?
2. Do they have the financial resources to do the behaviour?
3. Do they have the material support required? for example Do they have the required equipment or facilities?
4. Do they have easy access to necessary resources and support?
5. Are there procedures or ways of working that encourage the behaviour?
6. Are there competing tasks and time constraints?
7. Do they have triggers to prompt them for example have reminders at strategic times?

Opportunity: social

1. Are social influences likely to facilitate or hinder the behaviour (e.g. peers, social/group norms, managers, other professional groups, service users, carers, relatives)?
2. Do they have the social support required? for example Do they have family or friends behind them?
3. Do they have people around them doing it? for example Are they part of a 'crowd' who are doing it?
4. Do they have social triggers to prompt them? for example Do they have someone to remind them to do it?

Motivation: reflective

1. Do they consider that the benefits of doing the behaviour outweigh the costs?
2. Do they feel that they want to do it enough? for example Do they feel a sense of pleasure or satisfaction from doing it?
3. Do they feel that they need to do it enough? for example Do they care about the negative consequences of not doing it?
4. Does doing the behaviour conflict with other behaviours?
5. Are there other things they want to do or achieve that might interfere with the behaviour?
6. Are they willing to prioritise the behaviour?
7. Do they believe that it would be a good thing to do? for example Do they have a strong sense that they should do it?
8. Are there incentives to do the behaviour?
9. Do they see the behaviour as normal and commonplace?
10. Do they have effective plans for doing it? for example Do they have clear and well developed plans for achieving it?
11. Are they confident that performing the behaviour will achieve the desired benefits/outcome?
12. Is doing the behaviour compatible or in conflict with the person's identity?

Motivation: automatic

1. Is doing the behaviour likely to evoke an emotional response? If so, what?
2. Are they likely to feel bad or good if they do or don't do the behaviour?
3. To what extent are emotional factors likely to facilitate or hinder the behaviour?
4. Can they be led develop a habit of doing it (e.g. have a pattern of doing it without having to think)?
5. Do they need to find a way of avoiding or coping with cravings and urges?