

# CONSULTATION PLAYBACK

## SPARKHILL



# Contents

- About Active Birmingham
- The Active Birmingham Approach
- Meet our Champion
- Location Maps
- Consultation Approach: The How and Why
- Champion Playback and Local Insight
- Findings
- What is Active Birmingham doing with the Knowledge
- Activity Finder
- Further Information





# About Active Birmingham

Active Birmingham is part of the Commonwealth Active Communities Birmingham 2022 Legacy investment aiming to...

- Tackle inactivity in local communities and engage underrepresented groups.
- Support the National Evaluation and Learning Partnership (NELP) who support learning and evaluation of whole systems and placed-based approaches, enhancing understanding of how to address inequalities in physical activity, by capturing and understanding the current conditions within place.
- Share insight and learning from across the system to co-produce solutions.

The initial Birmingham partnership:



# The Active Birmingham Approach

## Our Vision - *What we want to achieve:*

To create a city where physical activity is the norm; inequalities are reduced; systems are changed to remove barriers; and sport and physical activity is accessible and integrated into daily life.

## Our Mission - *Why we exist:*

Using the games as a catalyst we will continue to use an adaptive approach and to tackle inequalities in, and barriers to physical activity by focusing on the 3 key priority areas:

- 1) Building sector integration
- 2) Strengthening community and individual capacities
- 3) Tackling structural inequalities

These are aligned to the NELP conceptual framework interconnected areas where action to address inequalities often takes place.



# Meet Our Champion

[misbah.inspirehub@gmail.com](mailto:misbah.inspirehub@gmail.com)

## About Us – Inspire Hub CIC

Inspire Hub CIC is a community-focused Social Enterprise based in Sparkhill, Birmingham, rooted in local trust and driven by a vision of belonging, opportunity and wellbeing for all. Incorporated as a Community Interest Company in early 2025, Inspire Hub CIC was created by local leaders who share deep ties to the Sparkhill community and a commitment to fostering inclusive spaces where people can connect, learn and thrive.

## What We Do

Inspire Hub CIC delivers wellbeing and community-led activity programmes, especially for:

Low-income local residents

Minority ethnic communities

Young people aged 11-25

Older adults experiencing isolation

People facing barriers to health, wellbeing and service access

- Our organisation works at the intersection of community development, health, education, and physical activity, supporting individuals and communities to improve wellbeing, access opportunities, and reduce inequalities.
- We take a whole-systems approach, recognising that outcomes for children, young people, and families are shaped by social, cultural, economic, and structural factors.
- Through long-standing, trusted relationships with grassroots groups, faith settings, statutory services, and regional and national partners, we support locally led solutions, strengthen organisational capacity, and enable collaboration across sectors.
- Our role is both strategic and practical: we listen to communities, translate lived experience into insight, and work alongside partners to design and deliver inclusive, sustainable responses that reflect the realities of people's everyday lives.



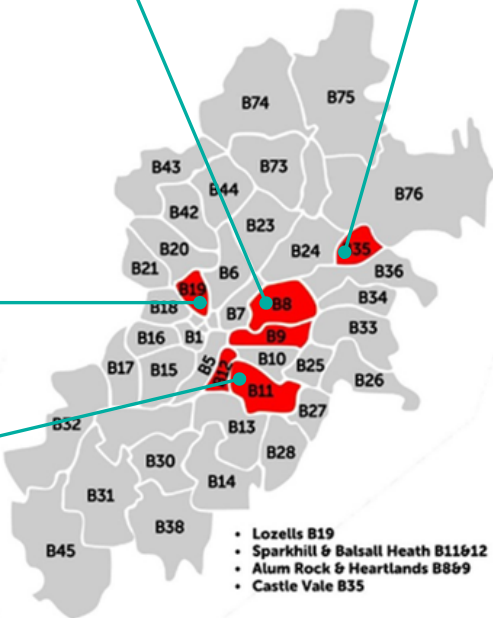
## Map of Anchor Locations

**OCF.**

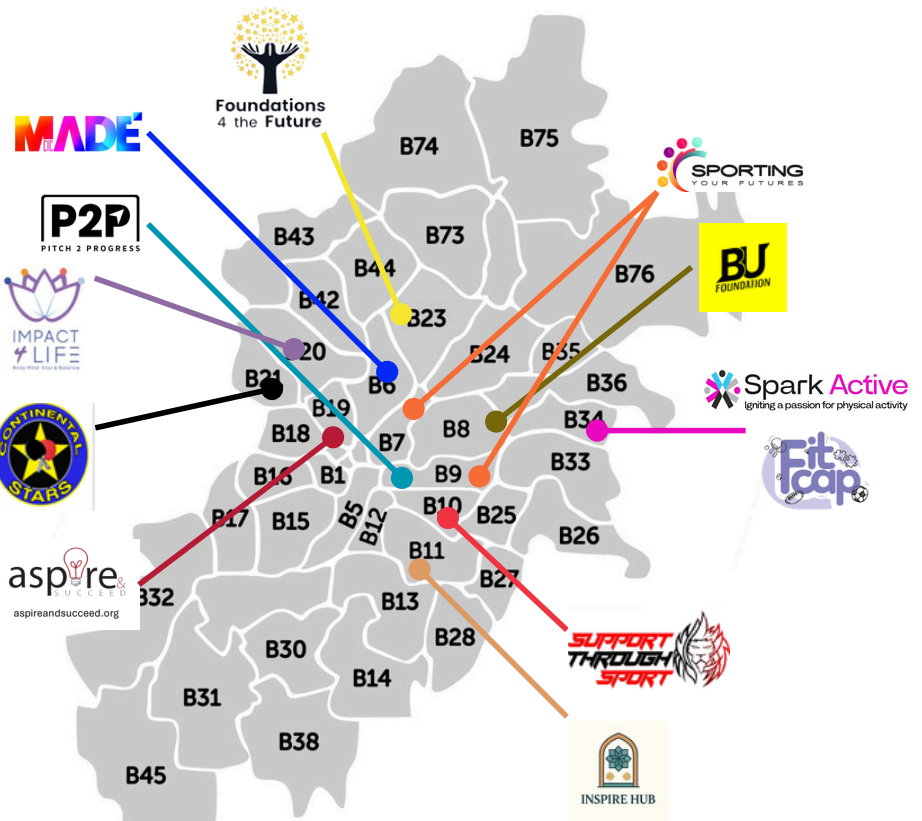
 The Pioneer Group

**SPORTS KEY**

**TOGETHER ST PAULS TRUST**



## Map of Champion Locations



- Shard End B34
- Heartlands B9
- Bordesley Green B9
- Aston B6
- Small Heath B10
- Sparkhill B11
- Balsall Heath West B12
- Birchfield B20
- Gravelly Hill B23
- Newtown B19
- Handsworth B21
- Nechells B7
- Ward End B8

# Active Birmingham Areas Map

Existing areas and areas of potential expansion



- LDP Areas (6) █
- CAC Areas (5) █
- LAP Areas (5) █

**Original Anchors (Red/Pink)**

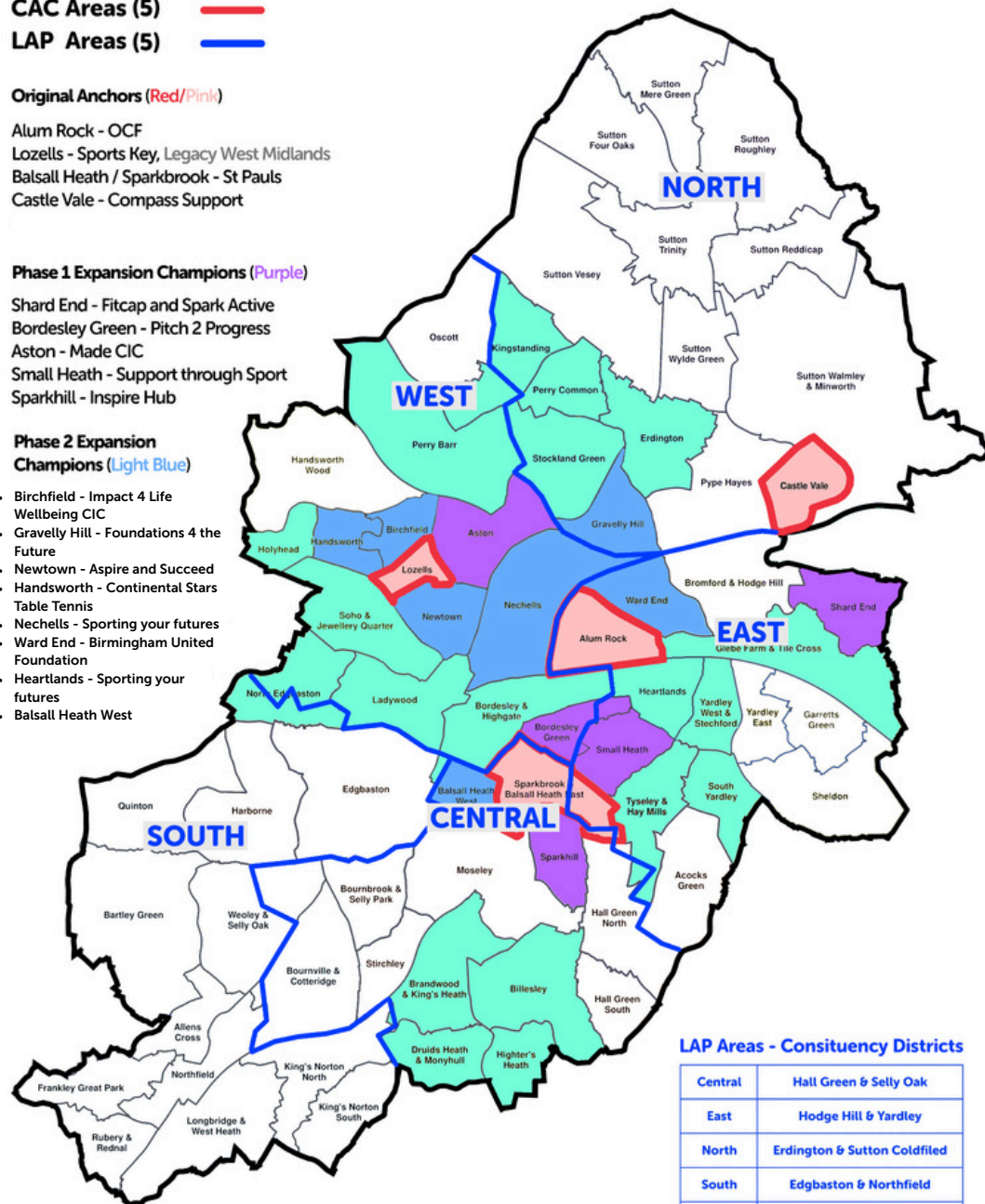
- Alum Rock - OCF
- Lozells - Sports Key, Legacy West Midlands
- Balsall Heath / Sparkbrook - St Pauls
- Castle Vale - Compass Support

**Phase 1 Expansion Champions (Purple)**

- Shard End - Fitcap and Spark Active
- Bordesley Green - Pitch 2 Progress
- Aston - Made CIC
- Small Heath - Support through Sport
- Sparkhill - Inspire Hub

**Phase 2 Expansion Champions (Light Blue)**

- Birchfield - Impact 4 Life Wellbeing CIC
- Gravely Hill - Foundations 4 the Future
- Newtown - Aspire and Succeed
- Handsworth - Continental Stars Table Tennis
- Nechells - Sporting your futures
- Ward End - Birmingham United Foundation
- Heartlands - Sporting your futures
- Balsall Heath West



# Consultation Approach: How and Why?

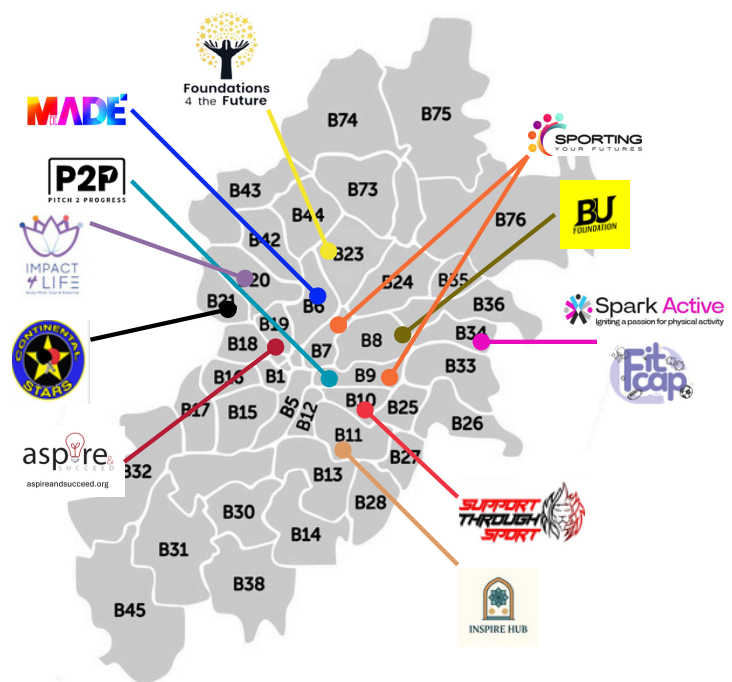
## Why Consultation Was Needed?

To ensure that Active Birmingham's approach reflects real local needs, we needed to undertake consultation in priority wards. The aim was to measure the needs and capacity of providers in each place, so that investment and resources are directed to the right areas and priorities.

The consultation enabled us to:

- Gather community-led insight to inform local delivery plans.
- Understand the current landscape of provision, gaps, and opportunities.
- Identify the barriers and enablers to physical activity across different communities.
- Build a stronger evidence base to guide place-based decision-making and ensure our actions are targeted, equitable, and sustainable.

This approach ensures that future investment and collaboration are driven by lived experience and grounded in what matters most to people and providers in each place.



# Why Anchors and Champions delivered the Consultation?

Our Active Birmingham Anchor Organisations and Champions were the natural starting point for community consultation. The anchors and champions are trusted organisations and associated individuals who are already embedded within their communities. Due to the ‘frontline’ work carried out by these organisations, they are uniquely positioned to understand the needs and priorities of their local communities, and are ideally suited to connect with people at a grassroots level.

Anchors and Champions were selected to lead the consultation because:

- They are trusted people with deep relationships with and credibility in their neighbourhoods.
- They form an integral part of their community and have been shaped by it
- They exist to benefit their local people.
- They enable authentic and honest conversations, ensuring that insight gathered is genuine and reflects real community priorities.
- They can bridge the gap between system and community, building trust and understanding on both sides. For example they can translate system language and concepts (eg. the Maturity Matrix or National Evaluation tools) into terms that are meaningful and accessible to local people.
- By empowering anchors to lead, the consultation became more inclusive, culturally relevant, and grounded in the realities of place, strengthening local ownership and buy-in for the next stage of Active Birmingham’s development.



# How Anchors and Champions delivered the consultation?

## Objectives and Scope

The anchors and champions were asked to:

- Co-design engagement objectives and scope for the community engagement strategy.
- Engage at least five sport & physical activity organisations and a minimum of three cross-sector stakeholders (e.g. local councillors, housing, police, transport) using a survey tool to better understand the conditions helping to address physical activity inequalities in place and to identify the key barriers and enablers.
- Introduce the Active Birmingham approach, brokering connections and opportunities for local organisations to get involved (using a provided slide deck and stakeholder comms).
- Deepen understanding of place, feeding insight into locality action plans and brokering further connections with community groups, networks, and systems partners.

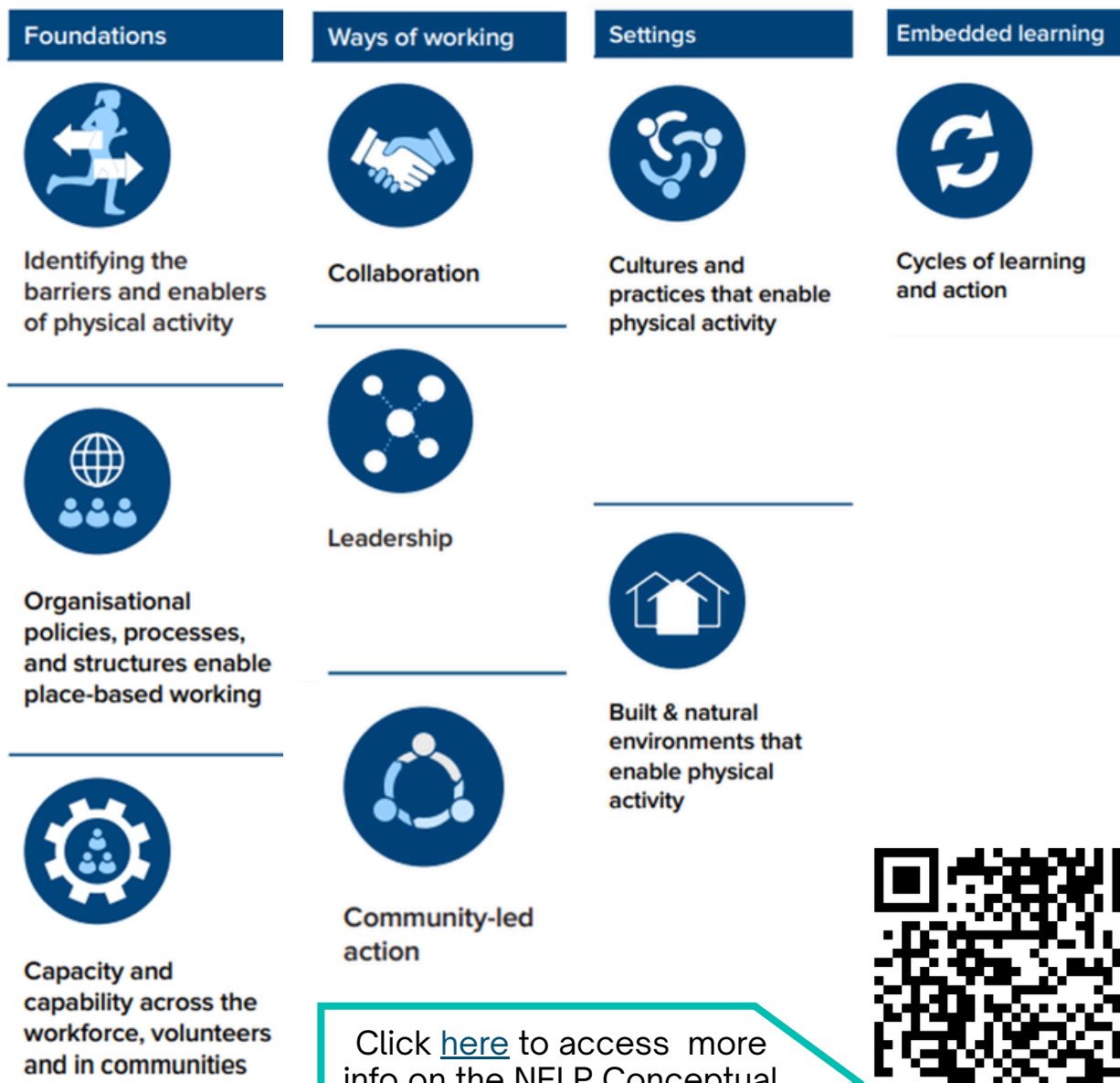
## Areas of Exploration

Through workshops, conversations, and local mapping, anchors and champions explored:

- Current context, priorities, and challenges for tackling physical inactivity.
- Barriers and enablers to participation in physical activity.
- Capacity and capability of local workforce, volunteers, and organisations.
- Cultural and social norms that shape wellbeing and physical activity behaviour.
- Assets and environments that support active lifestyles.
- Examples of community-led or co-produced initiatives already working well.
- Levels of cross-sector collaboration and leadership, including key networks and forums.
- Opportunities and gaps for better communication, promotion, and joint working around physical activity and wellbeing.

# The Survey Tool

- The National Evaluation and Learning Partnership (NELP) have identified a number of features or ‘conditions’ that may be necessary for place-based approaches to address inequalities in physical activity.
- The framework for the questions helped to engage partners and places with the 9 conditions for change
- The purpose of the questionnaire / survey is to better understand the conditions helping to address physical activity inequalities in place and to identify the key barriers and enablers.



Click [here](#) to access more info on the NELP Conceptual Model or scan the QR code



# Inspire Hub Summary of consultation approach, benefits and outcomes

- We carried out consultation by engaging a wide range of organisations operating across our local patch, including grassroots sports clubs, faith-based providers, national governing body delivery partners, private fitness providers, healthcare services, and informal community groups.
- This enabled us to capture diverse perspectives across structured, semi-structured, and unstructured physical activity provision.
- Acting as a connector across sectors has strengthened our understanding of the inequalities shaping access to physical activity, particularly where cultural norms, cost of living pressures, workforce capacity, and trust in institutions act as barriers. It has also highlighted where community-led and informal activity is already working well but remains unsupported.
- The consultation process helped identify the breadth of assets within the community, including trusted spaces, volunteers, peer-led groups, and culturally competent delivery models, as well as gaps in coordination, funding, and workforce development.
- Bringing organisations together through this process has supported reflection on current practice, encouraged more place-based thinking, and created opportunities for collaboration between health, sport, and community providers.
- A key outcome has been the development of stronger relationships and mutual trust between organisations operating at different levels of the system, supporting a shared understanding of challenges and opportunities to increase participation in physical activity.

# Consultation Findings



## 1. Identifying Barriers and Enablers

### Barriers

- First-step engagement remains the primary barrier, even when services are delivered locally.
- Low turnout persists among older Southeast Asian women and mothers.
- Lack of visible role models reduces confidence to attend new activities.
- Cultural and confidence-related concerns limit initial participation.

### Enablers

- Delivery in trusted, faith-adjacent venues (e.g. near mosques) increases participation.
- Women-only sessions create safer and more comfortable environments.
- Visibility of role models from the same demographic builds trust.
- Familiar settings reduce fear and uncertainty around first attendance.



## 2. Organisational Policies, Processes, and Structures

- Organisations lack a consistent way to capture and use community insights.
- A standard community insights template is needed to inform:
  - Internal planning and governance
  - Funding bids
  - Service improvement
- Communities want visible feedback on how their views influence delivery.
- A clear “you said, we did” approach would strengthen accountability and trust.



## 3. Capacity and Capability

### Key skill gaps include:

- Basic social media use
- Impact reporting
- Simple monitoring and evaluation
- Groups prefer peer-led learning over formal external training.
- Simple, practical templates are more effective than complex systems.
- Support should enable organisations to start small and build skills over time.



#### 4. Collaboration

- Reflective conversations help communities understand what worked and why.
- Focus groups support co-design and shared problem-solving.
- Trust increases when feedback is visibly acted upon.
- Collaborative learning strengthens relationships between organisations and communities.



#### 5. Leadership

- Informal leadership routes are often more realistic and effective than formal qualifications.
- Examples include:
  - WhatsApp group coordinators
  - Walking group leaders
- Where formal training is required (e.g. women's swimming coaches), targeted sponsorship is effective.
- Leadership development must be matched with supportive facilities and inclusive cultures.



#### 6. Community-Led Action

- Small pilot projects reduce risk and encourage participation.
- Showcasing local role models helps shift social norms.
- Combining delivery with story capture strengthens visibility.
- Evidence of impact benefits both communities and funders.



#### 7. Cultures and Practices

- Cultural relevance is strongest when activities are led by local people.
- Many organisations deliver high-quality work with limited visibility.
- Low use of social media means impact often goes unseen.
- Improved storytelling would strengthen recognition and engagement.



## 8. Built and Natural Environments

- Activities are more accessible when delivered near trusted, faith-adjacent venues.
- Session timing should fit daily routines (e.g. after school drop-off).
- Small social elements (tea/coffee) help build relationships and routine.
- Welcoming environments support sustained participation



## 9. Embedded Learning

- Knowledge is often lost when individuals leave organisations.
- Shared templates support consistency and continuity.
- A simple shared repository would help retain learning across organisations.
- Repeatable processes strengthen learning at a system level.



# Recommendations

## 2. Organisational Policies, Processes, and Structures

- Introduce a standard community insights template that organisations can use for internal planning, governance, and funding bids.
- Ensure insight collection benefits organisations directly, not only external reporting requirements.
- Embed a clear “you said, we did” feedback mechanism to demonstrate how community voices influence decisions.
- Support organisations to use insight data to adapt delivery and improve trust with local residents

## 3. Capacity and Capability

- Provide peer-led training focused on practical skills, including:
  - Basic social media use
  - Simple impact reporting
  - Light-touch monitoring and evaluation
- Develop easy-to-use templates to help organisations capture quotes, photos, attendance, and short case studies.
- Enable organisations to build skills gradually rather than relying on costly external courses.
- Focus capacity-building on confidence, visibility, and sustainability as well as delivery

## 4. Collaboration

- Use reflective “how and why” conversations to support shared learning across organisations.
- Facilitate focus groups that enable co-design with community members.
- Encourage organisations to share what worked, what didn’t, and why.
- Strengthen trust by ensuring feedback leads to visible changes in delivery.

## 5. Leadership

- Recognise and support informal leadership roles within communities (e.g. WhatsApp coordinators, walking group leaders).
- Value lived experience and community trust alongside formal qualifications.
- Where formal qualifications are required (e.g. women’s swimming coaches), provide targeted sponsorship.
- Ensure leadership development is supported by appropriate facilities and culturally inclusive environments.

# Recommendations

## 6. Community-Led Action

- Fund small pilot projects to test ideas and lower the barrier to participation.
- Use pilots to build confidence and demonstrate what works locally.
- Actively showcase local role models to help shift social norms.
- Combine delivery with story capture to make impact visible to residents and funders.

## 7. Cultures and Practices

- Continue to prioritise culturally relevant delivery led by local people.
- Strengthen visibility of community-led work through improved storytelling.
- Support organisations to share impact more consistently, particularly online.
- Reinforce social, welcoming, and non-intimidating activity cultures.

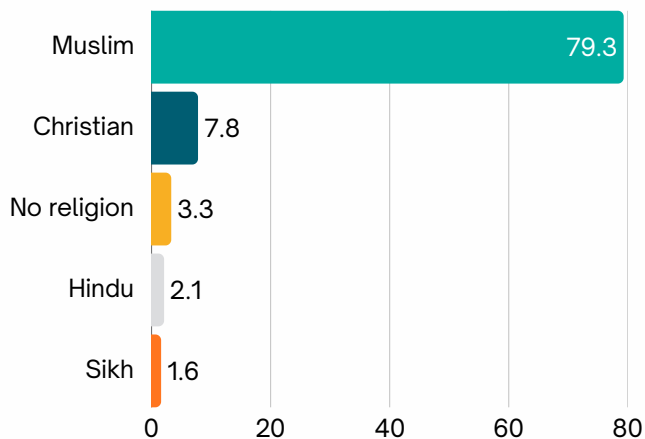
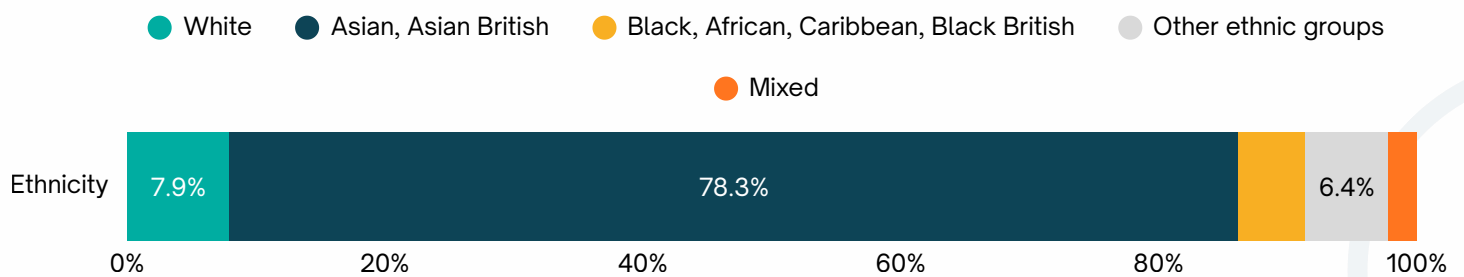
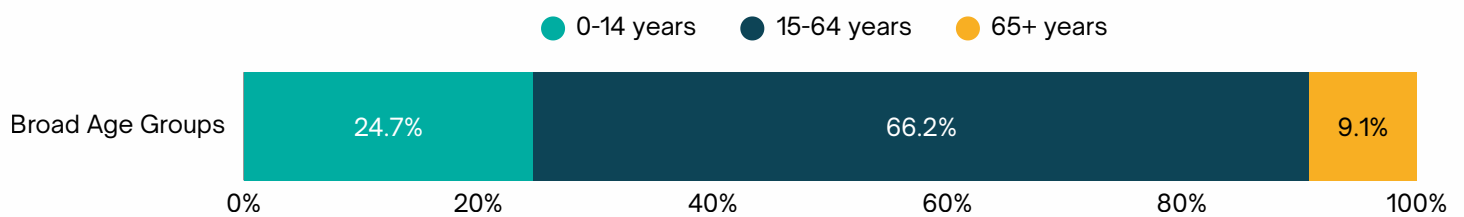
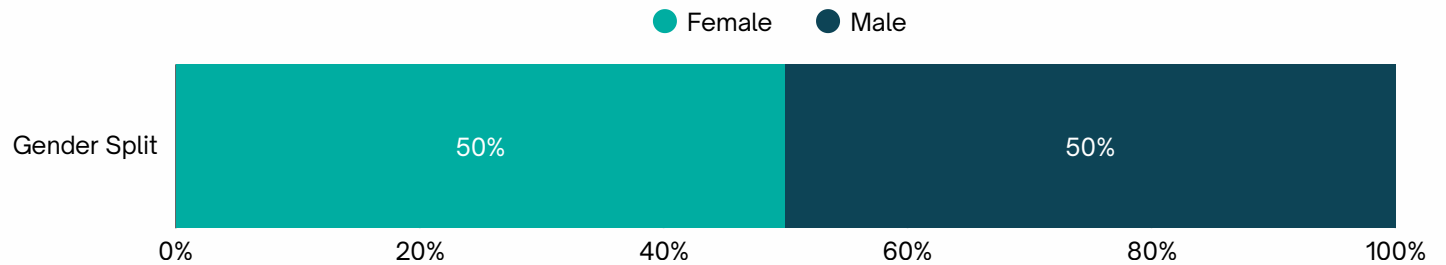
## 8. Built and Natural Environments

- Deliver activities near trusted, faith-adjacent venues to increase comfort and attendance.
- Schedule sessions at times that fit daily routines, such as after school runs.
- Include small social elements (e.g. tea and coffee) to encourage connection and routine.
- Design spaces that feel safe, familiar, and welcoming for women.

## 9. Embedded Learning

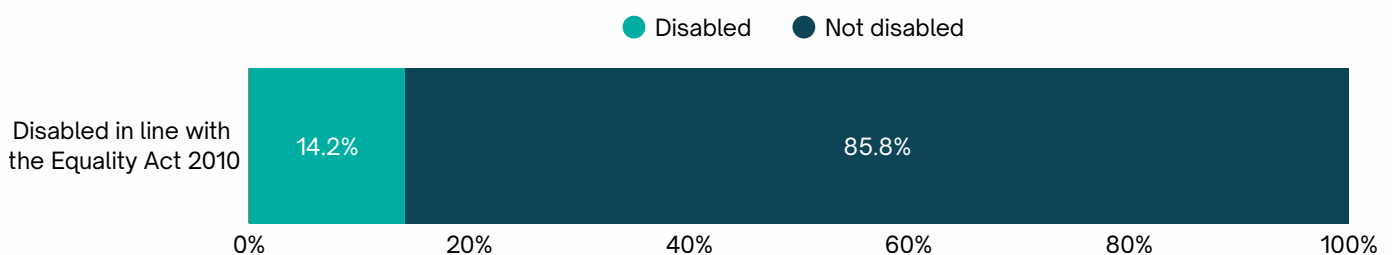
- Develop shared templates to capture learning consistently across organisations.
- Create a simple shared repository for resources, insights, and examples.
- Introduce repeatable processes so learning remains in the system when individuals move on.
- Encourage organisations to revisit and reuse learning to improve future delivery.

# Local Insight: Sparkhill



Rank out of 69 wards: **16**

Where 1 is the most deprived and 69 is the least



# What is Active Birmingham Doing with the Knowledge?

## Empowering Local Voices

- Hosting forums for community insights to shape future projects.
- Amplifying local voices in decision-making.

## Enhancing Community Connections

- Community Connector roles (Callam and Katie) to improve collaboration and outreach.
- Updating resource maps to better reflect local assets and needs.

## Securing Meaningful Funding

- Investing in tools like the Activity Finder
- Using leftover funds to maximise impact.

## Raising Awareness

- Sharing knowledge through platforms like the Council's 'City Observatory'.
- Showcasing successes wherever we can

## Encouraging Reflection

- Partnering with organisations such as WMCA, Sheffield Hallam University, and Sport England to gather insights and track progress.
- Helping orgs feedback so decisions are aligned with community priorities.

**ACTIVE  
BIRMINGHAM**

# Activity Finder

[activebirmingham.co.uk](http://activebirmingham.co.uk)



Getting more people moving



**ACTIVE  
BIRMINGHAM**

## Activity Finder

### Discover Local Activities

Easily find sports and physical activity sessions near you, filter by sport, activity or location.

### Connect and Get Involved

A hub for volunteers and professionals to link with local clubs and community groups.

### Free Promotion

Clubs and organisations can list their activities for free to reach more people.

### Support Health and Wellbeing

Healthcare and referral agencies can refer patients and service users to local activities for prevention and recovery.

Contact: [info@sportbirmingham.org](mailto:info@sportbirmingham.org)

For help guidance and information



Sign up to the Sport Birmingham Newsletter to discover more about local sport and physical activity



The Active Birmingham Activity Finder allows local sport and physical activity organisations to list their activities for free. It allows members of the public to search for a huge range of activities available in their area.

To access Activity Finder, scan the QR or click the link below. The video link provides guidance on how to list your activity.

[activebirmingham.co.uk](http://activebirmingham.co.uk) Click [here](#) for guidance video



Check out Active Birmingham Activity Finder - a fantastic and free way to promote your sport or physical activity organisation.

For more information and support in connection with Activity Finder contact Jacky White, Community Engagement Officer  
Email: [jacky.white@sportbirmingham.org](mailto:jacky.white@sportbirmingham.org)

# Ways to Connect

The Active Birmingham Network hold regular monthly Operations Group Meetings. All network members and stakeholders are warmly welcomed.

## The shared values of the Ops Group

- Inclusive
- Connectivity
- Needs Driven
- Co-Designed
- Enabling



## The shared purpose of the Ops Group

- Nurture communities to enable and empower them to create opportunities to meet their needs
- To share networks, opportunities and champion each other's work and Active Birmingham
- To influence local place strategies
- To consider target groups / priorities in areas
- To consider our legacy and ensure sustainable outcomes are achieved.
- To encourage communities to be less competitive and more collaborative – connected to funding
- Promote leadership & upskilling – linked to commonwealth legacy
- To connect national offers to local areas based on need (fingertips data)
- To amplify & act on voices of the community (push to influence policy & strategy)

## Join the Ops Group Stakeholder Partnership for:

- Invites to bi-monthly face-to-face Ops Meetings
- Active Birmingham updates and playback
- Place-based working and collaboration



For more details about the Ops Group and to join you can get in touch with our Active Birmingham Connectors:

Callam Dunne, Development Manager (Youth & Community)

Email: [callam.dunne@sportbirmingham.org](mailto:callam.dunne@sportbirmingham.org)

Katie Bolam, Activity Manager - Communities & Placemaking

Email: [katie.bolam@theaws.org](mailto:katie.bolam@theaws.org)



## Further Information



You can learn more about Sport England's place-based strategy [here](#)

Want to know more about your place?  
Click [here](#) for Census data

**Buddle** - Learning and Support for sports clubs and organisations. Click [here](#) for more information.

**Get Grants** - Funding advice, training and support for sports clubs and organisations. Click [here](#) for more information.

**Birmingham Voluntary Service Council (BVSC)** - Supporting the voluntary and community sector. Click [here](#) for more information.

**Sport Birmingham** website - A broad range of support and information including [funding](#), [events](#) and [community support](#) .

**Street Games** - national charity transforming young people's lives through sport. Click [here](#) for more information.