

Sport and Active Leisure Strategy – 2019-2022

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1. Introduction

Stockton-on-Tees is a great place to live, work and play. In relation to sport and leisure, this includes the aim to provide a variety of opportunities help people sustain healthier lifestyles and support well-being. High quality, accessible leisure facilities and activities are key to achieving this.

The overall framework for health and wellbeing in Stockton on Tees is the Joint Health and Wellbeing Strategy 2019 – 2023. This sets out three high level strategic priorities;

1. All children and families get the best start in life
2. All people in Stockton on Tees live well and live longer
3. All people in Stockton on Tees live in healthy places and sustainable communities

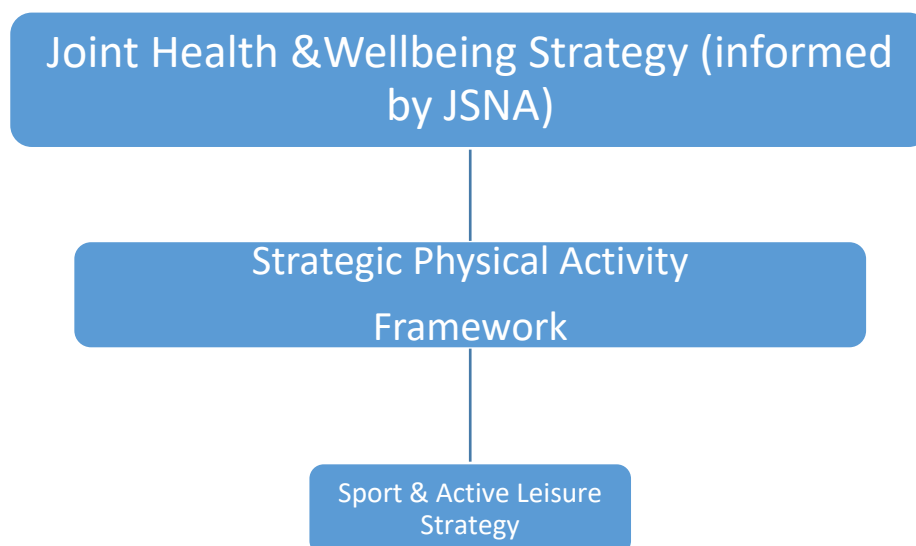
These priorities and the areas of focus within them are informed by the Joint Strategic Needs Assessment (JSNA), which analysis the health needs of the Borough’s population.

In respect of the Health & Wellbeing Strategy priority for children and families, we aim to ensure that all children live healthy lifestyles and make positive health and wellbeing choices.

In respect of the priority for people to live well for longer, we aim to ensure people live healthier and more independent lives.

This Sport and Active Leisure Strategy (SALS) for Stockton-on-Tees sets out the ways in which Stockton Council and its partners aim to use sport and active leisure top contribute to the achievement of the broad aims referred to above. The SALS is informed by the findings and priorities identified in the Physical Inactivity section of the JSNA and is aligned with the recently agreed Strategic Physical Activity Framework.

The SALS provides the strategic basis for the operational planning of the Council’s sport and leisure programmes and teams. It complements other plans, such as those for Green Infrastructure and Active Travel, and does not attempt to frame or set out all the ways in which the full range of Council services contribute to the higher-level Health & Wellbeing Strategy priorities.



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2. Challenges

People from lower income households are generally less physically active and some of our communities face significant levels of socio-economic disadvantage.

The well documented rise obesity and inactivity increases the risk of chronic ill health, with subsequent large costs to individuals and society. Credible independent large-sample surveys and data analysis shows that high levels of inactivity are closely associated with people's socio-economic position – specifically income, education and local area deprivation. Other factors influencing physical activity include gender, ethnic group, age and geographic area. Physical activity has a direct cost in terms of money and time which is higher for the poor than the well-off.

In Stockton-on-Tees, the proportion of adults and children achieving the recommended levels of physical activity is significantly worse than the national average.

- Levels of physical inactivity in England are very high; nearly 80 per cent of the population do not hit key national government targets.
- The percentage of physically inactive adults in Stockton-on-Tees (27.2%) is higher than the North East (24.6%) and England (22.3%) average.
- Education, household income and local area deprivation are all independently associated with inactivity. These differences are already evident in young adults, and increase steadily with age
- Females, ethnic minorities, and people in low socio-economic positions are all less likely to do any activity than males, people classifying themselves as White, and those with the highest socio-economic positions.
- Inactivity increases the more people are disadvantaged in socio-economic terms. Even low-cost activities such as walking are affected by socio-economic position, and the difference increases with increasing activity cost.
- Local area facilities and geographical factors explain very little of the variation in physical inactivity in England; the variations are primarily associated with individual and household characteristics.

This last finding is particularly significant to considerations of our community leisure facilities, their distribution and accessibility.

According to research by the ESRC Centre for Market and Public Organisation, (2014), the following should be considered in the development of policies designed to increase participation in sport and active leisure:

- Sports centres and swimming pools should be subsidised to keep prices low could enable low-income people to attend local facilities.
- Including more physical activity in the school curriculum and improving school facilities may help cross socio-economic divides early in life.

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- More targeted health education in certain key groups may help, in order to raise awareness of inactivity as the most important risk factor which can be modified for chronic illness

Mental Wellbeing

According to the Faculty of Sport and Exercise Medicine UK, physical activity and sport has been shown to have a strong and positive influence on mental wellbeing and some mental illnesses. Participation in regular physical activity can increase self-esteem and reduce stress and anxiety. Physical activity can help play a role in preventing mental health problems and improve the quality of life of those experiencing them. As such it is reasonable to suggest that by increasing the levels of sport and active leisure within our communities we will not only see an improvement in physical health but also the mental wellbeing of those participating.

Transport

Some communities in Stockton-on-Tees are remote from leisure facilities, secondary schools, community centres and sports clubs and as such are reliant upon personal or public transport to access sports and active leisure opportunities. There are acknowledged weaknesses in public transport systems and relevant Stockton and Tees Valley Transport strategies detail the areas for potential transport improvement as a basis for investment or for encouragement of commercial providers.

In addition to efforts to improve transport, this Strategy advocates dispersed networks of local facilities and outreach activities for isolated communities.

3. Making a Difference - Our Priorities

Despite the well-documented benefits of engaging in sport and active leisure there are still significant numbers of the population that do not engage. However, we can ensure that those who want to engage in sport and active leisure are supported are given the opportunity to do so.

Priority 1 - Develop and coordinate a universal offer that ensures that everyone can access some form of sport and active leisure opportunities, regardless of socio-economic circumstances.

Proportionate Universalism is a principle drawn from public health analysis, it informs our strategy for improving sport and active leisure participation rates.

Focusing resources and provision solely on the most disadvantaged will not reduce health inequalities sufficiently; indeed, it may stigmatise those most affected while missing the opportunity to build cohesion across the population, who are all negatively impacted to a greater or lesser extent.

To reduce the steep social gradient in participation levels, actions must be universal, but with a scale and intensity that is proportionate to the level of disadvantage.

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Current facilities, activities and programmes supporting the universal offer

Leisure Facilities – Tees Active

Research (Eisenberg & Okeke) suggests that interventions and policies that increase options for indoor physical activity, particularly among less well-off groups, are likely to be effective in increasing overall physical activity. This highlights the importance of providing high quality indoor spaces within communities to promote active leisure and remove potential barriers.

Stockton Council along with our strategic leisure partner Tees Active have over the past decade invested more than £30m into the development of a high quality and diverse leisure facility portfolio across the borough and are currently spending £11.5m creating a new leisure centre in Ingleby Barwick.

Stockton Council's partnership with Tees Active has enabled joint investment with Tees Active servicing a portion of capital repayments through their trading income and by continuing to invest in this partnership we are providing high quality universal leisure offer for our communities.

TAL's Option-3 Leisure Card allows disadvantaged residents to benefit from significant discounts and offers across the leisure facility estate. We monitor the TAL membership levels for communities of need and for geographic distribution. Graphs below show relevant data.

Tees Active interacts and makes a genuine and valuable contribution to individuals, groups and organisations across the whole the community. Key achievements in the recent past includes:

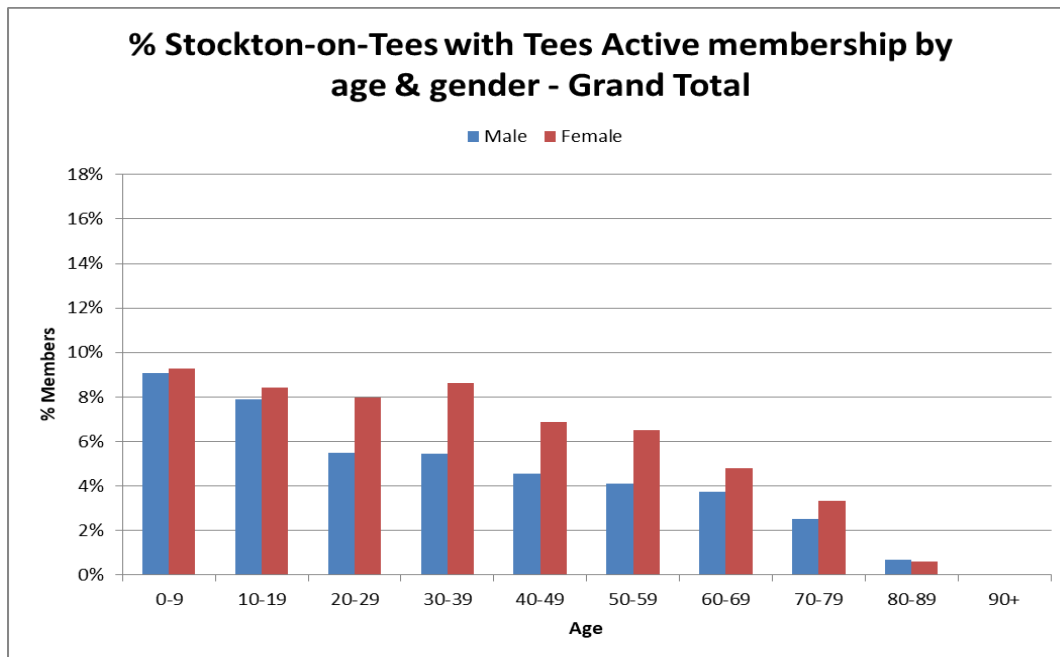
- In 2017/18 there were 1,901,198 visitors improving their health at Tees Active managed facilities, participating in swimming, gym sessions, fitness classes, ice skating, adventure activities and other sporting related activities.
- Net Promoter Score (NPS) averages 72% against a national benchmark of 47% (this is an internationally recognised industry specific measure that relates to the customers overall satisfaction with the service or product and loyalty to the brand)
- The Learn-to-Swim programme has 2004 children attending its lessons each week which provides them with a life skill and often introduces them to physical activity and the benefits of keeping fit at a young age.
- 4950 children per academic year attend school swimming lessons at Tees Active manage swimming pools
- The School Swimming programme was used by Swim England as an example of best practice of school swimming delivery.
- 369 looked after children each year have access to the Tees Active facilities
- 471 health related sessions were facilitated by Tees Active across its venues in 2017/18.
- 849 disability/special needs sessions were hosted across Tees Active venues in 2017/18.
- 305 individuals were supported on Tees Actives Lite-4-Life Weight Management scheme.
- Individuals in receipt of benefits are provided with discounted access to facilities and activities through the Option-3 Leisure Card. This is an offer that has been reduced or withdrawn in other local authority areas as they engage with commercial providers.

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Graph 1 – Percentage of the Stockton Population with a Tees Active Membership

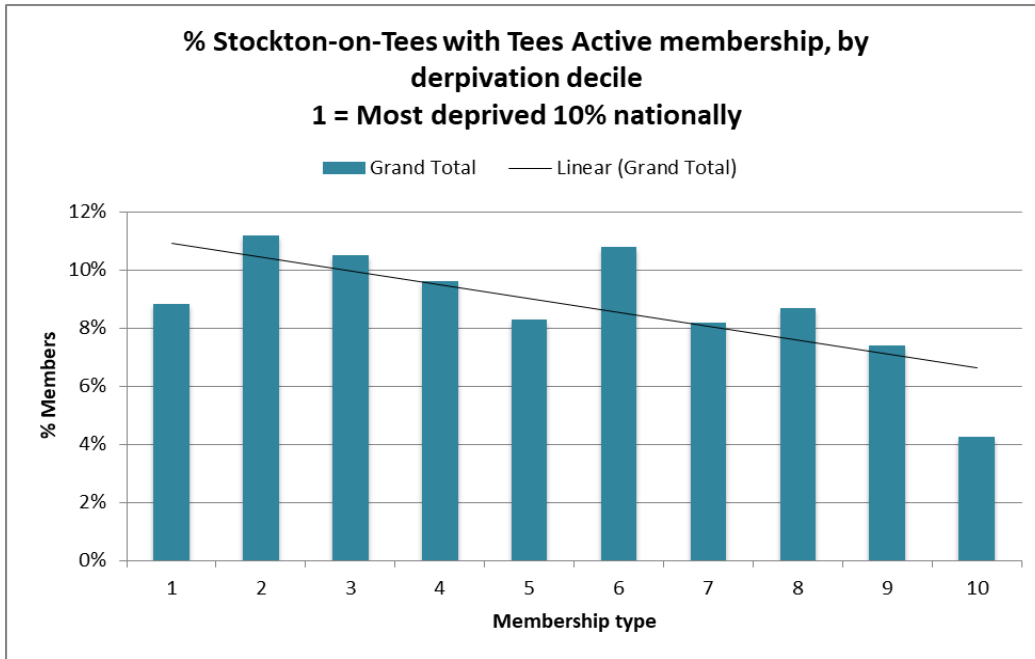


Graph 2 – Membership of Tees Active by Age and Gender

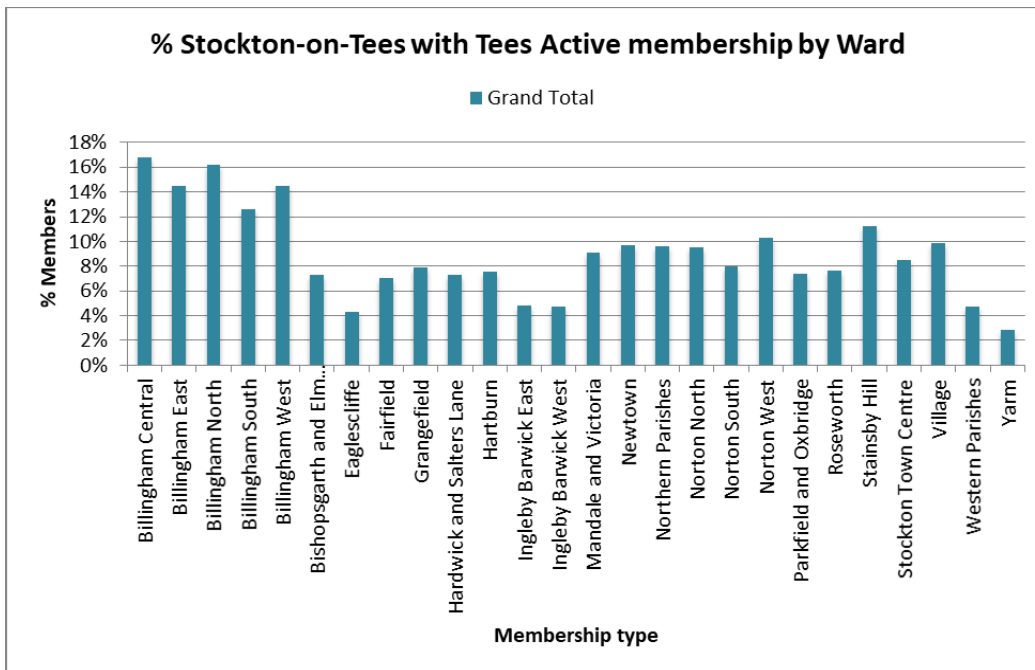


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Graph 3 – Membership of Tees Active by deprivation decile



Graph 4 – Membership of Tees Active by Ward



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KEY TARGETS

- Increase leisure centre visitor numbers by 1% per annum from 2019-2022
- Working with partners to increase the number of disadvantaged or vulnerable people accessing Tees Active's facilities from baseline

Schools and Colleges

Historically schools sports facilities, indoor and out, were difficult to access out of school hours and as such wouldn't be included as part of the formal leisure offer. However, many of the schools previously outside of the community offer are now providing opportunities for the community to access their sporting facilities.

Over the past few years there has been an increase in the number of schools that provide community use either through formal community use agreements or through external letting agencies. Currently over 90% of the secondary schools in the borough permit community use of their sports facilities. This has included some schools that have chosen to partner with specific voluntary sector clubs that have reached the scale where they require access to facilities multiple days per week to service the needs of their multiple teams/groups.

With formal leisure facilities, available playing pitches and school sites open for community use, the need to expand community use of other school sites, i.e. primary schools will be subject to demand analysis on a case by case basis. There is a willingness in principle to allow community use of primary school sites, although this needs to be appropriate to the sports and the availability of ancillary facilities (e.g. changing rooms, parking).

The Colleges within the borough (Stockton Riverside College and Stockton Sixth Form College) both promote community use of their facilities and have worked closely with the Council in the past to facilitate greater community access. Both colleges have on their sites a full-size artificial grass pitch which are utilised by community sports organisations.

Private Sector Providers

There are a number of private gyms and health clubs, fitness organisations and coaching businesses based within the borough that play an important role in the provision of active leisure and sporting opportunities both within the communities and providing programmes to schools.

Community Centres

Community centres play an important role in the provision of local sport and active leisure programmes particularly in communities where there are no formal leisure centres. Onsite Building Trust manage a number of facilities across the borough that play an important role in the leisure provision mix and are a vital cog in the sport and active leisure wheel of the borough.

Onsite Building Trust, the private limited company and charity founded in October 2013 initially took over and started managing four community centres transferred to them from Stockton Council in

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April 2014. Since then, they have developed and now manage eight centres within Stockton-on-Tees which are:

- The Grangefield Centre
- Marsh House Sports Community Centre
- The Elmwood Centre
- Robert Atkinson Centre
- Stillington Village Hall
- Ragworth Neighbourhood Centre
- Norton Grange Community Centre
- The Glebe Community Centre

People from across the age spectrum utilise the facilities at the Community Centre participating in sports activities including football, volleyball, judo, karate, badminton, health and fitness/ gym, yoga and archery. The centres also host the University of the Third Age (U3A) along with community groups and organisations such as The Guides and Brownies.

Playing Pitches/ Outdoor-Recreation sites

Playing Pitches are those outdoor sites marked out for formal sports, usually incorporating ancillary facilities such as toilets and changing rooms. Pitches include those for football, rugby, cricket and hockey, bowling greens and tennis courts. They play a vital role in supporting many of our residents to be active with football, the national game still being one of the most popular participation sports. However due to financial pressures investment into the improvement of playing pitch sites has been limited to the development of a few strategic facilities that have been developed in conjunction with developmental sports clubs, e.g. Stockton Town FC.

The development and implementation of the FA's Local Football Facilities Plan 2019-2029 (LFFP) will enable greater levels of investment to be attained for the development of football facilities across the borough (subject to partnership funding being attained). The Local Football Facilities Plans across England and Wales is backed by £640m of FA funding.

Due to wetter winters and the need to drive down costs and modernise the way football is played there is a drive to migrate much of the mini and junior football from grass onto artificial grass pitches which is in line with the FA's commitment to see 50% of mini and junior football on AGP's by 2020. The aspiration of SBC and partners is for the creation of a mixed economy of usage (grass and AGP's) which will enable the maintenance and development of a smaller number but higher quality grass pitch sites combined with AGP usage. The benefits of this include 1) fewer facilities of better quality which means better experience for footballers and 2) reduced costs for facilities owners (including SBC) as there is less funding available to maintain playing pitches and outdoor recreation sites. However, migration has proved difficult to date as although it is believed that this will create a better football experience for young people, this requires clubs, teams, players and volunteers to change their habits and longstanding arrangements.

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Migration also involves cross authority collaboration, reflecting the fact that the local leagues cover areas greater than a single Borough.

Despite football being by far the biggest participation pitch sport in the borough, other pitch sports including Rugby, Cricket and Hockey are also an important part of the facility mix across Stockton-on-Tees. The Rugby Football Union have also invested in Stockton providing a full size Rugby artificial grass pitch, currently the only one within the Tees Valley. Cricket is also still relatively vibrant in the borough although there is concern nationally about participation drop off and newer formats of the game are being explored.

KEY TARGETS

Work with the FA and the junior leagues to achieve migration from grass to artificial pitches in line with identified FA targets (50%).

Work with the four-schools identified in the Local Football Facilities Plan to bring forward strategically identified football facility improvements.

Deliver the priority community projects identified within the LFFP, subject to available funding.

Parks and Open Spaces

The Borough has a diverse range of outdoor spaces and assets which provide opportunities for active recreation and help to encourage active lifestyles. This includes 1500 hectares of publicly accessible open space incorporating:

- Two 'strategic urban parks (Preston Park and Ropner Park)
- 11 other urban parks
- Three country parks (Wynyard Woodland Park, Billingham Beck Valley Country Park and Cowpen Bewley Woodland Park)
- 48 play areas and 28 sites with informal sport facilities such as skate parks and multi-use games areas
- Numerous other sites such as recreation grounds, nature reserves, amenity green space, green corridors and cemeteries.
- The River Tees is one of the Borough's major recreational assets, with the impounded river upstream of the barrage providing ideal conditions for the wide range of water sports.
- The Borough's green infrastructure assets also include extensive public rights of way and a cycleway network.

The Borough's green infrastructure network has been extended and improved in recent years through a wide range of projects and as a result of the planning and development process.

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The Green Infrastructure Strategy (2011) continues to provide a future vision for how green infrastructure will contribute towards the sustainable development of the Borough, including the contribution it makes to health and well-being. Specific projects are identified in the accompanying Green Infrastructure Delivery Plan (2018-21), setting out how the council will work in partnership with other organisations (e.g. Environment Agency, Groundwork, Tees Valley Wildlife Trust, Natural England and others) to further develop the Borough's green infrastructure network. The plan remains a 'live' document which can incorporate any additional projects needed to support physical activity and complement other interventions.

The Hub, Stockton High Street

The Hub runs a variety of walking and cycling activities throughout the Stockton area. The project is based in central Stockton, it's a dedicated one-stop centre providing information, advice and resources for walking and cycling.

The Hub provides a number of services related to active leisure and sustainable travel which includes:

- A variety of regular guided walks and rides
- Advice on walking and cycling routes, free local maps, public transport information and personalised route planning advice
- Free, safe and secure bike storage, including lockers and changing rooms for people travelling into Stockton
- Urban cycling guidance to help individuals gain confidence with road cycling
- Cycle maintenance classes
- A bicycle recycling scheme that has seen over 200 reconditioned bikes to vulnerable members of Stockton's community

Voluntary Sector Sports Clubs

Sports clubs continue to play an extremely important role in the provision of sport and active leisure opportunities for both young people and adults. In Stockton we have over 110 clubs which makes up 10-15% of the voluntary sector organisations operating across the borough (Catalyst support over 800 member organisations). Voluntary sector sports clubs constantly and rightly being referred to as the 'life-blood' of community sport on account of the significant role they play in enabling thousands of people to engage in sport facilitating physical activity participation and social inclusion.

Many clubs however have been hit hard by the changing behaviour and habits of sports participants and spectators leading to reducing memberships and lower income through previously reliable revenue streams such as the club bar takings.

As such there is a strong argument for a fundamental shift in how clubs operate with an increase in business planning and the diversification of offer. Clubs can no longer rely on high numbers of members and a vibrant bar to provide a healthy income.

Creating a greater level of interdependence (shared knowledge/ development between clubs) is part of the way forward. In the past there has been an over reliance on the statutory agencies to provide support for clubs and with ever decreasing budgets this is becoming harder to provide. SBC and

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Catalyst continue to support club development and facilitate a positive network of clubs. In turn these clubs are committed to working together in partnership and to share expertise and resources for the greater good of community sport across the borough.

SBC continue to provide support to clubs which comes in the form of:

- Club get-togethers to facilitate ongoing contact, partnership and interconnectivity
- Support with funding/ grant applications
- Providing a link between Tees Valley Sport and grass roots sports organisations
- Consultation of strategic documents, e.g. Playing Pitch Strategy, to ensure they are appropriate and representative.

KEY TARGETS

Provide club development advice and guidance to the boroughs 110+ sports clubs via the 'Club-Hub' Social Media page.

Work with Tees Valley Sport to facilitate quarterly club development forums.

Create 'Club-link' networks in Billingham, Stockton Central, Thornaby/ Ingleby Barwick, and Yarm/ Eaglescliffe to encourage formal partnerships between clubs and schools.

Free community sports events – Parkrun & Great-Run Local

Parkrun organise free, weekly, 5km timed runs around the world. They are open to everyone, free, and are safe and easy to take part in. These events take place in pleasant parkland surroundings or on stunning riverside locations and we encourage people of every ability to take part; from those taking their first steps in running to Olympians; from juniors to those with more experience; all are welcome. The Stockton Parkrun takes place weekly at the Tees Barrage (Saturday – 9am).

Great-Run Local is a FREE, weekly, friendly running 2km and 5km events organised by trained volunteers. The friendly runs are designed to encourage participation from all levels ranging from absolute beginners and families to more experienced regular runners. The Stockton Great-Run Local takes place weekly in Ropner Park (Sunday – 9.30am).

Large Scale Sports Events

Stockton Council has developed a strong pedigree for delivering high quality sport and active leisure events, including the Stockton Duathlon Festival, the Stockton Cycling Festival, the River Rat Race and in 2019 the City Games in partnership with Great Run Company.

Large scale events have the ability to inspire people to become sporting participants. In order to maximise the power of inspiration we have developed a number of events that have brought international sports stars such as Mark Cavendish (2016 British Cycling Road Race Championships) to the streets of Stockton.

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Stockton Cycling Festival

Stockton Cycling Festival is a free annual family festival designed to engage people of all ages and abilities. Through our well-established relationship with British Cycling we have played host to both the National Road Championships (2016) and the National Circuit Championships (2018) both of which involve Olympians/ household names. The event format is typically based around:

- Youth Racing
- Ride-Stockton - A once per year opportunity for participants to ride around Stockton Riverside on accessible traffic-free roads.
- The Stockton Grand Prix - Britain's top cycling teams and riders compete in this elite road race which is part of the Premier Calendar Series

Research undertaken to measure the impact of the Festival demonstrated that almost three in four (74%) respondents said the Festival would inspire them to become more active.

The City Games

For the first time in 2019 the Great North City-Games will come to Tees Valley, where thousands are expected to enjoy this incredible spectacle in the heart of Stockton town centre where they will see world class sprinters, long jumpers and pole vaulters. The High Street will be transformed to host world class athletes from around the globe as they compete alongside the very best home-grown talent.

Outline plans agreed with Great Run Company set out how the City Games might return to other towns within the Tees Valley between 2019 and 2025.

The Stockton Duathlon Festival

Stockton Duathlon Festival is a run-cycle-run event which has over recent years attracted National, European and World Qualifier status seeing elite performers from across the UK travelling to Stockton to compete. The event aims to attract and engage participants of all levels and abilities from complete novices through to elite competitors. The Duathlon Festival which has been running since 2013 regularly attracts over 700-participants and numbers are increasing and because the event provides the opportunity for novices to get involved in an accessible and safe running/ cycling event we see it as an important catalyst for encouraging those who are doing a little bit to do more.

KEY TARGET

60% of sampled sports event attenders agree with the statement that the event has inspired them to become more active

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Children and Young People – Building and Reinforcing the Active Habit

Priority 2 – Develop and implement inspiring, appropriate and accessible opportunities for children and young people in their formative years.

To maximise the possibility that future generations of adults are engaged in sport and active leisure we need to focus significant attention on supporting our children and young people to develop 'the active-habit'.

Whereas socio-economic disadvantage impacts significantly on participation levels of adults, research suggest the impact isn't as profound on young people. As such we have a significant opportunity to provide positive sport and active leisure opportunities through schools/ schools sports partnership, TAL, family-hubs, private providers, leisure facilities and sports clubs. Secondary schools and students face a number of curriculum-based and teaching resource pressures which make it hard for them to emphasise sport and active leisure. By comparison, primary schools have greater freedoms, flexibility and resources to engage in sports programmes and children up to the age of 11-years are more receptive and malleable when it comes to participating in sport.

Drop out from participation in sport and active leisure by teens is a major concern and something that is concerning policy makers across the length and breadth of the UK. There are a number of theories about why this is the case however if we are to go some way towards reversing the trend in Stockton-on-Tees then we need to increase our understanding of the factors that lead to drop out and then take steps to mitigate them. Throughout 2019 we will be undertaking research to identify why young people in our borough drop out of sport and active leisure in their teenage years. Findings from this study will enable us to develop appropriate interventions to reduce drop by young people, and in particular by girls who are identified as a target group by Sport England.

Examples of current interventions for children and young people include:

Funk-Feet

Funky-Feet is an initiative for 2-4 year old children which develops fundamental movement and social skills and focuses on achieving learning, achievement and fun for all participants. Research has shown that young people who develop good coordination are much more likely to continue to participate in sport than those who do not.

Funky Feet has been developed in line with Early Years Foundation Stage good practice, it supports; Communication and Language, Physical Development, and Personal, Social and Emotional Development. These are achieved through playing and exploring, active learning, creating and thinking critically.

Central to the model is the principle of Child Initiated Activity, involving children being willing to have a go, having their own ideas, choosing ways to do things and enjoying achieving what they set out to do.

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What Parents tell us about Funky Feet:

- 98% of parents say that their child's social skills have improved and they have learned to mix well and share more with other children.
- 92% of parents quote that their child's confidence has improved since attending FF
- 60% of the children have tried and started to eat fruit who wouldn't have done before after seeing other children in Funky Feet eating fruit
- 90% of parents say that their child's daily structure has improved due to the structured sessions they attend at Funky Feet
- 92% say that their child's coordination has improved.
- 92% say that their child's physical development has improved

What some parent shared with us about their child's FF experience:

- *'It's fabulous, my child has learned to mix and share'*
- *'The structure of the session is really helping my son prepare for nursery'*
- *'The sessions have improved the coordination skills of my child'*
- *'My child has grown in confidence since coming to Funky Feet'*
- *'Attendance at Funky Feet has helped to develop my child's listening skills'*

What one teacher told us:

'We can tell the difference between the children who have attended Funky Feet and those who haven't. Confidence, the ability to listen to instruction and a willingness to participate in group activities are some of the characteristics that those attending Funky Feet come armed with.'

School Sports Partnership

Building on the work being undertaken to support pre-school children the School Sports Partnership works closely with schools in the development of a wide range of PE and sports opportunities.

School Sport Partnerships (SSPs) are one strand of the previous government's Physical Education, School Sport and Club Links strategy launched in 2002. Since 2006, all schools in England have been part of an SSP. They are a family of secondary, primary and special schools working together to increase the quality and quantity of PE and sports opportunities for young people.

A number of benefits of SSP's have been identified and these include:

- Collaborative planning across a number of schools and at a strategic level
- Contribution to improvements made in other subjects
- Aiding pupils' transition from primary and secondary school
- A diverse range of sporting activities available within school in which children/ young people can participate
- Growing the numbers of young people who become sports leaders.

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- SSPs strengthen the pathways from school into community sports clubs.
- After-school clubs, competitions, festivals and events

Intelligence from the Stockton School Sports Partnership has identified the following:

- Across Tees Valley there has been a significant decline in secondary sports opportunities, fixtures etc. with fewer teachers able to commit to giving additional time after school and staff not being permitted to attend events during curriculum time.
- Secondary PE teachers would suggest that issues in PE would include facilities (girls in particular not wanting to go outside for lessons), activities on offer, students not valuing the importance of the subject, exam pressure, body image, increased time on phones and gaming etc.
- Funding in Primary schools has led to an increase in the number of opportunities in a wide range of sports and there is a good take up of these opportunities However, this is not sustainable for the secondary schools and there is a big dip in the number of extra-curricular clubs offered in Y7 and beyond due to a lack of funding, exam pressure and other demands on the students' time.
- Far fewer competitive opportunities exist for secondary students & national data from School Games participation reflects this dip.
- Opportunities for young people with Special Educational Needs has improved however there is still inequality of opportunity and this is worse in primary than secondary schools.
- It is predicted that there will be an increase in the number of young people not wanting to be identified as male or female and this will create additional challenges around PE/ sports participation in schools.

School-Club links

School-Club links are formally established and sustained relationships between schools and local sports clubs. Developing stronger links between schools and clubs is important in ensuring that children feel comfortable and secure in moving from school to community sports participation. This can be particularly important for children who may not have sporty or active parents and as such the creation of the link between schools and clubs can be the important catalyst for sustainable community sports participation for a great many children and young people. There are a number of strong relationships established already between clubs and schools but by strengthening and expanding school-club links we can benefit a great many more children and young people.

Bright Minds Big Futures

Bright Minds Big Futures has been designed to bridge the gap between young people and the Council to ensure that we understand the priorities of young people and that we are being responsive to their identified needs. The Leisure and Sports Development Team will support the Big-Committee towards the achievement of the sport and leisure priorities identified within The Big-Plan.

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KEY TARGETS

Undertake a research study with young people in KS3,4 and 5 to understand factors involved in disengagement from PE, sport and active leisure in order that we can develop a fit-for-purpose sport and active leisure offer that appeals to our young people – completed by March 2020

Increase the number of children accessing Funky Feet by 20% between 2019-2022.

Increase the number of formal club-school links by 10% per annum between 2019-2022

Targeted interventions

Priority 3 - Develop initiatives that a) support the most disadvantaged, vulnerable or at risk of exclusion to be active and b) Develop interventions in response to identified needs within the community that are not provided as part of the universal offer

Sporting Steps

Operating for since 2016 Sporting Steps (SS) is showing how together sport, leisure and social care can provide a progressive cost effective support model for people with learning disabilities, sensory loss and mental health conditions. Based around sport and physical activity, SS provides a dynamic environment which supports physical, mental and social development and where individuals identify and pursue their own personal sporting goals and wider ambitions e.g. employment. Market research demonstrated a lack of appropriate sports participation, competition and volunteering opportunities for our targeted group within both Stockton and the wider Tees Valley; despite there being a desire from the target group to engage in sporting activities.

SS required a change in the mind-set of staff, partners, providers and clients. Through it all was the passion and belief that the SS approach would improve lives and do so while making significant savings for Stockton Council.

An example of how SS has changed lives, one individual in his 50's spent over 20-years in day service provision. However since attending SS he has:

- Improved his physical fitness, mental well-being and social network
- Increased his self-confidence
- Become a Multi-Sports volunteer
- Participated in local and regional sports competitions
- Secured paid employment with the Council for 12-hours per week
- Won a regional volunteering in sport award

This individual's involvement in Sporting Steps is estimated to have saved £12,000 per annum in day service costs.

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Funky-4-Life

Tapping into the energy of Funky-Feet, Funky-4-Life involves children participating in a Funky-Feet session alongside elderly residents of the boroughs care homes. Inspired by TV programmes that demonstrated the positivity of intergenerational collaboration the programme has been extremely well received and is now being delivered weekly in seven care homes in the borough.

Due to the low cost of running the programme it is planned that Funky-4-Life will be delivered within all the borough's care homes providing a physical and mental health benefit to a great many of our most vulnerable residents.

Sporting Chance

Delivered by Volunteering Matters within Stockton-on-Tees, Sporting Chance welcomes and engages older men 50+ in sports and exercise sessions. It is designed to improve fitness levels, increase social connectivity/ reduce loneliness and isolation and provide purposeful activity for those at a loose end after retirement of bereavement. Participants can access Sporting Chance either through self-referral or referral from their G.P and the programme has led to some impressive outcomes for participants including 1) weight loss 2) reduced medication 3) improved mood and mental wellbeing 4) improved mobility and 5) increased socialisation opportunities (Source - Volunteering Matters).

Exercise Referral

Delivered by Tees Active, the 12-week Active Health Exercise Referral Scheme involves participants being referred by their GP to an exercise programme to improve the negative impact of a medical condition, a medical incident (e.g. heart attack), to encourage the development of a more healthy lifestyle or to simply improve physical or mental wellbeing.

Many of the sessions involve the gym or chair based exercise and national evidence suggests that such schemes can increase physical activity in sedentary people although as with the normal population a number of barriers exist which impact upon long term behaviour change. Such barriers include:

- Lack of self-efficacy (belief in their ability to be successful in the programme)
- Poor body image
- Poor time management
- Lack of social support
- Intimidating environments
- Inadequate supervision
- Session times

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Positively-Active

Sport has been shown to be an effective vehicle for engaging disaffected individuals and particularly young people with many high profile sports stars coming from troubled beginnings. In Stockton, Leisure and Sports Development in conjunction with the Youth Offending Team and Youth Services are piloting an intervention to reduce anti-social behaviour by using sports activity sessions as a positive alternative. We believe that this intervention will both increase engagement and reduce the numbers of young people accessing the criminal justice system as juveniles. The programme will be evaluated in autumn 2019.

KEY TARGETS

Increase the number of Funky-4-Life sessions from four to ten per week by 2022.

Increase the number of participants taking part in Sporting Steps by 100% by 2022.

Develop the number of adults with learning disabilities and mental health conditions becoming sports leaders and coaches – 10-per annum from 2019-2022.

Sisters-R-Doing-It

Launched in 2014 to reduce the number of women and girls who are inactive, the Sisters-R-Doing-It running programme was developed for women by women. Feedback from women who had participated in previous 'couch-to-5k' programmes told us that due to issues such as body confidence there was a need for a women's only programme where even the instructor is female. The programme was initially delivered FREE of charge but it was recognised that levying a small cost was important in sustaining engagement of participants throughout the programme and could also generate income for SBC which could be reinvested.

The SRDI Licensing Scheme

Following interest from a significant number of women participants from beyond the borough SBC branched out and commenced delivery of SRDI programmes across the Tees Valley in 2017. This led onto the development of a licensing schemes in 2018 which sees run leaders paying SBC an annual license fee plus 20% of their income. Currently the programme is being delivered in the following locations outside of SBC with more locations being added periodically:

- Middlesbrough
- Darlington
- Redcar
- Saltburn
- Hartlepool
- Seaham
- Sunderland
- Gateshead

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The licensing scheme allows the successful model to be used in other local authority areas, encouraging more women to be more active and covering the costs incurred by SBC.

School-Club Partnerships

Egglescliffe Academy and Yarm Rugby Union Football Club

School playing pitches can lay idle for much of the time and with concerns over pupil safety seeing large fences erected in the last decade they can become community assets that are hidden behind lock and key. However a positive partnership between Egglecliffe Academy and Yarm RUFC is demonstrating the potential benefits for young people and the wider community of schools working with developmental local sports clubs to create sporting-hubs. The Egglecliffe-Yarm partnership will see the club take a lease for the schools playing fields at Allens West which will enable them to grow and develop and access national funding programmes through organisations such as Sport England and the Rugby Football Union (RFU). The School will have guaranteed unfettered access along with having a vibrant local club operating on its fields and working with its pupils. It is early days for this innovative project however the commitment demonstrated from both partners to date suggest this will be a real sporting asset for the Eaglescliffe and Yarm communities and a great model to expand upon in the future.

TARGETS

Increase the number of SRDI License holders by 15% per annum from 2019-2022.

Provide advice and guidance to ALL clubs/ schools that identify a desire to create a formal partnership for the benefit of community sports participation.

Awareness, Advocacy and Information

Priority 4 - Provide our communities with a combination of regular information re; opportunities, in conjunction with accurate, inspiring and challenging messaging

We should never make assumptions that our communities are fully aware of the benefits of participating in sport and active leisure. Nor should we assume that our communities are aware of what is available to them within their locality and across the borough as a whole. As such a key part of the strategy to increase participation in sport and active leisure involves raising awareness of opportunities, advocating for greater levels of participation and providing the right amount and level of information so that individuals can make an informed choice whether to participate and when and where they may do so. Such an approach will require greater coordination and partnership working between all the stakeholders involved in providing sport and active leisure across the borough.

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Plans

Priority 5 – Maintain and develop up-to-date strategic plans that enable significant capital investment to be secured for the maintenance of existing and the creation of new sports and active leisure facilities and activities.

In order to effectively plan, fund and provide the right sports and active leisure facilities and activities it is essential that we have up-to-date robust plans that are aligned to key national and regional bodies and strategies (i.e. Sport England) that enable investment to be secured and invested in the right sites and activities. Along with this Sport and Active Leisure Strategy the following documents are key in ensuring we are able to plan and fund our facility aspirations:

- The Playing Pitch Assessment and Strategy (2015-19) (this plan is currently being updated)
- The Built Leisure and Sports Facilities Assessment (2016-20)
- The Local Football Facilities Plan (2019-2029)

Plans can be found at the following links:

Playing Pitch Strategy and Built Leisure and Sports Facilities Assessment

<https://www.stockton.gov.uk/economic-regeneration-and-transport/planning-policy/monitoring-and-supporting-documents/supporting-documents/>

Local Football Facilities Plan

<https://lffp-prod.ff-apps.dh.bytemark.co.uk>

It is important that these documents are kept up to date to ensure that SBC and partner organisations can benefit from developer contributions and national funding streams, e.g. Sport England, Football Foundation and Section 106/ Community Infrastructure Levy contributions from developers.

Having these documents in place has enabled significant investment into sports facilities in Stockton-on-Tees. Examples include £1.5m investment from Sport England into the Ingleby Barwick Leisure Centre and over £750,000 into Billingham Rugby Club from the Rugby Football Union for the provision of a rugby specific artificial turf pitch.

TARGETS

Update the Playing Pitch Assessment and Strategy – by January 2020

Update the Built Facilities Strategy – By December 2020

3 Active Living Hubs (community level programming using existing facilities,)

It is proposed that the implementation of the Sport and Active Leisure Strategy will be undertaken from within existing resources. This will require us to work differently to achieve more with the resources we have available, exploring different partnership and delivery models. One approach

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identified through the LGA Peer Review of Physical Inactivity in 2018 was the Active Living Hubs (ALH) model, similar to the Healthy Living Centre approach of the early 2000's.

Active Living Hubs (ALH) are services based in existing buildings within less affluent areas. The aim of the ALH is to remove/ reduce accessibility issues that prevent people from participating in sport and active leisure. Based on the work of the Young Foundation's research into 'Community Sports Hubs', such a model has been shown to be effective at supporting people in disadvantaged communities to become more engaged in sport and active leisure. ALH's are considered to be a potential bridge from physical inactivity to engagement in regular participation in sport and active leisure within disadvantaged communities.

The model appears relevant to the circumstances and conditions we face in Stockton on Tees and may have significant benefits and particularly for those communities where people find it difficult to access mainstream provision due to e.g. cost or transport. A local hybrid form may provide the opportunities to increase resources and improve the impact whilst not detracting from or dismantling existing relationships and programmes of work. We believe this is worthy of further exploration and evaluation.

Based on the Young Foundations research, effective Active Living Hubs should be:

- Built on what already exists – In order to gain the buy-in of key individuals and organisations it is vital that the development of an ALH is cognisant of what is already in place and seeks to build upon rather than replace current provision.
- Championed and led by inspirational, creative and motivated people – For the individuals working and volunteering within community sports hubs it is more than a 9 to 5 job. They are not motivated by financial return or the need for status, instead they seek to improve their local community. They are inspired by their love of sport and its power to change people's lives. Limited resources mean these individuals often take on the role of coach, office manager, janitor, cleaner, marketer, role model and much more. They deploy a range of skills to keeping these organisations afloat. Indeed the strength of these hubs is the entrepreneurial and innovative approach taken by their leaders.
- Grounded in the communities they serve, and responsive to local demand – Because they are community owned, hubs often draw on volunteers, financial support, and goodwill from their local community to survive. Local political relations can also be instrumental to success. This involves everything from donations for fundraising raffles to local MPs intervening in relationships with the council. Communities that truly feel a sense of ownership invest in its success. This also extends to the practical aspects of running a hub, with the ability to adapt what is offered to ensure it meets local need and attracts the community to attend.
- Able to adapt and innovate which is often not available to public sector facilities – Community sports hubs are free from the constraints of many public sector facilities. This freedom allows them to adapt to demand, innovate in how they deliver their services and be creative in how they raise additional funds. From using a football pitch as a car park in the off-season, to catering for weddings and other community celebrations, hubs can be flexible in what and how they operate. Many have differential pricing structures which are also important in widening participation in disadvantaged areas.

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- Facilitated not delivered by SBC and as such free from the procurement processes that constrain the public sector and are able to access 'charity rates', shop in discount stores for supplies, take a DIY approach to repairs or new projects, and even engage in bartering with other local community groups to access equipment and skills which would otherwise be unattainable or unaffordable.
- Something "different" – Almost all the hubs we spoke to offer something out of the ordinary – be it culture, facilities or a unique and quirky history. They range from skate parks built in old factories, with the dilapidation a 'feature' and everyone involved in creating something new from old, to a community-run dry ski slope, to a modern purpose-built hub in a rural area offering facilities previously unavailable without an extended journey.

TARGET

To evaluate the Active Living Hub model and consider a pilot in one of the identified areas, in partnership with existing organisations.

Monitoring

The Leisure & Sports Development Service Delivery Plan (**Appendix 1**) sets out in greater detail the actions that will be taken by Stockton Borough Council.

This plan and the achievement of identified targets will be monitored as part of the corporate performance management processes. An annual report on progress on the wider strategy will be provided to the Health and Wellbeing Partnership.

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Appendix 1

Leisure and Sports Development Service Delivery Plan – What we will do

The following objectives build on the work identified within the strategy and will deliver against the identified five-priorities. These objectives will be accompanied by detailed action plans as appropriate.

Priorities	Objective
1	1. Continue to be a supportive yet demand commissioner with regards to the Tees Active Leisure Facilities ensuring both value for money and maximising access for all within the borough
1 & 3	2. Support facility providers including schools, colleges and community centres to maximise their assets for the benefit of the communities they serve. Create club-school facility usage partnerships where appropriate and possible
5	3. Ensure strategic plans are kept up-to-date to ensure external capital resources can be secured for the maintenance and development of both indoor and outdoor sports facilities
5	4. Work with the relevant organisations, i.e. the FA, Football Foundation and Clubs to implement the Local Football Facilities Plan
5	5. Continue to work with the FA, Sport England and the local leagues to support the process of migration from grass pitches to artificial turf pitches, particularly for small sided and junior football.
All	6. Work with other key strategy leads from Public Health, EGDS and TAL to ensure coordination in the delivery of strategies, facility developments and activity programmes
1	7. Continue to facilitate the development of voluntary sector sports clubs, creating a strong and collaborative interdependent club network
1, 2, 3	8. Work with facility and activity providers to develop outreach programmes that can in some way mitigate the transport barriers faced by some of our communities (linked to proposed Active Living Hubs)

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2	9. Expand the Funky Feet programme to ensure it is accessible to all children across the borough removing the barriers of cost and geography
2	10. Develop greater coordination with the school sports partnership and in particular the development of enjoyable and sustainable school and community sports opportunities for children between the ages of 4-11-years
2	11. Develop club-link networks in order to increase the number of formal relationships between clubs and schools to increase participation, particularly by children and young people
2	12. Respond positively to the findings of the research study into 'drop-out' by young people and lead appropriate challenge and interventions.
3	13. Sustain and develop the Sporting Steps initiative for adults with learning disabilities and/ or mental health conditions including the development of 1) participation opportunities 2) competitive opportunities and 3) coaching and leadership opportunities for the participants
3	14. Mainstream the Funky-4-Life programme within the borough's care homes
3	15. Work with Volunteering Matters to develop a sustainable long-term plan for the Sporting Chance programme for older-men
3	16. Measure the impact of the Positively Active programme for young people at risk of falling into the criminal justice system. Develop a business case for additional programmes as appropriate
3	17. In conjunction with colleagues from Public Health, Children's Services, EGDS and Tees Active develop and pilot the Active Living Hubs model
3	1. Explore with partners the opportunity and viability to grow and scale the Funky Feet and Sisters-R-Doing-It programmes beyond the boundaries of the borough, with surpluses reinvested back into Council services
4	2. Through the emerging Strategic Physical Activity Group develop a marketing and communications strategy that ensures a holistic and

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	consistent approach to 1) raising awareness of the importance of physical activity, sport and active leisure and 2) the opportunities available within the borough
3	3. Respond positively and appropriately to identified needs and aspirations of the community that are not provided through the Universal offer
1	4. Develop and support the delivery of sports events that 1) inspire participation, e.g. Cycling Festival and 2) enable weekly participation, e.g. Parkrun
1,2	5. Continue to work to improve access to Services and Facilities by Public Transport, Walking and Cycling
3	6. Stockton Council to be proactive and to set a positive example in the development of increased levels of active leisure and sports participation in the workforce