



# CHANGING LIVES

THROUGH  
SPORT AND  
PHYSICAL  
ACTIVITY

RESEARCH SCOTLAND  
robust. inquisitive. research and support



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## MINISTERIAL FOREWORD

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I am delighted to be introducing this Changing Lives through Sport & Physical Activity Fund Report.

This report clearly demonstrates that working in partnership can deliver positive change to better address individual and community needs through sport and physical and to support people to become and stay active. This Fund and the wider Changing Lives through Sport & Physical Activity programme has created a positive movement for change which continues to have a significant impact on the lives of those taking part. Our learning from the work is that positive change is most likely to happen when organisations understand their communities, have focus on the change they want to deliver in terms of wider outcomes and have the skills and capacity to make that happen.

The barriers to sport and physical are complex and varied, and through this approach we can help people overcome these issues and enjoy the clear benefits that sport and physical activity bring. We know that being active not only helps people with their own health and wellbeing, but also helps develop skills and brings communities together. I have been impressed to see both sporting and non-sporting organisations use sport and physical activity intentionally to get more people taking part and this report highlights the considerable amount of great work that has taken place to support communities and people to be active, and made a difference to so many across Scotland.

I am pleased to see the strong emphasis on inclusion is prominent within this report as we strive to build a more inclusive and healthier nation. This is ever more important as we address the impacts of the pandemic and ensure that the whole sector works to support participation across all groups and tackle inequalities. I am confident that we can continue to make progress in this area. I invite you all to join us and help change lives through sport and physical activity.

Finally, I want to offer my thanks to everyone involved in the success of this work particularly the 17 partnerships for their commitment and Spirit of 2012 for management of the Fund. Thanks also to the Changing Lives Operational Group of **sportscotland**, Spirit of 2012, The Robertson Trust and Scottish Government and to Research Scotland for their continued support throughout the duration of the Fund and for this report.

**Maree Todd**

Minister for Public Health, Women's Health and Sport



# VOICES OF CHANGING LIVES PARTICIPANTS



**“I love the clubs...I feel good and love coming every night. I feel better and I have got much faster.”**

**“I talk to people a lot more – it’s good that way. It’s all about just helping each other out. So, I’ve got that goodness in me that I was missing for a long time.”**

**“**

**I feel more confident and empowered.”**

**“I haven’t found anything else that calms me as much as physical activity does.”**



**“I’ve overcome people touching me and I’m coping better in crowds with lots of noise. I’m making new friends and feel included as part of the team.”**

**“**

**It’s lifted my feeling of wellbeing. I’ve made some good friends and I’m getting fitter!”**

**“It is the first real team sport I have been involved in. It is very supportive, confidence boosting. It does not feel like exercise, it became just like meeting your pals every week.”**

**“**

**Having exercise posts in the garden has made me fitter and helped improve my confidence going outdoors. It’s good fun too.**

**”**





# SUMMARY

## WHAT IS THE CHANGING LIVES FUND?

This report sets out findings from an evaluation of the Changing Lives through Sport and Physical Activity Fund.

This was a £1 million Fund which sat within the wider Changing Lives through Sport and Physical Activity Programme and involved national partners Scottish Government, **sportscotland**, The Robertson Trust and Spirit of 2012. Spirit of 2012 managed the Fund on behalf of partners.

The Changing Lives Fund aimed to change lives through sport and physical activity. It aimed to address wider individual and community needs through sport and physical activity, and to support people to become and stay active. The focus was on individual or societal change, not on increasing participation or providing pathways to a particular sport.

The Fund supported 17 partnerships, providing short-term additional resource to enable sport and community organisations to intentionally change lives through sport and physical activity. It aimed to bring about change in relation to health and wellbeing, inclusion, skills and community connections.

Funded partnerships involved collaboration between sport and physical activity focused organisations, and a wide mix of other organisations including community, equality, youth work and health organisations.

The Fund was intended to run for two years, from early 2019 to late 2020. For many projects, the first six months focused on project set up, with delivery commencing mid-2019. In early 2020, the context changed substantially with the emergence of the Covid-19 pandemic. Projects were paused for some time, moved to crisis support to assist communities and had to significantly change the way they were delivered. The Fund was therefore extended through to autumn 2021.

This evaluation covers the Fund from early 2019 to late 2021, exploring project delivery, participants, outcomes and learning. It is supported by a detailed interim report which covers Year One of the Fund (pre-pandemic) which was produced in spring 2020.





## WHO IS TAKING PART IN CHANGING LIVES ACTIVITY?

The Changing Lives Fund involved 2,860 people in sustained activity (Level 2), and more than 10,300 in low level, taster, introductory or mass participation activity (Level 1). Level 2 is the stage at which it is expected that change could take place for the individual. Level 1 is about engaging people in activity, with the aim of moving them on to Level 2 over time.

Across the programme, there were a much higher number of Level 1 (low level/taster) participants than expected, and a slightly lower number of Level 2 (sustained activity). This is likely to have been affected by the pandemic.

There was a strong focus on young people in the Fund, with almost half of all participants being under 16. There was a broadly equal split, with slightly more female participants than male and a good proportion of participants were minority ethnic – at 25%. Just over one in ten participants was disabled, which was below target and below average for the Scottish population.

Some projects also targeted specific groups, such as people from areas of high deprivation, young people with care experience, people with experience of substance misuse, people recently liberated from prison and people not in employment or education.

To engage participants, projects found that it was helpful to support participants to lead and drive activity themselves, and combine physical activity with social opportunities. Delivery staff who could inspire participants as role models or had lived experience also helped to engage participants. A key aspect of reaching target groups effectively was working in partnership, across sectors, to make the most of the contacts, networks and trust that each partner organisation had built up.

As the pandemic emerged, projects found that the relationships they had built up with participants helped to maintain engagement with participants, to support them through the pandemic. It was harder, however, to build new relationships in the context of restrictions and uncertainty.

Projects experienced challenges planning and re-planning activity to meet changing guidelines, running sessions at a distance due to restrictions on face to face and group work, and finding suitable venues for activity once restrictions eased.

While online approaches were used, and a few projects felt they engaged some new participants in this way, projects found that there was a high level of fatigue about online activity, as well as challenges accessing devices and connectivity, and finding space to be physically active at home.

**THE CHANGING LIVES FUND INVOLVED MORE THAN**  
**13,000 people**

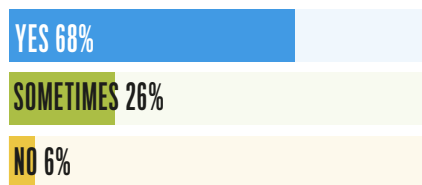


# ARE WE CHANGING LIVES?

## STRENGTHENING COMMUNITIES

The Changing Lives Fund highlighted the real potential for strengthening communities through sport and physical activity. In Year 1, pre-pandemic, there was good evidence from a sample of those involved in a sustained way in the Fund that most felt their project helped them to become more involved in their community.

**Has the project helped you feel involved in your community?**



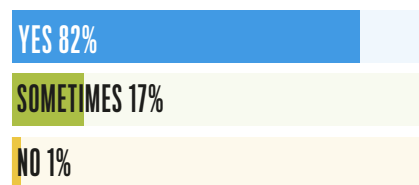
Total number N = 120

In Year 2, for many projects, building strong communities became a key focus. Projects worked to meet the immediate needs of individuals and families, and help people connect, talk about anxieties and communicate. Projects helped participants feel included and connected during the pandemic and feel part of something in their community. Some projects found that they widened their focus to work with families, rather than individuals.

## INCLUSION THROUGH SPORT AND PHYSICAL ACTIVITY

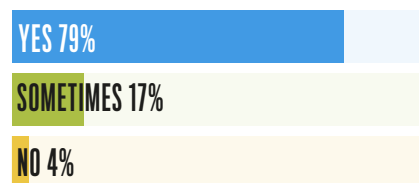
Pre-pandemic, evidence from a small sample of those involved in a sustained way highlighted that the Changing Lives Fund had a clear impact on how included and close to other people project participants feel. Almost all felt the project helped them to feel more included and closer to people, with group activity helping individuals to bond with one another and create a sense of belonging.

**Has the project helped you feel included?**



Total number N = 153

**Has the project helped you feel closer to people?**



Total number N = 151

In Year 2, while the pandemic made it challenging to build connections and bring people together, some projects gave evidence about how their work had supported people to build friendships, connect, foster a sense of belonging, and support people to socialise more and reduce isolation.

“

**I TALK TO PEOPLE A LOT MORE – IT’S GOOD THAT WAY. IT’S ALL ABOUT JUST HELPING EACH OTHER OUT.”**

Participant





“

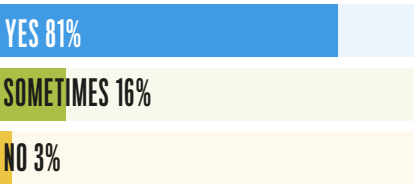
**IT DOESN'T MATTER  
WHAT LEVEL YOU'RE  
AT, IT'S INCLUSIVE  
FOR EVERYBODY.”**

Participant

HEALTH AND WELLBEING

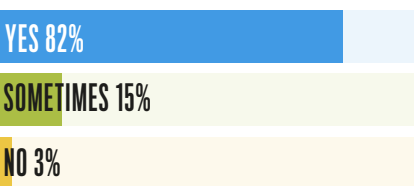
Evidence from the first year of the Fund, pre-pandemic, shows that projects helped most people to feel healthy, useful, relaxed and optimistic.

Has the project helped you feel healthy?



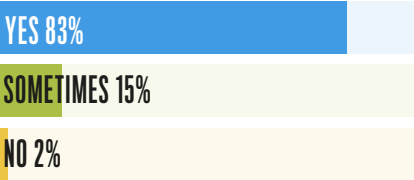
Total number N = 159

Has the project helped you feel relaxed?



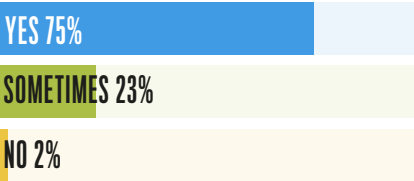
Total number N = 126

Has the project helped you feel useful?



Total number N = 126

Has the project helped you feel optimistic?



Total number N = 161

These measures were not used in Year 2, during the pandemic and the evidence is therefore more varied. However, many projects were still able to demonstrate that they were supporting physical health, strength and balance and mental health.

“It’s lifted my feeling of wellbeing.”

Participant

“I love to see my mother so animated and lively...”

Family member

“I’m proud of myself and it got me a lot more active.”

Young person

“They are playing football, dancing and running about for an hour or two a couple of days a week which they couldn’t do before.”

Parent

“It has encouraged me to do more exercise.”

Older person

INCREASING PHYSICAL ACTIVITY LEVELS

Pre-pandemic, there was clear evidence that Changing Lives projects supported a clear shift away from participants being inactive, through to doing some activity or being active.

Physical activity level	Inactive	Some activity	Active	Total number
Baseline	27%	38%	35%	N = 78
End year 1	10%	39%	51%	N = 70

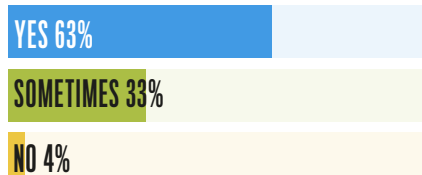
In Year 2, projects measured change in a different way in the context of the pandemic. Some projects found that it was hard for participants to maintain physical activity levels during the pandemic. However, some found that most participants were still reporting being more active as a result of the project, and some participants reported feeling more included and welcome in sport and physical activity.



## SKILLS

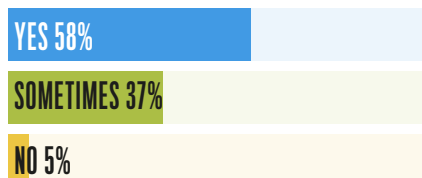
Evidence from Year 1, pre-pandemic, showed that most participants felt that projects had helped with their skills in terms of decision making, thinking clearly and dealing with problems well. There was also good wider evidence that participants developed their confidence, leadership, teamwork, independence and skills for learning, volunteering and employment.

**Has the project helped you feel able to make your mind up?**



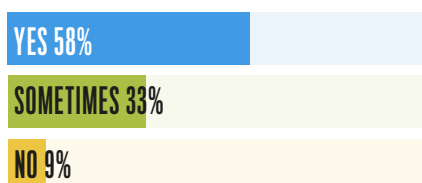
N = 123

**Has the project helped you feel able to think clearly?**



N = 127

**Has the project helped you feel able to deal with problems?**



N = 126

In Year 2, the shape of projects shifted considerably. However, projects were still able to ensure that participants had opportunities to develop their skills through awards, qualifications, leadership roles, supporting independent travel, building positive routines, supporting family relationships and building employability skills. A few projects also specifically built the skills of people to deliver sport and physical activity in an inclusive and engaging way, including young people, care home workers and sports coaches.



# WHAT DID WE LEARN?

The emergence of the Covid-19 pandemic in spring 2020, in the middle of the Changing Lives Fund period, was extremely challenging. However, the response of the funded projects, and associated evaluation, also uncovered important learning.

## INTENTIONALITY

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The Changing Lives Fund has demonstrated that using sport and physical activity intentionally to bring about change can be a powerful tool. Projects have achieved outcomes around strengthening communities, inclusion, health and wellbeing, increasing engagement in physical activity and skills. To achieve these changes, projects found that it was important that activity focused on using sport and physical activity intentionally to bring about change, and delivering activity in a way which focuses on relationships with participants, person-centred approaches and social activity and fun.

## PARTNERSHIPS AND RELATIONSHIPS

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The Changing Lives Fund brought together sporting and community partners to share skills and resources and achieve positive impact for individuals and communities. The partnership approach has largely worked well, and built projects with different skills, expertise and contacts. Where this has worked well, the partnership had added value and built knowledgeable, supportive teams able to deliver in their communities. Working in partnership was a key element of engaging participants effectively.

However, there remains some work to be done to ensure that partners across different sectors can work together within the Changing Lives ethos. A few projects experienced challenges around the ethos and approach of sports organisations (clubs and Hubs) involved in Changing Lives projects, and reflected that perhaps further work needed done to engage sports organisations in the ethos of the Changing Lives approach, to support coaches and volunteers to understand why Changing Lives work is important and how it fits with their wider activities.



## ENGAGING PARTICIPANTS

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The evaluation highlighted that most projects reported engaging successfully with their target groups. To engage people in sustained activity (Level 2), projects had to work with a higher number of participants on a low level, taster or introductory level (Level 1) than anticipated. This balance may have been affected by the pandemic. The balance of participants was broadly equal for males and females and a good proportion were ethnic minority participants (25%).

Around one in ten participants was disabled, lower than expected for the Fund. Projects experienced some challenges gathering monitoring data, and further work will need to be done to build confidence asking about disability and additional support needs in a meaningful way. However, wider evidence suggests this is a real gap for the Changing Lives Fund – not just related to monitoring challenges – and an important area of focus for future work.

## FUNDER APPROACH

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Many projects indicated that the flexibility of Spirit of 2012 in managing the funding, and The Robertson Trust, **sportscotland** and Scottish Government more broadly, helped them to continue to achieve positive outcomes for their participants during the pandemic. Partners felt that Spirit of 2012 staff were supportive, realistic, flexible and good at communicating.

## EVIDENCING CHANGE

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The standard health and wellbeing and physical activity measures were suspended for Year Two of the Fund. However, in Year One the health and wellbeing measures worked very well for demonstrating outcomes. The physical activity measures provided consistency in the way in which information about physical activity levels was gathered, but if using these measures again, processes should be in place to gather the raw data centrally to allow for consistent analysis.

The standard measures worked well because they were as simple as possible and accompanied by a strong focus on qualitative, creative methods for gathering evidence about impact. Projects very much welcomed the focus on real change in people's lives, for a targeted group of people and based on an in-depth understanding of their needs, rather than a focus on numbers and participation.

## CULTURE CHANGE

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The Changing Lives Fund, within the context of the wider Changing Lives Programme, has contributed to a significant impact on how people think about sport and physical activity, and the impact it can have. National partners felt that the Fund was very valuable in demonstrating how, practically, sport and physical activity can be used to build stronger communities and bring about change for individuals. This shift has meant that the Changing Lives approach is influencing national approaches to strategies, plans, funds, support and communications, across a wide range of policy priorities.

In some instances, the Changing Lives Fund has also influenced how participating partners approach their delivery of sport and physical activity and adopt a Changing Lives approach. Most of the funded projects are continuing their work or have accessed funding for specific aspects of the work piloted during the Changing Lives Fund.

**“This has given Changing Lives leverage that it hasn’t had before. People really understand the Changing Lives approach, and the intentionality.”**

**National partner**

# AREAS FOR CONSIDERATION

The Changing Lives Fund demonstrated that sport and physical activity can play a powerful role in supporting people to become more active, feel healthier, improve their mental wellbeing, feel included, develop skills and strengthen their community links. There are important messages for others within this, including:

- **For funders** – Sport and physical activity can be a powerful conduit for bringing about a wide range of positive outcomes. In managing this process it is important to be flexible, outcomes focused and take time to work with funded organisations to articulate the change they can bring about through their work. It is important to recognise that this may change or develop along the way. The emphasis should be on real change, perhaps for a smaller or more focused group of people over a sustained period of time, rather than concentrating on targets around the number of people taking part or activities taking place.
- **For all deliverers** – Key components of the Changing Lives approach were the social aspect of activity and participants being involved in designing and delivering activity. Sustained, regular and in-depth activity was needed to bring about significant change. This learning should be built in to future approaches.
- **For sports organisations** – Activity can be adapted to maximise benefits for participants, beyond taking part to really making a major difference to people's lives. Intentionality and working with partners in other sectors is key, aiming to deliberately use sport and physical activity to achieve particular outcomes for people and communities, based on community needs. Using this approach can help to build sport and physical activity as an integral part of communities, enhance understanding of the value of sport and physical activity and open new opportunities. However, this approach requires a clear culture shift and needs clear commitment, vision and time to ensure that coaches and volunteers understand the ethos of the approach and how it fits with their wider activities.
- **For wider sectors** – Working with sport and physical activity organisations can be a powerful way to bring about change for individuals and communities, across many different areas including strengthening communities, equality and inclusion, health and wellbeing and skills development. Working in partnership brings many benefits, and draws on the skills across sectors.
- **For all** – The Changing Lives Fund successfully engaged a wide range of target groups. However, numbers of disabled people or people with additional support needs were relatively small. This is an important area and may require further exploration and targeted work in the future, including profiling the success of some projects which have successfully engaged with people with additional support needs through the Changing Lives approach.



# INTRODUCTION

## ABOUT THIS REPORT

This report sets out findings from an evaluation of the Changing Lives through Sport and Physical Activity Fund (the Changing Lives Fund). This was a £1 million Fund which was part of the Changing Lives through Sport and Physical Activity Programme, delivered by The Robertson Trust, the Scottish Government, **sportscotland** and Spirit of 2012.

The Fund was intended to run for two years, from early 2019 to early 2021. For many projects, the first six months focused on project set up, with delivery commencing mid-2019. In early 2020, the context changed substantially with the emergence of the Covid-19 pandemic. Projects were paused for some time, moved to crisis support to assist communities and had to significantly change the way they were delivered. The Fund was therefore extended through to autumn 2021. The pandemic had a clear impact on the ability of projects to deliver their work and achieve their original intended outcomes, and this is reflected throughout this evaluation.

## ABOUT THE CHANGING LIVES FUND

The Changing Lives Fund aimed to address wider individual and community needs through sport and physical activity and to support people to become and stay active. The focus was on individual or societal change, not on increasing participation or providing pathways to a particular sport. The Fund provided short term additional resource to enable sporting and community organisations to intentionally change lives through sport and physical activity and to evidence this.

The Fund has four change themes. The sport for inclusion theme was mandatory. Projects were encouraged to develop and articulate their own intended outcomes within their chosen change themes, but examples were provided as a guide for the types of outcomes area that partners expected to see.

### Sport for Inclusion

For example outcomes around:

- People who may not traditionally participate
- People being more equal
- People becoming and staying more active

### Sport for Health and Wellbeing

For example outcomes around:

- Better physical and mental health
- Increased positive and healthy behaviours and choices
- Happiness and confidence

### Sport for Skills

For example outcomes around:

- Developing skills for life, learning and work
- Improved learning experiences and attainment
- Progression into learning, training, volunteering or employment
- People being able to make positive choices in their lives

### Sport for Communities

For example outcomes around:

- People feeling safer, connected and socially cohesive
- Improved family relationships
- Positive engagement with the environment

**A TOTAL OF 97 APPLICATIONS WERE  
RECEIVED TO THE FUND, TALLING**

**£5.9 MILLION**

## **APPLICATIONS AND FUNDED PROJECTS**

The Fund was open to partnerships between sport and physical activity organisations and community organisations. At least one of the organisations was required to be from the third sector. This was to encourage sporting and community partners to come together to share skills and resources and achieve better impact.

A total of 97 applications were received to the Fund, totalling £5.9 million. The applications were assessed and ranked by Spirit of 2012 and recommendations were made to the Funding Panel (involving Scottish Government, **sportscotland** and The Robertson Trust).

A total of 17 projects were funded, totalling just over £1 million and working across at least 13 local authority areas. Full details of the funded projects are included in Chapter Two.

## **Changing Lives context**

The Changing Lives Fund sat within the wider Changing Lives through Sport and Physical Activity Programme. The wider programme included support to enable organisations to use sport and physical activity as a driver to achieve positive individual and community change. This included clear messaging and leadership roles, networking opportunities and the development of a range of learning and development support to build knowledge, skills and capacity within delivery organisations and those who support them.

**sportscotland's** corporate strategy published in 2019 is entitled '**Sport for Life**'. It sets out a clear vision of building an active Scotland where everyone benefits from sport. It focuses on the role that sport can play in changing lives and supporting people to enjoy as many of the benefits of sport as possible.

The Sport for Life strategy recognises that sport helps to support health, develop skills, strengthen communities, improve activity and boost the economy.

The Sport for Life strategy clearly shows how the outcomes embedded within the Changing Lives Fund around being active, staying active, wellbeing and resilience all link with a world class sporting system in Scotland.

Recognition of the ability of sport and physical activity to change lives is also built into Active Scotland Outcomes Framework, which describes Scotland's ambitions for sport and physical activity. A clear connection has been made between the Changing Lives approach and outcomes 1, 2 and 5 within the framework.

Importantly, outcome 5 is about the development of communities through sport and physical activity – rather than developing sport in communities. Through this outcome, the Active Scotland Outcomes Framework recognises and emphasises that sport and physical activity can be a means to develop wider social outcomes in communities – for example around education, employment and safety. This outcome focuses specifically on “harnessing the power of sport and physical activity to improve resilience in communities”<sup>1</sup>.

<sup>1</sup> <https://www2.gov.scot/About/Performance/scotPerforms/partnerstories/Outcomes-Framework/Wellbeing-Resilience-Communities>





### Supports health

As well as helping us unwind, sport helps us develop stronger bodies and better health.



### Improves activity

In an increasingly inactive world, sport gives us the motivation and support to help physical activity become a regular habit.



### Develops skills

Sport can keep young people engaged at school and beyond, helping them develop and learn how to communicate, lead and work in teams.



### Strengthens communities

Sport reduces loneliness and antisocial behaviour and makes people feel more connected to their community.



### Helps the economy

Sport supports productivity and reduces health expenditure, while also boosting employment and tourism.

Source: Sport for Life summary, [sportscotland](https://www.sportscotland.scot/)

## Vision: A More Active Scotland

Physical activity is about getting people moving. Daily walking, playing in a park, going to a gym, training with a team or aspiring to win a gold medal - it really doesn't matter how people get active, it just matters that we do.

Being physically active contributes to our personal, community and national wellbeing.

Our vision is of a Scotland where more people are more active, more often.

## National Outcomes

Business	Employment	Research and Innovation	Young People	Early Years	Healthier	Inequalities Tackled	Life Chances
Safe from Crime	Sustainable Places	Resilient Communities	Environment Valued	National Identity	Impact on Environment	Older People Supported	Public Services

## Active Scotland Outcomes

We encourage and enable the inactive to be more active <b>1</b>	We encourage and enable the active to stay active throughout life <b>2</b>	We develop physical confidence and competence from the earliest age <b>3</b>
We improve our active infrastructure – people and places <b>4</b>	We support wellbeing and resilience in communities through physical activity and sport <b>5</b>	We improve opportunities to participate, progress and achieve in sport <b>6</b>

**Equality: Our commitment to equality underpins everything we do**

## EVALUATION PURPOSE

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This evaluation focuses on four main themes:

DELIVERY
PARTICIPANTS
OUTCOMES – CHANGING LIVES
LEARNING

These themes and associated key research questions were developed jointly by Scottish Government, **sportscotland**, The Robertson Trust and Spirit of 2012. An evaluation framework for the Fund was developed, setting out what would be explored, when, how, why and by whom.

In July 2020, the evaluation framework was updated. It was agreed that in the context of a global pandemic the evaluation focus would shift for Year 2 of the programme.

Firstly, there was a stronger focus on exploring areas of common challenge, learning and best practice across the funded partnerships. This particularly focused in on how organisations responded to the challenges presented by the Covid-19 pandemic.

Secondly, the way participant numbers and profiles were explored changed to recognise the significant change in context since target numbers were set. There was more focus on understanding whether people stayed involved, what helped with this, whether the target group changed and why.

Thirdly, the way achievement of outcomes was explored shifted to recognise that intended outcomes may have changed in light of the pandemic. Projects received support to review their intended outcomes and were supported to flex and shift their intended outcomes to meet the changing context. As the environment was fast-changing, many projects had to re-design their project more than once over the period, and this is recognised throughout the evaluation.

To enable a Fund wide report on outcomes, at the outset of the evaluation two standard measures were applied across funded partnerships.

- Partnerships which aimed to support inactive people to become more active were asked to use a standard definition of what constituted inactive/some activity/active – with a different version for under 16s and adults. This was to allow partners to explain what impact the Fund had on supporting people to become more active, in a consistent and collective way.
- Partnerships which aimed to improve participant health and wellbeing were asked to gather data on 10 standard health and wellbeing measures, in a consistent way. The standard health and wellbeing measures and response options are included as Appendix One.

Due to the pandemic, these measures were used in Year 1 of the Fund (2019/20), but not during Year 2 (2020/21). The impact of the pandemic on people's health and wellbeing and physical activity levels was so profound that it was no longer felt to be useful to compare these levels at the beginning of the project (pre-pandemic) and the end (during the pandemic). Instead, partners were encouraged to submit evidence in a meaningful way for their project and participants, using a mix of qualitative and quantitative evidence. They were supported to develop new evaluation plans by Research Scotland.



## EVALUATION METHOD

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The evaluation draws on four main sources of information.

- **Learning Events** – These events brought together funded partnerships and included time for reflection and learning. Part of this reflection was not recorded, enabling honest reflection and learning from the challenges experienced – in the form of action learning sets. Other activities included identifying ‘Top 10’ lessons learned on the themes of partnerships, outcomes and project set up. This reflection and learning was recorded, to inform other similar projects in the future.
- **Reporting Forms** – Each project was required to submit a six-monthly report on progress in terms of finances, participants, outcomes and communications. In April 2019 each project developed a learning and evaluation plan to ensure that the information submitted within these reports was focused and of a high quality. These plans were updated mid 2020 in light of the pandemic.
- **Interviews with project partners** – Interviews were held with 29 partners and staff involved in delivering Changing Lives projects. These interviews were held in late 2020 and early 2021 and focused strongly on learning in the context of the pandemic.
- **Interviews with national stakeholders** – After the Changing Lives Fund closed, interviews were held in late 2021 and early 2022 with three of the funding partners – Scottish Government, **sportscotland** and Spirit of 2012<sup>2</sup>. These interviews focused on overall reflections on the programme, key successes and lessons learned.

Research Scotland also delivered a support role to the funded partnerships, providing assistance and advice in ensuring that learning and evaluation were built in from the beginning of each project. This support role was provided by a separate team within Research Scotland.

Support with finalising intended outcomes, and establishing methods to measure impact, helped funded partnerships to refine their outcomes, developing aims that truly focused on change.

Most projects reduced the overall number of intended outcomes and refined these to focus on a small number of changes that could be realistically brought about by the project. Each project developed a simple evaluation plan, setting out how they would measure impact. Initially, these plans included how each project would use standard measures for exploring physical activity levels and health and wellbeing, as well as wider measures individual to each project. Intended outcomes and approaches to measuring impact were then explored again in summer 2020 in light of the pandemic.

Engagement with the support varied, as each organisation was at a very different stage in terms of experience of reporting on outcomes. Some organisations were very used to focusing on change, exploring this with participants and reporting on this, and required very little support. Other organisations were keen to explore new approaches, test ideas and stayed regularly in touch for support around evaluation methods.

Overall, this approach helped to emphasise to projects that the focus was on real change, not numbers of participants; that it was acceptable – and understandable – for intended outcomes to change along the way; and that learning was a very important part of the process. The process of support also helped to explore, with projects, the wide range of innovative and interesting ways that qualitative and quantitative evidence could be gathered, and emphasise the real value of rich qualitative evidence in demonstrating change.

Discussions and reflections made during meetings with Research Scotland in a support capacity were treated confidentially and were not built into the evaluation. Where relevant, projects were encouraged to reflect on interesting lessons learned or findings within their reporting forms – so that key lessons could be included within the evaluation.

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2 The Robertson Trust lead moved on towards the end of the Fund.

A young boy with short brown hair, wearing a bright green safety vest over a red shirt, is captured in motion, running across a light-colored wooden gymnasium floor. He is looking forward with a focused expression. In the background, other children and adults are blurred, suggesting a busy, active environment. The floor has various colored lines (red, green, blue) and a blue cone, indicating a structured physical activity or game.

## CHAPTER 2

# CHANGING LIVES DELIVERY

This chapter explores the level and nature of funding provided through Changing Lives, and the nature of activities undertaken by funded partnerships. It sets the context and describes the types of activity and funding that were undertaken in order to change lives through sport and physical activity.

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## ABOUT THE FUNDED PARTNERSHIPS

The Changing Lives Fund portfolio was made up of 17 partnerships. A description of each of the partnerships is provided below. The partners included third sector and public sector organisations. Some of the partners, such as sport governing bodies, leisure trusts, sports clubs and community sport hubs have a strong focus on sport and physical activity. Other partners have more of a focus traditionally on equality, education, health, mental health or youth work.

Project	Partners
<b>ActivAGE</b>	Greenock Morton Community Trust/CVS Inverclyde
<b>Active Families</b>	Sport Aberdeen/Action for Children
<b>Care About Walking</b>	Paths for All/Perth and Kinross Council
<b>Care 2B Active</b>	Active Communities/Who Cares? Scotland
<b>Centre Forward</b>	Forth Valley College/Falkirk Football Community Foundation
<b>Champions for Change</b>	North Ayrshire Leisure/North Ayrshire Drug and Alcohol Partnership
<b>Community Strides</b>	Scottish Association for Mental Health (SAMH)/jogscotland
<b>Inclusion through Activity</b>	Active Stirling/Change, Grow, Live
<b>Inspiring Cadder!</b>	Achieve More Scotland/YOMO
<b>Let's Give Sport Back to Girls</b>	Inch Park Community Sport Hub/Youth Scotland
<b>Positive Change through Football: Inside and Out</b>	Street Soccer Scotland/Shelter Scotland/APEX Scotland
<b>Replay Sporting Memories</b>	Sporting Memories Foundation/Calderglen Community Sport Hub/ South Lanarkshire Leisure
<b>Shining a Light on mental health: by young people for young people (BYP4YP)</b>	Scottish Sports Futures (SSF)/ Scottish Association for Mental Health (SAMH)
<b>Together Equality Achieves More (T.E.A.M)</b>	Big Hearts Community Trust/Multi Cultural Family Base
<b>Walking Netball – More than a game</b>	Netball Scotland/Age Scotland/Breathing Space
<b>Wicketz</b>	Lords Taverners/Cricket Scotland
<b>Youth Work through Sport</b>	Youth Scotland/St Angela's Participation Centre Community Sport Hub/ North Kelvin Sports Development Group

Three of the partnerships saw changes in involvement. Youth Scotland became involved in the Let's Give Sport Back to Girls project in mid 2019, and Change Grow Live became involved in the Inclusion through Activity project in October 2019. In both cases this was because the original partner was unable to continue its involvement. Sporting Memories also widened its focus from working with Calderglen Community Sport Hub to working more widely with South Lanarkshire Leisure.

## ABOUT THE FUNDED ACTIVITIES

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The Changing Lives Fund was strongly focused on outcomes and change. Projects had the flexibility to plan their activities to achieve maximum impact, and to flex delivery in line with what works and what project participants need.

However, the broad types of activity funded through each Changing Lives project were set out and agreed at the outset. The types of activity were wide ranging, focusing on themes such as:

- supporting people to be more physically active – with a range of target groups
- increasing access to physical activity
- supporting mental health and wellbeing
- supporting social inclusion and connections
- supporting skills development
- raising awareness of drug and alcohol misuse and supporting behaviour change
- supporting community integration on release from prison.

Projects aimed to work with a wide range of target groups, including:

- young people
- older people and people in care homes
- care experienced young people
- disabled people
- families with complex needs
- people from minority ethnic communities
- people in areas of socio-economic disadvantage
- people due for release from prison
- people affected by drug and alcohol misuse.

A summary of each project, its broad focus and target group is included below.



Project	Description	Target group
<b>ActivAGE</b>	Fortnightly intergenerational physical activity in care homes, using young people as volunteers	160 older people in care homes, young volunteers
<b>Active Families</b>	Supporting families to be more physically active	60 people in families with complex needs in Aberdeen
<b>Care About Walking</b>	Encouraging walking for physical activity and social contact	260 older people across 10 care homes
<b>Care 2B Active</b>	Connecting young people with and without care experience to become more active	80 care and non-care experienced young people in Renfrewshire
<b>Centre Forward</b>	18-month programme to support skills development and SQA qualifications	24 young people with learning disabilities
<b>Champions for Change</b>	Raising awareness of drug and alcohol misuse, and developing young people as champions to deliver these messages	640 school pupils involved in sustained activity
<b>Community Strides</b>	Increasing access to jogging activities, recruiting and training jog leaders from minority ethnic communities	88 people from minority ethnic communities
<b>Inclusion through Activity</b>	A 12 week behaviour change programme extending into a wider 12 month community wide programme	50 people aged 18 and over affected by alcohol and substance misuse
<b>Inspiring Cadder!</b>	Weekly physical activities and workshops on the benefits of activity	300 young people in Cadder, Glasgow
<b>Let's Give Sport Back to Girls</b>	Weekly physical activity sessions with local school pupils	50 girls and young women
<b>Positive Change through Football: Inside and Out</b>	Developing a pathway using football – from within prison to community	150 people due for release from prison
<b>Replay Sporting Memories</b>	Strength and balance activities for older people at the Sports Hub	60 older people
<b>Shining a Light on mental health: by young people for young people (BYP4YP)</b>	Developing activity and mental health and wellbeing activity through young champions	20 young people as wellbeing champions
<b>T.E.A.M</b>	Football and group work to improve wellbeing and social connections	100 young people from multi-cultural communities in Edinburgh
<b>Walking Netball – More than a game</b>	Taster sessions leading to more regular walking netball activity.	600 older women involved in sustained activity
<b>Wicketz</b>	Weekly cricket based activity including physical activity, leadership and personal development	75 young people from multi-cultural communities in areas of socio-economic deprivation in sustained activity
<b>Youth Work through Sport</b>	Training people to deliver sport and physical activities to people in their community	75 volunteers and 500 participants in sustained activity



## CHANGING LIVES AWARDS

Each partnership was awarded between £42,000 and £70,000.

Project	Total Fund award	Spirit spend	% of total Fund award spent	Match funding attracted
ActivAGE	£57,000	£57,000	100%	-
Care about Walking	£50,000	£50,000	100%	£142,345
Care2BActive	£69,985	£69,985	100%	-
Centre Forward	£51,600	£51,600	100%	£21,255
Champions for Change	£69,600	£69,260	100%	£5,803
Community Strides	£69,787	£69,622	100%	-
Inclusion through Activity	£42,151	£42,150	100%	-
Inspiring Cadder	£64,160	£64,160	100%	-
Let's Give Sport Back to Girls	£66,218	£66,218	100%	-
Positive Change Through Football, Inside and Out	£53,761	£53,761	100%	£44,000
Replay Sporting Memories	£69,871	£69,871	100%	£14,209
Shining a Light on Mental Health: BYP4YP	£61,205	£53,842	88%	-
Active Families	£69,782	£69,782	100%	-
T.E.A.M	£47,772	£47,772	100%	£8,455
Walking Netball	£54,003	£53,948	100%	-
Wicketz	£50,000	£45,732	91%	£11,897
Youth Work through Sport	£69,960	£64,699	92%	-
<b>Total</b>	<b>£1,106,855</b>	<b>£999,402</b>		<b>£247,964</b>

By the end of the funded period, four projects had a slight underspend.

- Youth Work through Sport had underspent largely due to reduced delivery in 2020, due to Covid-19 restrictions, and was allowed to continue delivery into 2022.
- Shining a Light on Mental Health had underspent due to Covid-19 and had been allowed to use this activity for supporting Scottish Sports Futures Wellbeing Ambassadors through to March 2022.
- Wicketz had underspent due to reduced delivery due to Covid-19 as well as savings in venue hire and training due to support from project partners, and was allowed to continue delivery into 2022.
- Inclusion through Activity had a small underspend due to reduced delivery due to Covid-19 and was allowed to use this to continue to accept referrals for a slightly longer period than planned.

Seven projects attracted match funding, of a total of almost £250,000 across all projects. Projects attracted between £5,000 and £142,000 in match funding. In most cases, match funding came from partner organisations involved in delivering the project. Other sources of match funding included local authority youth work funds, Ballie Gifford trust and the Tampon Tax Fund. One project – Care about Walking – attracted just over £142,000 in match funding. This was from sources such as The Robertson Trust and The National Lottery Community Fund.

## INTENDED OUTCOMES

Projects described their intended outcomes when they applied to the Changing Lives Fund. The outcomes were to fit within four broad themes:

### **SPORT FOR INCLUSION** (a mandatory theme)

### **SPORT FOR HEALTH AND WELLBEING**

### **SPORT FOR SKILLS**

### **SPORT FOR COMMUNITIES**

Successful projects were then supported by Research Scotland to refine their intended outcomes. Each project was encouraged to focus on a small number of outcomes, where they could bring about real change within the funded project. Projects were encouraged to select up to five outcomes and were supported to consider how they would monitor progress and gather evidence to demonstrate achievement of these. These intended outcomes were then reviewed in mid 2020, in light of the pandemic.

#### Inclusion

**All** projects selected outcomes relating to inclusion, as this was a mandatory theme. Projects developed outcomes relating to:

- improved ownership of activities
- increased opportunities for leadership roles
- activity reaching a broader range of participants
- increased opportunities for physical activity
- people moving from inactive to active
- people maintaining higher levels of physical activity.

When outcomes were reviewed in mid 2020, projects retained outcomes relating to inclusion. However, a few mentioned that their focus on increasing opportunities for physical activity was impacted by the pandemic.

#### Health and wellbeing

**Almost all** (16 of the 17) projects selected outcomes relating to health and wellbeing. Projects developed outcomes relating to:

- increased levels of physical activity
- improved wellbeing
- increased confidence
- improved physical health
- improved mental health/emotional wellbeing
- increased understanding of the benefits of health and wellbeing
- improved lifestyles, and healthier, more positive choices.

When outcomes were reviewed in mid 2020, projects retained outcomes relating to health and wellbeing. Projects emphasised that this was a key part of their work. However, many stressed that their focus was on supporting participants during the pandemic, aiming to maintain health and wellbeing in extremely challenging circumstances. Projects stressed that it was unlikely that participants' overall health and wellbeing would improve over the period, in the context of the global pandemic.

#### Skills

**Some** projects (6) selected outcomes relating to skills. Projects developed outcomes relating to:

- increased aspirations
- improved employability skills
- improved leadership
- increased skills amongst people delivering activity.

When outcomes were reviewed in mid 2020, these projects retained these intended outcomes. However, one project emphasised that their focus had shifted slightly away from skills development and towards support with health and wellbeing

#### Community

**Some** projects (6) selected outcomes relating to community. Projects developed outcomes relating to:

- improved connections between people in the community
- stronger, more sustainable communities
- more inclusive communities
- improved sense of belonging within the community
- improved community engagement.

When outcomes were reviewed in mid 2020, a few projects highlighted that due to the pandemic it had been challenging to work on improved connections between people in the community and improved sense of belonging, due to the pandemic. One project, which worked with older people, had to remove an intended outcome relating to building better connections with young people and the wider sports community, due to the pandemic.

## BROAD TYPES OF ACTIVITY

Across the projects, activity fell broadly into the following categories:

- regular physical activity
- ad hoc/drop-in physical activity
- social activity
- educational activity relating to physical, social, emotional and nutritional wellbeing
- coaching/leadership training.

Within these categories, there was a wide variation in activity on the ground in terms of setting, size of groups, demographics, intensity of activity and intended outcomes.

Some of the projects – particularly those focused on skills development and leadership –involved working with the same individuals intensively over time. Other projects involved working with participants over blocks of activity, with participants changing over time. Some involved working with a core group of ‘champions’ consistently over the project to develop skills and using these leaders to then engage with larger numbers of participants around physical activity or health messages.

On the following pages we provide a selection of examples to highlight a flavour of the types of activities that took place.

### EXAMPLE:

## Care 2B Active engaging care experienced young people

The Care 2B Active project, run by Active Communities and Who Cares? Scotland, worked with young people with care experience. Young people suggested activities they wanted to try, and developed a six-week taster session – including clubbercise, parkour, netball, bowling, Highland dance and basketball. Young people received support with clothing, footwear, equipment and transport. An average of 23 young people with care experience attended each week. A qualified holistic therapist led weekly guided meditation, led by young people’s suggestions. This provided a safe space to discuss mental health and develop transferable coping skills.

In early 2020, after ensuring contacts and support were in place, the project paused for a few months. The project was able to provide support in helping families to access devices and access to the internet to ensure they could learn at home, stay connected and reduce isolation. Strong referral networks were developed to support access to food, and the project delivered equipment and wellbeing packs to help young people stay active at home. Online classes were offered to support mental health and wellbeing and reduce isolation – including fitness, parties, yoga, mindfulness, quizzes and games.

From July to December 2020, the project was able to deliver face to face activities using a new sports coach, with football, walking, dancing, running and other outdoor activities. These fun activities helped young people ease back into participation and reconnect with the project. The project was again paused during lockdown in early 2021, and outdoor activity resumed in March under Covid-19 guidelines. This included an outdoor Easter programme. The project continued to run some virtual activities, including an online Zoom group for young people on relationships.





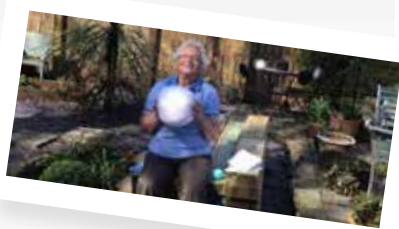
#### EXAMPLE:

### Replay Sporting Memories activities for older people

The Replay Sporting Memories project run by the Sporting Memories Foundation supported older people with long term conditions like dementia, Parkinson's Disease, depression and those experiencing loneliness and social isolation. The project commissioned a set of strength and balance activities and a training video, and these activities were incorporated into existing Sporting Memories clubs within the Calderglen area. New events, linked to the Calderglen Outdoor Sports Hub, were also introduced – including cricket, tennis, dance, bowls and table tennis.

In spring 2020, with the emergence of the pandemic, the project started KIT (Keep in Touch) weekly phone calls to check in on members and volunteers. This provided a vital way to keep engaging with people, and the project discovered that members were being less active and for some their physical health was getting worse. The project introduced ideas and motivation on how to keep active at home including an online magazine show featuring Sporting Memories Foundation volunteers reminiscing and talking about sport, guidance on how to reminisce over the phone and five virtual clubs, including exercise as part of the session.

Sporting Memories Foundation also developed a new at home KIT package containing physical activity equipment, reminiscence resources and a DVD. The pack was designed to dovetail with the weekly online clubs and telephone calls to encourage more physical activity and reminiscence at home. These were distributed to 92 members and volunteers in December 2020. The initial interest in KIT bags led to further investment from Scottish Government, allowing Sporting Memories Foundation to distribute a further 500 bags to community organisations, charities and groups across the country.



#### EXAMPLE:

### T.E.A.M for young people from a range of cultural backgrounds

The T.E.A.M project, run by Big Hearts Community Trust and Multi-Cultural Family Base, initially involved weekly support through after school activities for young people experiencing social isolation – with a specific focus on young people from a range of cultural backgrounds. The sessions involved physical activity as well as group work in a dedicated nurture space.

From March 2020 group activity ceased, and as restrictions eased there were some concerns from young people and families about returning to a large group setting. The project shifted to offer tailored family support. The project supported access to benefits, grants, food parcels and vouchers as well as providing wider practical support. Each young person received a fortnightly activity pack to support home learning and wellbeing. T.E.A.M provided therapeutic one to one sessions and worked with partners to ensure necessary specialist support was in place. The project also created a group to provide social interaction in a supportive environment and increase the confidence of young people. This ran online and face to face, when restrictions allowed.

#### EXAMPLE:

### **Inspiring Cadder!** for young people in areas of disadvantage

The Inspiring Cadder! project run by Achieve More Scotland focused on providing activities and opportunities for young people living in an area of high socio-economic disadvantage. The project delivered breakfast, lunch, after school and evening clubs each week throughout the year. There were a range of physical activities, including football, dance, gymnastics and multi-sports, as well as inputs relating to healthy choices around eating, health and contributing to your community.

From March to June 2020 the project shifted to delivering food parcels and providing some online classes to maintain contact with participants. During that time the focus was on supporting families and communities.

In summer 2020 the project ran a six-week summer programme, with breakfast and hot lunch each day as well as food parcels for families in need at least one day each week. August to December involved evening outdoor activities mainly with pupils of primary school age (due to fewer restrictions being in place for this age group). An average of 20 children attended each session. A small number of young people aged 12 to 18 also took part in outdoor activities. The project supported participants to exercise, have fun and eat healthy food as they coped with the restrictions in place as a result of the pandemic.

#### EXAMPLE:

### **Champions for Change** skills and wellbeing for young people

The Champions for Change project was run by North Ayrshire Leisure and North Ayrshire Drug and Alcohol Partnership. It supported a core group of young adults to develop their employability, leadership and health and wellbeing skills during the first year of the project. The original intention was that this group would deliver physical activity sessions with health and wellbeing messages in schools during 2020/21. However, due to the pandemic, the project developed in a very different way than expected. The pandemic resulted in restrictions in school visiting, and for most of the time it was not possible to involve these young adults in delivery.

Instead, Champions for Change used paid coaches to deliver active sports sessions to 16 primary schools, outdoor through local football clubs. The sessions used physical activity as a tool to deliver messages about substance misuse. A new football group was also set up – Medda Mending Minds. This group supported individuals with mental health or addiction issues, encouraging participation in physical activity while talking to people with similar issues. Participants were also signposted to physical activity opportunities as part of their journey to recovery.



## CHAPTER 3

# CHANGING LIVES PARTICIPANTS

This chapter explores the total number of participants in the Changing Lives Fund, and the profile of these participants. It also sets out volunteer numbers and profile.



## TOTAL PARTICIPANTS

When the Changing Lives Fund was established (pre-pandemic), projects indicated that overall they expected to engage:

- 5,300 participants in low level, mass participation, taster or introductory level activity (classed as Level 1 for this Fund)
- 3,292 participants in more sustained activity of approximately six sessions over three months (classed as Level 2 for this Fund).

From the outset of the Fund, projects were reassured that generally the focus within the Changing Lives Fund was on quality and outcomes, rather than quantity and numbers. Projects determined for themselves when participants were deemed to have shifted from Level 1 to Level 2 participation, based on the structure of their programme.

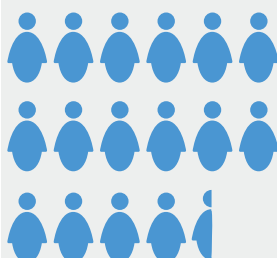
At the end of Year 1 (pre-pandemic), funded projects were well on track to achieve participant numbers in terms of ongoing, sustained involvement. In Year 1 a higher than expected number of Level 1 participants were engaged, but projects expected that many would transition to Level 2 – more sustained activity – over time.

## YEAR 1 LEVELS OF PARTICIPATION

LEVEL 2  
1,800



LEVEL 1  
8,200



However, projects had to pause, adapt and re-plan in light of the pandemic emerging in March 2020. This resulted in projects re-assessing the immediate needs of participants, and focusing on these. Many projects provided crisis support in the form of food parcels and one to one support and advice. All projects had to pause and re-assess delivery in some way. Projects that were working in schools and care homes had to stop for a longer time period, and all had to explore new ways of delivering their work. These factors had a significant impact on the number and level of engagement of participants.

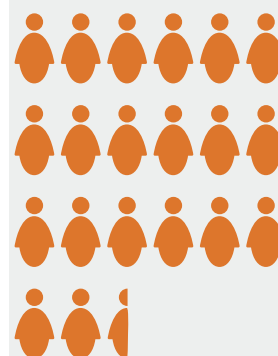
In total, across both Year 1 and Year 2, more than 10,300 people were involved in Changing Lives at Level 1 and 2,860 at Level 2. This is a much higher number of Level 1 participants than expected, and a slightly lower number of Level 2 participants than expected.

## TOTAL LEVELS OF PARTICIPATION (YEAR 1 AND YEAR 2)

LEVEL 2  
2,860



LEVEL 1  
10,320



The level of engagement varied between projects. Some projects were able to continue to engage effectively online, at a distance or through outdoor activity (particularly with younger age groups where there were fewer restrictions). However, some – particularly those working in restricted settings such as care homes and schools – found it particularly challenging to engage the number of participants they expected at the outset.

Overall, ten projects achieved or exceeded their target number of participants, while seven projects did not achieve their target number. The projects with lower than anticipated numbers of participants focused on individuals which had particular barriers to engagement over the pandemic, including older people, school pupils and people with complex needs.

PROFILE OF PARTICIPANTS:  
LEVEL TWO

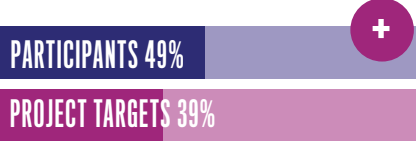
Projects gathered detailed information on the profile of participants involved in ongoing, sustained activity at Level 2.

Age

Information on participant age was available for 2,273 Level 2 participants. This highlighted that there was a strong focus on young people within the Fund, with half of all participants falling into this age group. The proportion of young people involved aged under 16 was slightly higher than expected at the outset of the Fund.

Target Groups

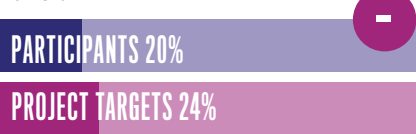
0 TO 15



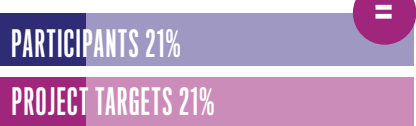
16 TO 24



25 TO 64



65 PLUS



EXAMPLE:

Youth Work Through Sport  
Young people and adults

The Youth Work Through Sport project aimed to support adults to develop their Youth Work skills and young people to develop their leadership skills and confidence while working towards Youth Achievement Awards.

Over the course of the project, four adult coaches or volunteers from St Angela’s Participation Centre Community Sport Hub and North Kelvin Sports Development Group were supported to achieve their PDA in Youth Work (SCQF Level 6). Overall 13 achieved Ready for Youth Work (SCQF Level 3) and 14 were trained on delivering youth awards and using appropriate Youth Scotland toolkits.

Young people were supported to develop their skills through an iLead social development journey. This included 29 young people achieving the Hi5 Award (SCQF Level 2), 47 achieving the Dynamic Youth Award (SCQF Level 3) and 9 achieving Bronze, Silver or Gold Youth Achievement Awards. Two young people worked since June 2020 to achieve their Bronze, Silver and Gold Youth Achievement Awards, entirely through digital means.

Before the pandemic, Youth Scotland always delivered these awards face to face, in youth, sport or community settings. Support sessions for young leaders moved online and young people identified creative ways of demonstrating practical application of their learning and completing the required challenges.



#### EXAMPLE:

### Centre Forward Young people

The Centre Forward project, run by Forth Valley College and Falkirk Football Community Foundation, supported 18 students to take part in work placements. The placements varied, including at Forth Valley Disability Sport, SERCO, Clackmannanshire Council, B&M Stores, Smyths, local charity shops and with Forth Valley College. Direct delivery had to be stopped mid-March 2020, but Forth Valley College maintained contact with the students to check on wellbeing. In August 2020, the project attracted funding from the National Lottery Youth Start Fund which will allow it to run until August 2023.



#### EXAMPLE:

### Care About Walking Working with older people in care homes

The Care About Walking project, run by Paths for All and Perth and Kinross Council, worked with older people living in care homes. In 2020, the project recruited five care homes to take part in the project. In spring 2020 the pandemic had a significant impact on access to care homes, with care homes under significant pressure managing resident and staff safety and staff absence. Care homes have been closed to all but essential external visitors since March 2020.

The project therefore could not be delivered in the way that was originally planned and shifted, in discussion with partners, to offer support to care homes with information, resources and updates. This included improving strength and balance exercise resources, cue cards and vinyls, working to make outdoor spaces more attractive, support with walking challenges and participation in research projects. The Care About Walking pack was also redesigned, to improve layout, design and accessibility.

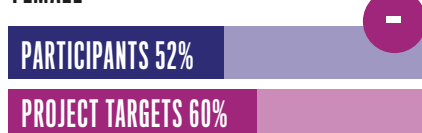
#### Strength and Balance Exercises

- Strengthen muscles
- Improve balance
- Reduce falls
- Stay active
- Manage a health condition
- Stay independent

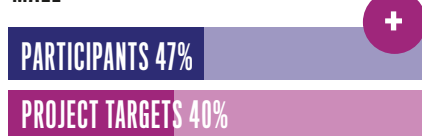
## Gender

Information on participant gender was available for 2,123 Level 2 participants. This highlighted that there was a broadly equal split, with slightly more female participants than male participants. The Year 1 evaluation recommended that concentrated work needed to take place to ensure that girls and young women were effectively engaged, with 48% of participants being female, and this balance has shifted slightly over Year 2.

### FEMALE



### MALE



### OTHER



## EXAMPLE:

### Walking Netball Women and girls

The Walking Netball project run by Netball Scotland, Age Scotland and Breathing Space aimed to get women and girls more physically active and involved in netball. Three Walking Netball activators were employed, who worked with partners to connect with community groups and women and girls. Each walking netball group identified a facilitator, and training was provided to support the facilitators.

During lockdown, a buddy system was introduced to keep people connected, and postcards were sent to participants. An online Net and Natter session was also held. In May 2021 work began to re-establish sessions and digitise training content to increase the flexibility of training for future facilitators.

## Disability

Information on participant disability was available for 1,669 Level 2 participants. This highlighted that 11% of participants, for whom information was available, were disabled. This is slightly lower than anticipated at the outset of the Fund.

### DISABLED



### NOT DISABLED



There have been some challenges gathering information on participant disability, and some gaps in reporting. Some projects indicate that it can take time to build trust to gather this type of information, and people do not always wish to disclose it.

## Ethnic origin

Information on participant ethnic origin was available for 1,706 Level 2 participants. Across both years of the Fund, partners intended that approximately 18% of participants would be minority ethnic. The Fund performed very well against this target – with 25% of all participants (for whom ethnic origin is known) being minority ethnic. This highlights that there was a strong focus on engaging minority ethnic people in the Fund.

**WHITE SCOTTISH OR WHITE BRITISH (74%)**

**ASIAN OR BRITISH ASIAN (16%)**

**BLACK, AFRICAN OR CARIBBEAN (4%)**

**WHITE OTHER (3%)**

**MIXED OR OTHER ETHNIC BACKGROUND (2%)**

**OTHER (<1%)**

### EXAMPLE:

## Wicketz engaging minority ethnic participants

The Wicketz project, run by Cricket Scotland and Lords Taverners, worked closely with local organisations to reach young minority ethnic people. The project engaged with schools, youth, community and inclusion groups working in the local area and worked with partners to host 90 taster sessions. There was strong partner interest, support and buy in, which greatly helped in connecting with potential participants. Working with partners gave the project a quick, visible, accepted and trusted connection with potential participants. Partners also supported the project through contributing resources and free venues.

The Wicketz Development Officer was a natural role model for young people and became well known and trusted within the community. He engaged parents of participants through an individual, person-centred approach, and promoted the project locally using flyers, and taster sessions in schools and community groups.

During the pandemic, sessions paused and support continued online and through regular check-ins with participants. Participants received hardship vouchers, fruit, Wicketz t-shirts and laptops when needed. New participants joined during this time and took part in online activity. Outdoor weekly sessions restarted as soon as possible, and most participants returned to these. There was a noticeable weight gain and lack of fitness when participants came back after lockdown, and coaches have focused on building fitness and enjoyment. Parent volunteers and older participants have begun taking the lead in sessions, supporting peers and helping the coaches.

“People got the idea that Wicketz is a family, it is not only for cricket.”  
**Staff**





## EXAMPLE:

### Community Strides engaging minority ethnic women

Community Strides, run by jogscotland and SAMH, established jogging groups in four cities across Scotland.

The project worked closely with community-based organisations with specific expertise in working with women from minority ethnic communities, to build trust and support participants to feel more comfortable. Project coordinators also worked closely with participants to understand more about their backgrounds and needs.

During the pandemic groups were paused, due to the restrictions and the wider challenges faced by participants and jog leaders. Sessions were adapted to support participants to undertake some form of exercise, through virtual sessions and face to face sessions where possible. When groups were able to re-start, some jog leaders were able to take on the role of leading sessions and play a key role in supporting women to migrate over to local jogscotland groups and become fully integrated within these.

Through the project, partners came to understand more about the reasons behind barriers to participation in sport for some minority ethnic people. Through working with women, the project learned about cultural views of motherhood, confidence and fitness, impressions of sport in Scotland, fear of being seen outdoors and by men, and access to suitable footwear and clothing.



### Wider profile

Some projects also targeted specific groups, beyond age, sex, disability and ethnic origin. These included:

- **People from areas of deprivation** – Six projects targeted this group, and these projects indicated that all or the vast majority of their participants came from areas of concentrated deprivation.
- **Young people with care experience**
  - One project targeted young people with care experience, and all of its participants fell into this group. Two projects also indicated that they involved a small number of young people with care experience, despite not specifically targeting this group.
- **People with experience of substance misuse** – One project targeted this group and all participants had experience of substance misuse. Another included this target group as part of their project.
- **People in the care of the Scottish Prison Service** – One project specifically targeted this group and most of its participants came from this group.
- **People not in employment or education** – One project specifically targeted unemployed people and people at risk of disengaging from education. However, the pandemic made it hard to involve this group of people in project delivery in schools, due to the restrictions in place around school visitors.

EXAMPLE:

### Positive Change Through Football people liberated from prison

In 2019, Street Soccer Scotland delivered programmes in HMPs Edinburgh, Barlinnie, Castle Huntly and Cornton Vale. From March 2020, the project was not able to visit prisons, with access very tightly controlled. The project shifted to support individuals who had been released from prison on a one-to-one basis. Calls and 'walk and talk' sessions were used to reduce isolation and support vulnerable participants. The project also worked with SISCO, a charity which supports re-settlement, to run community drop-in sessions. Crisis support was provided through food parcels, baby food and clothes, pet food and health and wellbeing items. The project worked closely with the NHS to deliver essential items.

From March 2021, the project was able to re-start socially distanced, non-contact football and from April 2021 full contact drop-in football was re-started.

EXAMPLE:

### Inclusion through Activity people in drug and alcohol recovery

The Inclusion through Activity project was run by Active Stirling and Change Grow Live, which provides a drug and alcohol recovery service in Forth Valley. The pandemic impacted on their ability to deliver group sessions, and staff were furloughed for significant periods over the life of the project. The project shifted to offer one-to-one client sessions in the gym, climbing wall and swimming, and over time participants were introduced to a wider range of health and fitness classes including yoga and cycling. The project also continued to provide mental wellbeing support and nutritional advice through texts, calls and online video support.

## LESSONS LEARNED: REACHING TARGET PARTICIPANTS

### Year One

Most projects reported engaging successfully with their target groups pre-pandemic. These projects were confident that they were reaching intended participants and that engagement and involvement increased as projects progressed. Projects used a range of different techniques to reach, engage with and sustain activity with the target group.

Approaches which projects indicated worked well included:

- participant led activity
- combining physical activity with social opportunities
- offering opportunities to gain qualifications such as youth work or coaching
- carefully considering the timing of activities – for example providing sessions for parents within school hours
- induction sessions – including getting to know project staff or visiting venues, which were particularly useful for those who live with anxiety
- carefully selecting delivery staff who are integrated with communities, could inspire participants as role models, and/or have lived experience of issues relevant to participants.



**PEOPLE TRUST US BECAUSE WE WERE THERE WHEN OTHER ORGANISATIONS WERE DISAPPEARING.”**

Project partner

A key aspect of reaching target groups effectively was working in partnership. Partners helped with signposting people who may benefit from participation in projects, supporting initial engagement through attendance at partner sessions, and also helped through providing introductions to key staff and networks.

## Year Two

As the pandemic emerged, approaches to engaging participants shifted. Projects found that they needed to identify new ways of engaging with participants, in a safe and accessible way.

Projects found that they were able to use the relationships with participants and what had been learned in Year 1 and engage with participants in an immediate and personal way to support them through the pandemic. Year 1 also meant that partner relationships were well developed, enabling many projects to respond in a holistic and person-centred way.

**“I wouldn’t underestimate the value of that, of having the time to build up relationships.”**

Project partner

Having a continued presence in the community, for example through delivering food parcels or activity packs, also helped to maintain these relationships during the pandemic.

### EXAMPLE:

## ActivAGE resources for care settings

The pandemic significantly impacted Greenock Morton Community Trust’s ActivAGE project which aimed to operate in care settings. Access to care settings was ceased in March 2020, and in February 2021 with visiting still prohibited, the project created a resource pack to send to each care setting. It consisted of strength, balance and sitting exercises for older people, Greenock Morton Football Club memorabilia and a quiz. Light exercise equipment was also distributed. The project kept in contact with Activity Coordinators and Managers from care settings, and staff indicated residents benefited from using the resource pack.



### EXAMPLE:

## Active Families supporting families

This project, run by Sport Aberdeen and Action for Children, aimed to support families with complex needs to become more active. The pandemic presented challenges, with families at home together with limited space and disruption to everyday routines. The project discussed with families how engaging with physical activity could support their physical and mental wellbeing. Many took part in video conference sessions, following a workout or yoga session via screen sharing. Being creative helped to engage children and young people, for example having a Fortnite dance workout or children coming up with their own workouts.

From summer 2020, face to face activity was possible. The project supported teenagers and adults to attend gym induction and gym spaces, building their confidence being in public spaces with others and using the gym. Young people went on sessions to the trampoline park, climbing walls and outdoor activities.

**“We have that trust and relationship with people in the community.”**

Project partner



“THE KIDS ARE KNACKERED FROM BEING ON ZOOM, THEY’VE GOT SCREEN FATIGUE. THEY’RE TELLING US THAT THEY GET HEADACHES ALL THE TIME.”

Project partner

## CHALLENGES AND LEARNING: ENGAGING PARTICIPANTS

### Year One

Pre-pandemic, most projects reported successful engagement with their target groups. The challenges that emerged were particular to each project, and no common themes were identified. Challenges experienced by different projects included:

- engaging participants who do not have English as a first language
- sustaining participant engagement
- travel to and from activities
- engaging participants who vary in needs from day to day – such as older people with dementia
- ensuring all staff, coaches and partners understood and supported the approach.

Through their work, the projects learned a lot about what worked, and what didn’t, in engaging their target groups.

### Year Two

The main challenge to engaging participants in Year 2, was the pandemic. The key challenges related to this included:

- **Planning through uncertainty –** Projects found that they regularly had to update their plans, to adapt to changes in restrictions and guidelines.
- **Restrictions on face-to-face work –** This was a key challenge, particularly for the 12 and over age group which had more restrictions.
- **Access to venues –** Many projects experienced challenges finding places to safely run activities, with access to community centres, schools, sport centres and partner premises restricted.

Projects learned that despite the weather, outdoor activity worked well for many. However, some had concerns about safety of very young or older participants, in outdoor spaces. Outdoor group activity required safe, secure and well-lit facilities. Some projects found that outdoor one-to-one activity could be very simple and work well, including going for a walk, to the park, for a bike ride or a kickabout.

### Year Two – Online opportunities

While projects used online opportunities to engage participants, there were challenges including:

- young people feeling overwhelmed or fatigued with digital learning
- challenges finding a safe space for discussions within the home
- space to be physically active at home
- access to a device
- anxiety about participation in online groups
- challenges with external interpretation online – exacerbated by time delays or connection issues.

To address these challenges, projects:

- developed resources to deliver to homes, to complement online learning
- supported participants to access technology or funding
- supported use of devices
- used young leaders to deliver sessions online – putting leadership skills into practice, supporting peers and helping coaches
- introduced games, challenges and creative approaches.

Although online opportunities did present challenges, a few projects mentioned that they reached more participants and volunteers through online activities, got to know family members, and developed online peer support groups. A few also felt that online engagement helped participants to gain confidence and become more active beyond the online session, building physical activity into their daily or weekly routine.

“The weekly exercises at the Zoom club gives me the motivation to do more exercises during the week.”

Participant

### Year Two – face-to-face

Some were able to reintroduce an element of face-to-face delivery over the funded period. This worked well when restrictions allowed small outdoor or one-to-one sessions with a focus on non-contact activities, and getting people moving in any way possible.

Overall, most projects found that participants were very keen to re-engage in face-to-face activity. In some instances, new people were engaged through online activity, who then took part in the face-to-face activity when it re-started. However, a few projects found that the needs of their participants were higher after lockdown.

“We found that a lot of the guys were reverting back to old habits of drugs or drinking or whatever, so that impact alone was pretty bad and that forced us to find a way around the lockdown situation and get them back out and get into something more positive.”

Project partner

“Despite the guidance loosening, a lot of our families feel very anxious. They’re not comfortable going out, they’re quite frightened. Some of them are still not sending their kids back to school.”

Project partner

## VOLUNTEERS

Almost 300 volunteers supported Changing Lives delivery. Most of these (188) were trained volunteers (Level 2), helping in a sustained way and likely to have achieved qualifications. Some (110) provided one-off or semi-regular volunteer support.

TRAINED 188

SEMI-REGULAR 110

The level of volunteer involvement in project delivery has varied. For some projects, the main focus of their activity was developing volunteers and leaders, while for others this was not a core aspect of their project. Two projects have not involved any volunteers, while one project working with young people has involved 73 volunteers.

Most of the trained volunteers have been aged 25 to 64 (51%), and many were aged 16 to 24 (36%). There was a broadly even balance in terms of male and female Level 2 volunteers. This is an improvement since Year 1, when the evaluation noted that more volunteers were male than female. Based on the information provided, a very small proportion of Level 2 volunteers were disabled (2%). Around a fifth of Level 2 volunteers were minority ethnic, indicating that the Fund has successfully attracted minority ethnic volunteers.

## LESSONS LEARNED: ENGAGING AND SUSTAINING VOLUNTEERS

Successful approaches to supporting and training volunteers have included:

- encouraging participants to take on a leadership role within the project – delivering activities, making decisions about the project and supporting others
- supporting people to gain qualifications
- encouraging parents and family members to volunteer
- working with local schools, colleges and universities to offer volunteering opportunities.

Beyond formal volunteering, many projects are ensuring that their activities are participant led. For example, in some projects young people were involved in decisions about things like activities and snacks and can lead a session if they have a particular interest.

While many projects had successfully engaged volunteers, most recognised that it was challenging. Potential volunteers can have many other life commitments including studying, employment and family life. This was particularly evident during the pandemic, when changes in volunteer circumstances – like being made redundant – impacted on their ability to stay involved.

EXAMPLE:

## Shining a Light on Mental Health

### By young people for young people

This project, run by Scottish Sport Futures and SAMH, aimed to develop physical activity and mental health and wellbeing through 20 young champions. 20 young Wellbeing Ambassadors were recruited and trained around mental health and wellbeing, and then involved in developing and delivering workshops to young people focusing on mental health. The young people delivered workshops to over 300 young people.

The Wellbeing Ambassador and workshop delivery has developed strongly beyond the initial idea and has now been integrated into Scottish Sports Futures core delivery. Additional funding has been secured to appoint a full time Wellbeing Training Co-ordinator to co-ordinate the young leaders who are Wellbeing Ambassadors and support them to deliver workshops. One of the Wellbeing Ambassadors gained full time employment with Scottish Sport Futures as a Youth Development Co-ordinator.

EXAMPLE:

## Community Strides

### volunteer role model



At Community Strides, run by jogscotland and SAMH, one of the volunteers became a community champion and role model for minority ethnic women. She joined the local jogging group and encouraged the other women to join her, resulting in the jogging group growing in membership with 10 new members. She also took part in a discussion panel as part of Women in Sport week and was shortlisted for an award at the Scottish Women in Sport awards.

The jogscotland project found that through building strong role models, women felt more confident joining their local jogging group. All of the women said that they felt comfortable going to the sessions because the group was friendly, inclusive and welcoming.

EXAMPLE:

## Wicketz

### engaging volunteers

The Wicketz project, run by Cricket Scotland and Lords Taverners, found that parents initially dropped their children off to attend activities. However, gradually partners started to hang around, chat to other parents and watch the session. Over time, the coach has worked with these parents to encourage longer term engagement and involvement in volunteering. Three volunteers joined the project in mid 2019 to support delivery. More parents continued to join during the pandemic, with 8 volunteer parents going on a Level 1 Cricket Coaching course in mid 2021.

During lockdown, Wicketz worked with young people as sports leaders to take a leadership role with responsibility for planning and running parts of the sessions for their peer group. Ongoing training is provided for volunteers and young sports leaders.



# ARE WE CHANGING LIVES?

This chapter explores the evidence that the funded projects are changing lives through their activities. It is important to recognise that in early 2020, when the pandemic hit, many projects were early in their work. The pandemic significantly changed the focus of funded projects.



## INCLUSION

**All** projects selected outcomes relating to inclusion, as this was a mandatory theme. The inclusion theme covered a range of outcomes. For the purposes of reporting, the inclusion theme has been split into:

- increased physical activity – including people moving from inactive to active, and people maintaining higher levels of physical activity
- inclusion in physical activity
- wider inclusion and connections.

### Increasing physical activity levels

Eight partnerships had outcomes relating to increasing physical activity levels. Five of these projects aimed for participants to become more active, while three had specific outcomes around getting inactive people to become more active. Evidence from Year 1 highlighted that projects supported a clear shift away from participants being inactive, through to doing some activity or being active.

#### BASELINE

**INACTIVE 27%**

**SOME ACTIVITY 38%**

**ACTIVE 35%**

N=78

#### END YEAR 1

**INACTIVE 10%**

**SOME ACTIVITY 39%**

**ACTIVE 51%**

N = 70

For Year 2, in light of the pandemic, these standard measures for physical activity were no longer used. It was not felt to be useful to compare activity levels pre- and post-involvement in the project, when a global pandemic had emerged over the same period. Instead, projects measured their impact on physical activity levels in a way which best suited their participants and the way they were supporting them.

In Year 2, seven projects provided evidence about their participants becoming more physically active.

#### EXAMPLE:

### Increasing physical activity levels

All (100%) of the young people with learning disabilities who took part in the Centre Forward project run by Forth Valley College and Falkirk Football Community Foundation increased their weekly participation levels in sport. The average increase was two hours per person, per week. Inactivity levels reduced from 28% to 0% and levels of being active increased from 56% to 72%. After the project, 56% of the students sustained an active lifestyle.

All (100%) of the young people involved in the Wicketz project run by Cricket Scotland and Lords Taverners reported feeling more active.

In the Shining a Light on Mental Health project, 100% of the Wellbeing Ambassadors reported being more active as a result of being involved in the programme.

Most (81%) older people participating in the Replay Sporting Memories project felt encouraged to exercise more and half (51%) felt more confident about moving more and being active. On average, participants increased their daily active minutes by 12 – an increase of 44%.

Over half (53%) of participants in Greenock Morton Community Trust's ActivAGE project reported feeling more physically active as a result of the project. The same proportion felt a big change in terms of improving their physical health.

School staff involved in the Let's Give Sport Back to Girls project, run by Youth Scotland and Inch Park Community Sport Hub, reported witnessing girls who had previously disengaged with physical activity now participating and feeling keen to take part in physical activity sessions.

# PARTICIPANT VOICES

“

**I'm proud of myself and it got me a lot more active.”**

Young person

**“My children are much healthier now because of the clubs. They are playing football, dancing and running about for an hour or 2 a couple of days each week which they couldn't do before. I have had to buy new clothes for my youngest son as he has lost so much weight from the running about.”**

Parent

“

**I have three residents who do the exercises together nearly every day... They really enjoy it and encourage each other to keep going with the exercises.**

Care home staff

”

**“It has encouraged me to do more exercise.”**

Participant



## Inclusion in sport and physical activity

Most projects (12) had intended outcomes which related to inclusion beyond physical activity levels. The focus of these projects varied. Some projects had intended outcomes around inclusion within sport and physical activity:

- people being more interested in, and better able to take part in, and lead sport and physical activity
- participants having a say in how the activities are developed.

Evidence from Year 1, from the project reporting forms submitted, showed that participants were beginning to feel more included within sport and physical activity, and more able to access it. Participants indicated that projects provided an inclusive atmosphere and reported feeling more able to take part in planning and participating in activities. Participants reported that they enjoyed coming to the activities and that it helped them feel more included.

In Year 2, projects still reported making a difference to how well people were included in sport and physical activity and addressing barriers to participation. This was in the context of the pandemic, with limited access to sporting and community venues.

### EXAMPLE:

## Young people with care experience

Care2B Active, which worked with young people with care experience, held Listen and Learn sessions to educate corporate parents, local organisations and community members. This has changed attitudes, and sports facilities agreed to become more trauma informed and reduce the use of banning young people from facilities. Through education and connecting the community, the stigma and discrimination experienced by young people decreased, resulting in better access to sport and physical activity.

“I will listen to what care experience young people want. I will empower them, and I will love and support them.”

### Participant

The project also provided 20 young people with care experience with equipment, clothing and footwear, and provided resources to support young people to stay active at home during the pandemic.

### EXAMPLE:

## Young people experiencing poverty and disadvantage

Achieve More Scotland delivered a six-week holiday programme in the summer of 2020, supporting children in disadvantaged areas. The camp was targeted at young people receiving free school meals and most in need, and young people received breakfast and lunch.

“I knew they were going to play sports and run about and have fun like children should. It was an even bigger help to know that they were given a breakfast and lunch each day.”

Parent, Achieve More Scotland

#### EXAMPLE:

### People with convictions

The Positive Change through Football: Inside and Out project included community drop-in sessions for individuals liberated from prison, run by Street Soccer Scotland and partner organisations. This gave participants access to continued sport and physical activity, as well as wider opportunities. It also widened access through introducing these sessions for women. The sessions increased access to football and personal development opportunities that people may not have otherwise taken part in.

“It doesn’t matter what level you’re at, its inclusive for everybody. Nobody’s rubbish your just all at your own pace and your own level, and it’s all about learning.”

**Participant**

One participant has since become a volunteer for Street Soccer Scotland.

### Inclusion through sport and physical activity

Evidence from Year 1, from a small sample of those involved in the Fund in a sustained way, also highlighted that the Changing Lives Fund had a clear impact on how included and close to other people the project participants feel. Almost all felt the project helped them to feel more included and closer to people, to some extent.

**Has the project helped you feel included?\***

**YES 82%**

**SOMETIMES 17%**

**NO 1%**

\*

**Has the project helped you feel closer to people?\*\***

**YES 79%**

**SOMETIMES 17%**

**NO 4%**

\*n=153 \*\*n=151

In Year 2, five projects provided evidence about how their work had supported people to develop friendships, connect people from a range of cultural backgrounds, foster a sense of belonging, help people to relate to a diverse group of peers, or support people to socialise more and reduce isolation.



## Feeling connected

At Greenock Morton Community Trust's ActivAGE project, all participants said that they felt better about their relationships with other care home residents and felt more included, with half experiencing a big change in how included they felt. Residents took part in a range of activities including a silent disco, gardening and a trip out of the home.

Wicketz, run by Cricket Scotland and Lords Taverners, found that a diverse group of young people with many different ethnic origins, cultural groups and nationalities socialised well and made friends. In particular, young refugees and asylum seekers made friends, settled in, felt included and developed confidence and skills for leadership, language and learning. Volunteers and parents also developed new positive relationships through volunteering at project activities, and formed their own social groups outwith – but as a result of – the project.



(Wicketz)



(T.E.A.M)

The T.E.A.M project run by Big Hearts Community Trust and Multi Cultural Family Base worked with young people from a range of cultural backgrounds. It found that most (70%) said they had met new people they would stay connected with.

“

**IT'S SO GOOD MEETING EVERYONE – I'VE HAD SO MUCH FUN AND EVEN THOUGH I WAS REALLY NERVOUS, EVERYONE HAS BEEN SO NICE.”**

Participant



## IMPROVING HEALTH AND WELLBEING

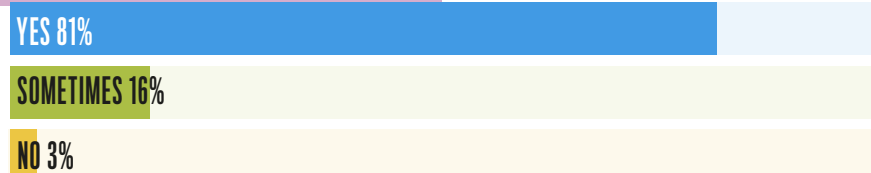
Sixteen projects selected outcomes relating to health and wellbeing, including:

- improved wellbeing
- increased confidence
- improved physical health
- improved mental health/emotional wellbeing
- increased understanding of the benefits of health and wellbeing
- improved lifestyles and healthier, more positive choices.

In Year 1, the 16 projects focusing on health and wellbeing outcomes were asked to gather standard information from participants to explore impact on health and wellbeing. The evidence, from a small sample of those involved in a sustained way in the Fund, highlighted that the projects helped most people to feel healthy, useful, relaxed and optimistic.

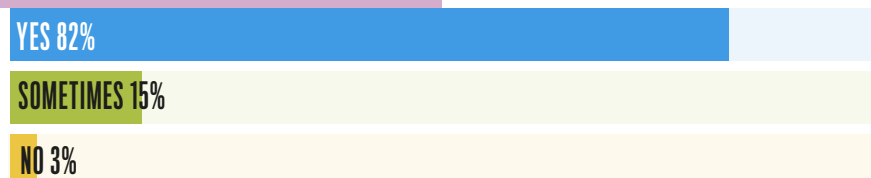
### Has the project helped you feel...

#### HEALTHY?



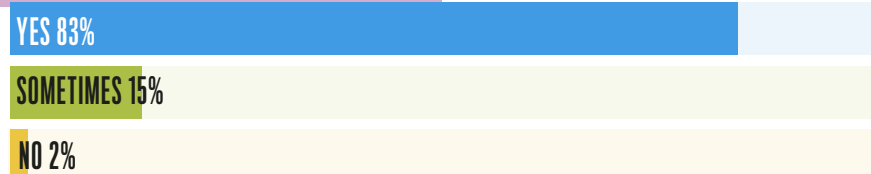
Total number N = 159

#### RELAXED?



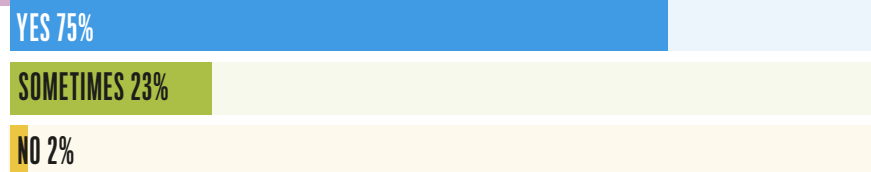
Total number N = 126

#### USEFUL?



Total number N = 126

#### OPTIMISTIC?



Total number N = 161

These standard measures were no longer used in Year 2 of the Fund, as in discussion with projects it was challenging to explore whether people felt healthy, relaxed, useful and optimistic in the context of a global pandemic. Instead, projects submitted information tailored to their own impact and focus on supporting people with their health during the pandemic.



## Physical health and wellbeing

In Year 1, there was good evidence from the reporting forms submitted by projects that the activity was having some impact on physical health. Projects working with young people submitted evidence showing that participants were feeling physically healthier, fitter, faster, making healthier eating choices or sleeping better.

For Year 2, the evidence was more varied. However, many projects were still able to provide evidence that they were supporting physical health, strength and balance.

### EXAMPLES:

## Physical health and wellbeing

At Community Strides, run by SAMH and jogscotland, 100% of participants felt more physically active and healthier because of taking part in the project.

At Centre Forward, run by Forth Valley College and Falkirk Football Community Foundation, 94% of students said the project had developed their health and wellbeing.

At Active Families, run by Sport Aberdeen and Action for Children, 93% of children and young people reported improved health and wellbeing.

At Wicketz, run by Cricket Scotland and Lords Taverners, sessions were extended for a longer period with fewer breaks and increased intensity, and coaches observed individuals increase their fitness, run further and more easily and reach a healthier weight.

At Walking Netball, run by Netball Scotland, Age Scotland and Breathing Space – 75% of participants were more motivated to take part in more physical activity and 50% had learned about the importance of keeping active. Walking Netball facilitators noticed a difference in the health and fitness of participants.

### EXAMPLE:

## Strength and balance

The Replay Sporting Memories project aimed to support older people to improve strength and balance. It provided a KIT bag of equipment, in 2020/21, to enable people to exercise at home. Evaluation found that:

- Almost half of participants either strongly agreed or agreed that the KITbag improved their confidence to move from sitting to standing.
- Around a third of participants either strongly agreed or agreed that the KITbag improved their confidence to move from standing to walking.
- 100% of participants strongly agreed or agreed that the KITbag had improved their physical health and were motivated to try new activities.
- 80% of participants noticed an improved hand grip because of using the squeeze ball regularly.

At the age of 90, one member has reported being able to tie his shoelaces again which is making a significant impact in his daily life.

## Mental health

In Year 1, there was evidence that Changing Lives projects were supporting wellbeing and mental health – including building understanding of wellbeing and self-care, reducing anxiety, helping with managing emotions, building relationships and made them feel better about themselves. However, projects made clear that mental health fluctuated and did not always improve in a linear way.

In Year 2, evidence from a wide range of projects pointed to maintained or improved mental health in the context of the pandemic.

### EXAMPLES:

#### Mental health and wellbeing

At Community Strides, run by jogscotland and SAMH, 100% of participants felt more confident because of taking part in the project.

At Centre Forward, run by Forth Valley College and Falkirk Football Community Foundation, 94% had improved their confidence and 75% had improved positive thoughts.

At Walking Netball, run by Netball Scotland, Age Scotland and Breathing Space, 91% of respondents maintained or improved their levels of mental health.

“It’s lifted my feeling of wellbeing; I’ve made some good friends and I’m getting fitter!”

Participants

At Greenock Morton Community Trust’s ActivAGE project, the majority of residents reported improvements in their mental health, with 50% experiencing a big change.

At T.E.A.M run by Big Hearts Community Trust and the Multi Cultural Family Base, young people reported feeling more confident, happier, less confused and less anxious. Young people also felt they could share their experience and feelings, and benefit from hearing about the experience of others.

At Active Families, run by Sport Aberdeen and Action for Children, some participants found that exercise boosted their mood, wellbeing and family relationships.

“

**THE SOCIAL ASPECT OF WALKING NETBALL AS WELL AS THE PHYSICAL SIDE WAS A REAL MOOD BOOSTER.”**

“

**I LOVE TO SEE MY MOTHER SO ANIMATED AND LIVELY ABOUT SOMETHING SO SIMPLE BUT VERY EFFECTIVE.”**

Family member of care home resident



“

**THIS PROJECT HAS  
HELPED ME INCREASE MY  
UNDERSTANDING OF  
MENTAL HEALTH AND BE  
ABLE TO DISCUSS MENTAL  
HEALTH MORE  
COMFORTABLY WITH  
OTHERS.”**

Participants

#### EXAMPLE:

### Shining a Light on Mental Health

The Shining a Light on Mental Health project, run by Scottish Sports Futures and SAMH, developed the skills of young people to lead discussions about mental health with their peers, and with adults. Feedback from the young ambassadors strongly highlighted the development of skills and capacity around mental health. In particular, ambassadors pointed to the importance of treating mental health as a general state, something which everyone has, rather than a specific illness.

Within this project 100% of the ambassadors said that they understood the benefits of physical activity for their mental health.

“I have a lot more knowledge on adult and young people’s perception of mental wellbeing. I am able to relate because I have heard many different experiences and can relate that back to people of different ages.”

Staff also felt that the young ambassadors had become more able to adapt and create an inclusive approach, opening up mental health conversations and dealing with things that come up. Staff felt that ambassadors developed trust and belief in their capabilities to deliver the activity, both to young people and adults.

“It has given the confidence to discuss sometimes very sensitive issues and a way to open discussions with young people from different backgrounds.”

Staff

#### EXAMPLE:

### Positive Change through Football – Inside and Out

This project, run by Street Soccer Scotland, Shelter Scotland and APEX Scotland, supported people with convictions to enjoy better physical and mental health. Participants talked about the mental health benefits of the programme, after leaving prison:

“That just made it a bit better cause it helped me a wee bit with getting out the house and going to a different environment and all that. Like I said, I used to isolate. Before I got into the jail, I was just stuck in the house just through my mental health and all that.”

“It’s one of the best things to support and get people to open up when you’ve got a game of football.”

“I talk to people a lot more – it’s good that way. It’s all about just helping each other out. So, I’ve got that goodness in me again that I was missing for a long time.”

Participants



**THIS AWARD HAS DEFINITELY HELPED ME TO BECOME MORE CONFIDENT AND WORK TO MY BEST AND TO TRY MY HARDEST WITHIN ALL THE CHALLENGES.”**

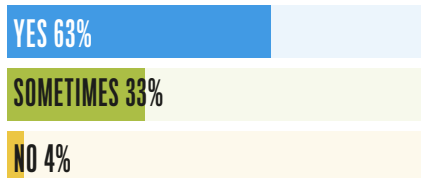
Participant

## BUILDING SKILLS

Six projects intended to achieve outcomes relating to improved skills, positive life choices and positive destinations for participants. Of these, four aimed to build skills through the project, supporting young people to increase their awareness of career opportunities, make positive life decisions and – in the long term – achieve positive destinations. The remaining two aimed to build skills to improve delivery of sport and physical activity.

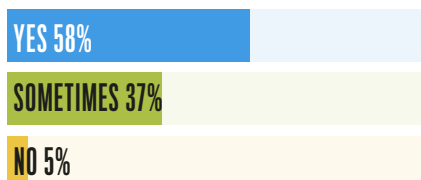
Evidence from Year 1, from a small sample of those involved in a sustained way in the Fund, showed that most participants felt that the project had helped with their ability to make their minds up, think clearly and deal with problems well, at least some of the time.

**Has the project helped you feel able to make your mind up?**



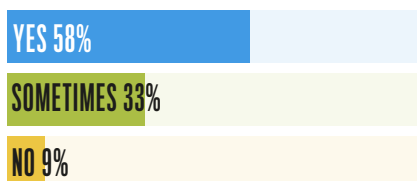
N = 123

**Has the project helped you feel able to think clearly?**



N = 127

**Has the project helped you feel able to deal with problems?**



N = 126

In Year 2, these indicators were not used, and projects gathered information in a way that suited how they had supported participants through the pandemic.

## Skills for life, learning and work

In Year 1, there was good evidence that through taking part in Changing Lives projects, participants developed their confidence, leadership, teamwork, independence and skills for learning, volunteering and employment. In Year 2, the shape of projects shifted considerably in light of the pandemic. However, projects were able to adapt to ensure that participants still had opportunities to develop their skills.

## EXAMPLE:

### Leadership and teamwork

47 young participants in the Youth Work through Sport project achieved a Dynamic Youth Award at SCQF Level 3. All felt it had helped with having a positive view of themselves, and most felt it had helped with problem solving, working with others to achieve a task and feeling valued as a member of the community. Six young people progressed through multiple levels of accredited awards.

## EXAMPLE:

### Independent travel

Care2B Active supported young people to gain skills in independence by building up their confidence to navigate public transport. Young people received monthly bus tickets uploaded onto their Young Scot Card. Through the course of the project 12 young people have been able to get public transport independently and confidently to and from activities. Young people have used these skills to travel to see friends or family, or to attend college.

#### EXAMPLE:

### Positive life decisions

The Positive Change through Football: Inside and Out programme worked with people who have convictions and was run by Street Soccer Scotland, Shelter Scotland and APEX Scotland

Nine participants who were in prison when they engaged with the project and who have now been released have avoided re-offending from periods of time ranging from four months to two years.

- Of those participants who have been released since joining the project all have secured accommodation.
- One participant is currently finishing a degree.
- Three participants are in full time employment, one is working part time and another is a carer for their mother.
- Of those participants still engaging with the project after their release, all have remained out of prison and have avoided reoffending.

Street Soccer Scotland is tracking the financial value of this support, and the reduction in re-offending among its participants. While nearly half of all newly released prisoners will re-offend within a year of release, no-one that the project is still in contact with has re-offended. It estimates this will result in a saving of between £350,000 and £600,000 in imprisonment and associated legal costs.

#### EXAMPLE:

### Positive activities

The Active Families project run by Sport Aberdeen and Action for Children worked with vulnerable families in Aberdeen. 93% of children and young people reported improvements in their level of activities and routines, including communication, working together and family activities. 75% of families accepted the offer of a personalised activity plan.

#### EXAMPLE:

### Employability

The Centre Forward project, run by Forth Valley College and Falkirk Football Community Foundation, worked with young people with learning difficulties. All reported that their skills improved in completing CVs, application forms and interview skills. All reported increased awareness of the responsibilities for employment. In total, the 25 students completed 219 SQA units, as well as emergency first aid and SFA coaching qualifications. 18 took part in work placements (prior to lockdown), seven went on to employment, nine went on to further training and five continued to volunteer.







## Skills to improve sport and physical activity

Two projects specifically intended to develop the knowledge and skills of people who deliver activities. This has included developing skills to ensure that deliverers can reduce barriers to activity, deliver more inclusive activity and deliver activity appropriate for a particular client group. A few other projects also reported improvements in people's skills to include people in physical activity.

### EXAMPLE:

#### Skills working with younger people

The Youth Work Through Sport project, involving Youth Scotland, St Angela's Participation Centre Community Sport Hub, and North Kelvin Sports Development Group, supported youth workers to develop their skills around creating an inclusive environment. Participants reported that they were more aware of the relevant issues and how to address them. And those delivering the project also saw improvements in the participant's knowledge and capacity to create an inclusive environment.

"I identified what barriers young people faced to take part, and we overcame some of these barriers to enable them to take part and engage... I will follow this up and follow through with removing barriers."

Participant

### EXAMPLE:

#### Skills working with older people

The Care About Walking project run by Paths for All supported staff working in care homes to develop their knowledge and skills around walking, and how walking could be used to benefit their residents. Care home residents were supported to participate in activities that got them more active and promoted strength and balance. Staff felt able to adapt the resources to the needs of their care homes and residents.

Staff from a number of care homes also took part in the Paths for All Step Count Challenge, which helped some staff to understand the benefits of walking and being active, which they shared with their residents.

"Because the staff have got involved in everything, a lot more people have been going out into the garden, a lot more people have been taking strength and balance classes. We are all joining in."

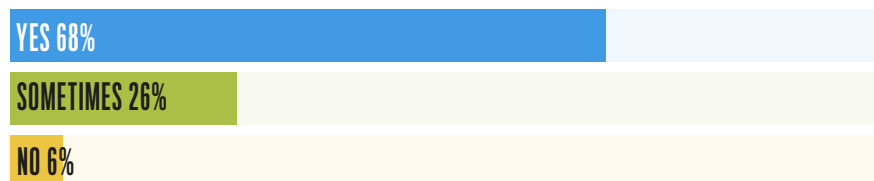
Care home staff

The Greenock Morton Community Trust ActivAGE project also supported and upskilled staff to deliver activities with care home residents, through introducing new exercises and activities.

## STRENGTHENING COMMUNITIES

In Year 1, almost all projects (16) were asked to gather standard information from participants to explore whether the project helped them to feel involved in their communities<sup>3</sup>. The evidence, from a small sample of those involved in a sustained way in the Fund, indicated that around two thirds felt that the project helped them to become more involved in their community.

**Has the project helped you feel involved in your community?**



N = 120

Six projects specifically aimed to bring about change in relation to strengthening communities, including:

- improving connections between people in the community
- stronger, more sustainable communities
- more inclusive communities
- improving sense of belonging within the community
- improving community engagement.

In Year 2, some projects found it challenging to build connections between people in the community in the way that was originally envisaged – particularly connecting people in care homes with the wider community, or intergenerational work. However, projects adapted and found new ways to achieve this. For many, building strong communities became a key focus for Year 2. Some projects found that rather than focusing in on supporting individuals, they supported the families – helping people to connect digitally, talk about anxieties and communicate.

### EXAMPLE:

#### Care 2B Active

Care 2B Active, run by Active Communities and Who Cares? Scotland, found that through walking groups, participants noticed a lot of litter on their routes. Young people talked about how to improve their area and explored how to take pride in their community and bring about change. Young people became motivated to take part in walking litter picks, with nine sessions attracting 75 attendances. This work has continued through six young people now volunteering at the weekends to support Renfrewshire Team Clean Up.

Care 2B Active also helped to bridge the divide between young people with care experience and their peers. Previously there were some tensions and prejudice, and by bringing the young people together and widening understanding of care experience, young people were able to talk positively about what it means to be care experienced. Through this, some young people have gone on to join school teams or groups.

<sup>3</sup> One project was not asked to gather this information as this was not the focus of the project.



**IT'S A MASSIVE PART OF THE COMMUNITY NOW...IT'S REALLY TAKEN AN ACTIVE PART OF PEOPLE'S EVERYDAY LIVES."**

Wicketz Staff

EXAMPLE:

## Wicketz

Wicketz, run by Cricket Scotland and Lords Taverners, involved bringing together a range of people, including young people, parents and community volunteers through leadership opportunities. Young people were trained as sports leaders, giving them ownership of the activity. The increased ownership has facilitated a sense of belonging and pride in the club. The project has also engaged parents, some of whom have qualified as assistant coaches.

"Some of the parents are involved now, too. They used to just drop the kids off to have some free time, but now they stay for 15-20 minutes at the start to see what their kids are doing. We have two parent volunteers who want to be involved in cricket and I am telling them how to get qualifications like UKCC Level 1 coaching."

"It took about two or three months...they really found their feet... they really belonged in that environment, and I think most importantly, they believed that the club was theirs, that it was a part of them and vice versa, they were a part of the club."

Staff

The coaches delivering the activity noted that the project is now well known within the communities they work in. People living and working in the community, in shops and restaurants are familiar with the project and are proud to say that they or their children attend the club.

EXAMPLE:

## Walking Netball

Most participants (62%) in Walking Netball said that meeting new people was one of the best parts. It helped participants feel included and connected, with 97% maintaining or improving their feeling of being included over the pandemic. A quarter felt more involved in their community as a result.

"It makes me feel included in my own community. It's something to look forward to. I feel part of a team as I never felt included at school. It helps my fitness and gets me out of the house. [Now] I'm making friends and I like the social side."

Participant



## CHAPTER 5

# LESSONS LEARNED

This chapter explores learning about what has worked well and what has been identified as challenging for the funded partnerships.





## WHAT HAS HELPED TO CHANGE LIVES

Projects identified a range of factors which contributed to their success and which helped to improve outcomes for participants.

The main themes emerging were:

- partnerships, relationships and teams
- focusing on change
- the social aspect of activity
- person-led approaches.

### Partnerships, relationships and teams

Broadly, projects spoke positively about partners which included public sector organisations, businesses, schools, third sector organisations and others. Working with others helped projects to deliver more activity, engage target groups and build their reputation in communities. During the pandemic, some relationships strengthened with partners bringing their own skills and contacts, being flexible to bring the most to the partnership. However, some found that the pandemic put different pressures on organisations, and that partners were not able to work together quite as closely as before.

Strong relationships within staff teams were also important. Staff felt that having a supportive team, with autonomy to try out new things in an ever changing context, also helped to bring about change.

Through the Changing Lives Fund, projects have also connected with one another to learn and shape their response to delivery in the context of the pandemic. This has been facilitated by Spirit of 2012, through Learning Events and also through their monthly catch up meetings with projects, identifying common challenges and opportunities, and initiating contacts between projects to explore ideas.

### Focusing on change

Projects learned that it was important to set a small number of focused, realistic changes that they aimed to bring about, from the outset. Projects felt that these should be based on community needs and expressed in clear and simple language. Projects welcomed the flexible approach taken by the Changing Lives Fund in relation to agreeing and finalising outcomes in the early stages of their project, and mid-way in light of the pandemic. Projects stressed that it was important to be flexible, reflective and open to unintended and unexpected outcomes.

### Social aspect of activity

The social aspect of activity, beyond the core activity itself were very important in some projects. Projects reported that group activity helped individuals to bond with each other and create a sense of belonging. A few projects noted that the informal times in activity, such as car journeys or tea breaks were a catalyst for this. And a few projects noted that providing snacks or a meal at the end of the session helped to bring people together and collectively improve wellbeing. This aspect of the activity was particularly hard to continue during the pandemic.

### Person-centred approaches

Generally, projects were being flexible and adapted to clients' interests and needs. In some cases, sessions were designed jointly with participants, and co-produced. In other cases, the timing or length of sessions were adapted to suit participant needs. And in some cases, one to one, bespoke support was provided. These approaches helped to engage participants in a way that suited them.

Projects adapted their approaches during the pandemic, focusing in on the needs of target groups in a flexible way. National partners noted that projects often adapted to focus not just on the needs of their original target group, but also wider families and communities. Many projects played a key role in the community wide response to the pandemic, building deeper relationships and providing essential support.

# LESSONS LEARNED FOR THE CHANGING LIVES FUND

## Intentionality

The Changing Lives Fund has demonstrated that using sport and physical activity intentionally to bring about change can be a powerful tool. Projects have achieved outcomes around increasing engagement in physical activity, health and wellbeing, inclusion, skills and community connections. To achieve these changes, projects found that it was important that activity focused on using sport and physical activity intentionally to bring about change, and delivering activity in a way which focuses on relationships with participants, person-centred approaches and social activity and fun.

Projects also learned that it was important to start with the wider intended outcome – getting people active or supporting health and wellbeing – and work with participants to explore how to achieve this – rather than begin with a specific way of doing this.

### EXAMPLE:

## Learning through Let's Give Sport Back to Girls

The Let's Give Sport Back to Girls project run by Youth Scotland and Inch Park Community Sport Hub initially aimed to get more girls involved with rugby, cricket and football, based on their ideas. However, it learned that the concept of the project created some barriers. It was hard to support inactive girls into specific, structured sporting activity within a club environment. Sometimes activities needed to be adapted or changed entirely to suit the mood and wider circumstances of the girls on any given day. There were also some challenges securing buy-in from coaches and volunteers within partner clubs. This was exacerbated during the pandemic, with many clubs being closed and relationships not yet built up at the point of lockdown.

The project adapted to help girls to see the benefits of physical activity and how they can choose to be involved on their own terms, rather than necessarily becoming involved in structured sports and club activities. The project shifted to focus on running physical activity, health and wellbeing sessions in primary and secondary schools and was successful in empowering the girls to give their ideas for the sessions and take responsibility for leading sessions. In the future, this project would ensure that a broad range of stakeholders were fully involved from the outset and project conception, to ensure full buy in.

## Partnerships

The Changing Lives Fund brought together sporting and community partners to share skills and resources and achieve positive impact for individuals and communities. The partnership approach has largely worked well, and built projects with different skills, expertise and contacts. Where this has worked well, the partnership had added value and built knowledgeable, supportive teams able to deliver in their communities.

However, there remains some work to be done to ensure that partners across different sectors can work together within the Changing Lives ethos. A few projects experienced challenges around the ethos and approach of sports organisations (clubs and Hubs) involved in Changing Lives projects. A few reflected that perhaps further work needed done to engage sports organisations in the ethos of the Changing Lives approach, to support coaches and volunteers to understand why Changing Lives work is important and how it fits with their wider activities.

It is important to note that the pandemic also had an impact on partnership working, with some projects finding that the pandemic put pressures on their ability to work jointly – particularly if different organisations had different ways of responding to the restrictions. For others, focus on community work strengthened, through existing and new partnerships, with sporting organisations realising what they can achieve through a focus on changing lives.

**“It is great to see sporting organisations being in that space.”**

National partner

## **“I’VE LEARNED JUST BECAUSE I BELIEVE IN IT, THAT DOESN’T EXTEND TO CLUBS AND COACHES.”**

Project partner

## **“THE JOURNEY THAT SPORT HAS TO DO IS HUGE.”**

Project partner

### **Profile and level of participants**

The evaluation highlighted that most projects reported engaging successfully with their target groups.

A key aspect of reaching target groups effectively was working in partnership, as well as taking a participant-led approach and including social opportunities. To engage people in sustained activity (Level 2), projects had to work with a higher number of participants on a low level, taster or introductory level (Level 1) than anticipated. The pandemic may have affected this balance.

The balance of participants was broadly equal for males and females and a good proportion were ethnic minority participants (25%). Around one in ten participants was disabled, lower than expected for the Fund. This is an important area of focus for future work.

### **Funder approach**

Many projects indicated that the flexibility of Spirit of 2012 in managing the funding, and The Robertson Trust, **sportscotland** and Scottish Government more broadly, helped them to continue to achieve positive outcomes for their participants during the pandemic. Partners felt that Spirit of 2012 staff were supportive, realistic, flexible and good at communicating. The approach focused on connecting and supporting partners, listening to partners and brokering connections.

**“From the word go Spirit of 2012 were very supportive, flexible and not on your case.”**

Project partner

**“The lines of communication being very open has been really good, and really unusual. This is not what it’s like with all our funders.”**

Project partner

Partners felt that reports and monitoring requirements did not feel too demanding, and that they had freedom to adapt their project to suit needs and the changing context.

**“It’s definitely beneficial to have that message from a funder that it’s ok to deliver in a different way.”**

Project partner

### **Evidencing change**

The standard health and wellbeing and physical activity measures were suspended for Year Two of the Fund. However, in Year One the health and wellbeing measures worked very well for demonstrating outcomes across health and wellbeing, skills development and strengthening communities.

The physical activity measures provided consistency in the way in which information about physical activity levels was gathered, but the analysis of this data was complex and each project approached it a slightly different way. If using these measures again, processes should be in place to gather the raw data centrally to allow for consistent analysis.

The standard measures worked well because they were as simple as possible, and accompanied by a strong focus on qualitative, creative methods for gathering evidence about impact, in a way that suited each project. It is important not to lose this qualitative focus in future evaluation activity. Projects very much welcomed the focus on real change in people’s lives, rather than numbers or activities.

“

**IT HAS BEEN AMAZING. WE HAVE BEEN ABLE TO POINT TO EXAMPLES OF CHANGING LIVES PROJECTS ACROSS SO MANY POLICY AREAS – POVERTY, CLIMATE ACTION, MENTAL HEALTH, SOCIAL JUSTICE.”**

National partner

“

**THIS HAS GIVEN CHANGING LIVES LEVERAGE THAT IT HASN'T HAD BEFORE. PEOPLE REALLY UNDERSTAND THE CHANGING LIVES APPROACH, AND THE INTENTIONALITY.”**

National partner



## Culture change

The Changing Lives Fund, within the context of the wider Changing Lives Programme, has contributed to a significant impact on how people think about sport and physical activity, and the impact it can have. National partners felt that the Changing Lives Fund was very valuable in demonstrating how, practically, the Changing Lives approach can be used to bring about change.

National partners felt that they had been able to make this change through working well together and developing strong relationships, despite having different organisational ethos, approaches and ways of working. Partners worked through challenges and were not afraid to have difficult discussions. All partners had to make compromises and adapt their approach – and felt that this was indicative of the success of the partnership.

### “We worked well together. And it was challenging!”

National partner

This shift has meant that the Changing Lives approach is influencing national approaches to strategies, plans, funds, support and communications.

### “More people know about it now, the awareness is there.”

National partner

The Changing Lives Fund has also influenced how participating partners approach their delivery of sport and physical activity, in some instances.

#### EXAMPLE:

## Netball Scotland

Netball Scotland and partners ran a Walking Netball programme through the Changing Lives Fund. Changing Lives has had a big influence on the direction Netball Scotland wishes to take, and its strategy has been refreshed to focus on introducing a range of different types of netball, like Walking Netball, Walking Netball Lite and chair-based netball for older people. These approaches can be easier to run in communities, and don't require a full-sized hall and all the equipment, but still get people more active in the community in a way that suits them.

## Sustainability

Most of the funded projects are continuing their work or have accessed funding for specific aspects of the work piloted during the Changing Lives Fund. For example:

- The Centre Forward project attracted funding from the National Lottery Youth Start Fund which allows it to run to August 2023.
- Scottish Sports Futures has mainstreamed its Wellbeing Ambassador programme from the Shining a Light on Mental Health project into its core delivery, and will use it as a social enterprise strand.
- Sporting Memories Foundation accessed funding to extend its KIT resource pack across Scotland, through the Scottish Government.
- Achieve More Scotland accessed funding through the CashBack for Communities programme, to extend its work to other communities in Glasgow and Lanarkshire.
- Champions for Change received funding from North Ayrshire Council and North Ayrshire Alcohol and Drug Partnership to continue delivery to October 2022.
- Care2BActive has accessed funding to train two members of staff as outdoor play rangers, allowing the project to continue with 15 young people who trained to be peer educators in outdoor play.
- Cricket Scotland and Lords Taverners will continue to deliver their Wicketz programme. The Glasgow project is one of their flagship projects, and will be used to inform and support best practice in other areas.

Other projects are continuing their work through an extension of the Changing Lives Fund underspend, into 2022. Some are continuing to support their work through core funding, until they can identify further sources of funding.

## AREAS FOR CONSIDERATION

The Changing Lives Fund demonstrated that sport and physical activity can play a powerful role in supporting people to become more active, feel healthier, improve their mental wellbeing, feel included, develop skills and strengthen their community links.

There are important messages for others within this, including:

- **For funders** – Sport and physical activity can be a powerful conduit for bringing about a wide range of positive outcomes. In managing this process, it is important to be flexible, outcomes focused and take time to work with funded organisations to articulate the change they can bring about through their work. It is important to recognise that this may change or develop along the way. The focus should be on real change, perhaps for a smaller or more focused group of people over a sustained period of time, rather than focusing on targets around the number of people taking part or activities taking place.
- **For all deliverers** – Key components of the Changing Lives approach were the social aspect of activity and participants being involved in designing and delivering activity. Sustained, regular and in-depth activity was needed to bring about significant change. This learning should be built into future approaches.
- **For sports organisations** – Activity can be adapted to maximise benefits for participants, beyond taking part to really making a major difference to people's lives. Intentionality is key, aiming to deliberately use sport and physical activity to achieve particular outcomes for people and communities, based on community needs. Using this approach can help to build sport and physical activity as an integral part of communities, enhance understanding of the value of sport and physical activity and open new opportunities. However, this approach requires a clear culture shift and needs clear commitment, vision and time to ensure that coaches and volunteers understand the ethos of the approach and how it fits with their wider activities.
- **For wider sectors** – Working with sport and physical activity organisations can be a powerful way to bring about change for individuals and communities, across many different areas including strengthening communities, equality and inclusion, health and wellbeing and skills development. Working in partnership brings many benefits, and draws on the skills across sectors.
- **For all** – The Changing Lives Fund successfully engaged a wide range of target groups. However, numbers of disabled people or people with additional support needs were relatively small. This is an important area and may require further exploration and targeted work in the future, including profiling the success of some projects which have successfully engaged with people with additional support needs through the Changing Lives approach.

## FINAL THOUGHTS

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Research Scotland has been involved in research and evaluation around the Changing Lives agenda for many years. Over time, we have seen a clear shift in how many people in sport, activity and community sectors talk about the positive change that can be brought about using the power of sport and physical activity.

We feel privileged to be involved in this evaluation which demonstrates the real difference that the Changing Lives approach can make to people's lives and our communities. It is exciting and positive to see the Changing Lives approach take shape and become a reality in Scotland. Thank you to everyone who took the time to take part in this evaluation and shared their experiences with us.



# WE ARE CHANGING LIVES.





# APPENDIX ONE: STANDARD MEASURES FOR EVALUATION OF THE CHANGING LIVES FUND

## FOR PROJECTS WHICH SET ANY INTENDED OUTCOMES AROUND HEALTH AND WELLBEING

These projects should use the below tool:

**Do you feel that this project has helped you to feel more:**

	Yes	Sometimes	No
Optimistic about the future			
Useful			
Relaxed			
Able to deal with problems well			
Able to think clearly			
Able to make your mind up about things			
Close to other people			
Healthy			
Included			
Involved in your community			

## FOR PROJECTS WHICH SET OUTCOMES AROUND PEOPLE BECOMING MORE ACTIVE

A standard definition:

### Adults 16 and over

- Inactive – less than 30 minutes **a week**
- Some activity – between 30 minutes and less than 150 minutes **a week**
- Active – at least 150 minutes **a week**

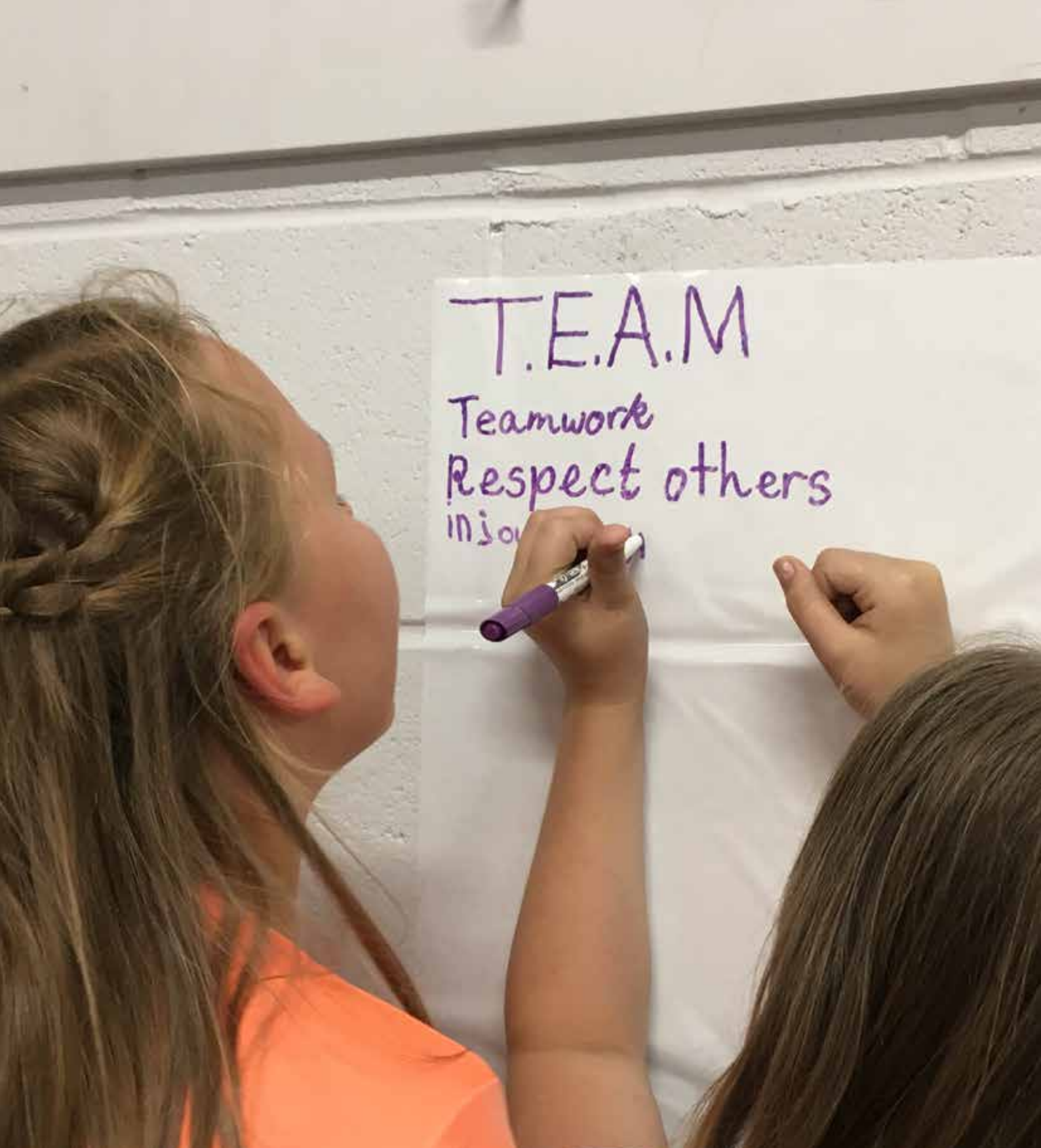
Based on the Chief Medical Officers definitions for adults

### Children under 16

- Inactive – less than 30 minutes **a day**
- Some activity – between 30 minutes and less than 60 minutes **a day**
- Active – at least 60 minutes **a day**

Based on the Chief Medical Officers definitions for children

**Note:** These tools were used pre-pandemic, but projects were not required to use these after March 2020 due to the pandemic influencing health, wellbeing and activity and making comparison pre, and post involvement in Changing Lives projects much less useful.



Changing Lives Through Sport & Physical Activity partners:

**sportscotland**  
the national agency for sport

 **The ROBERTSON**  
Trust

