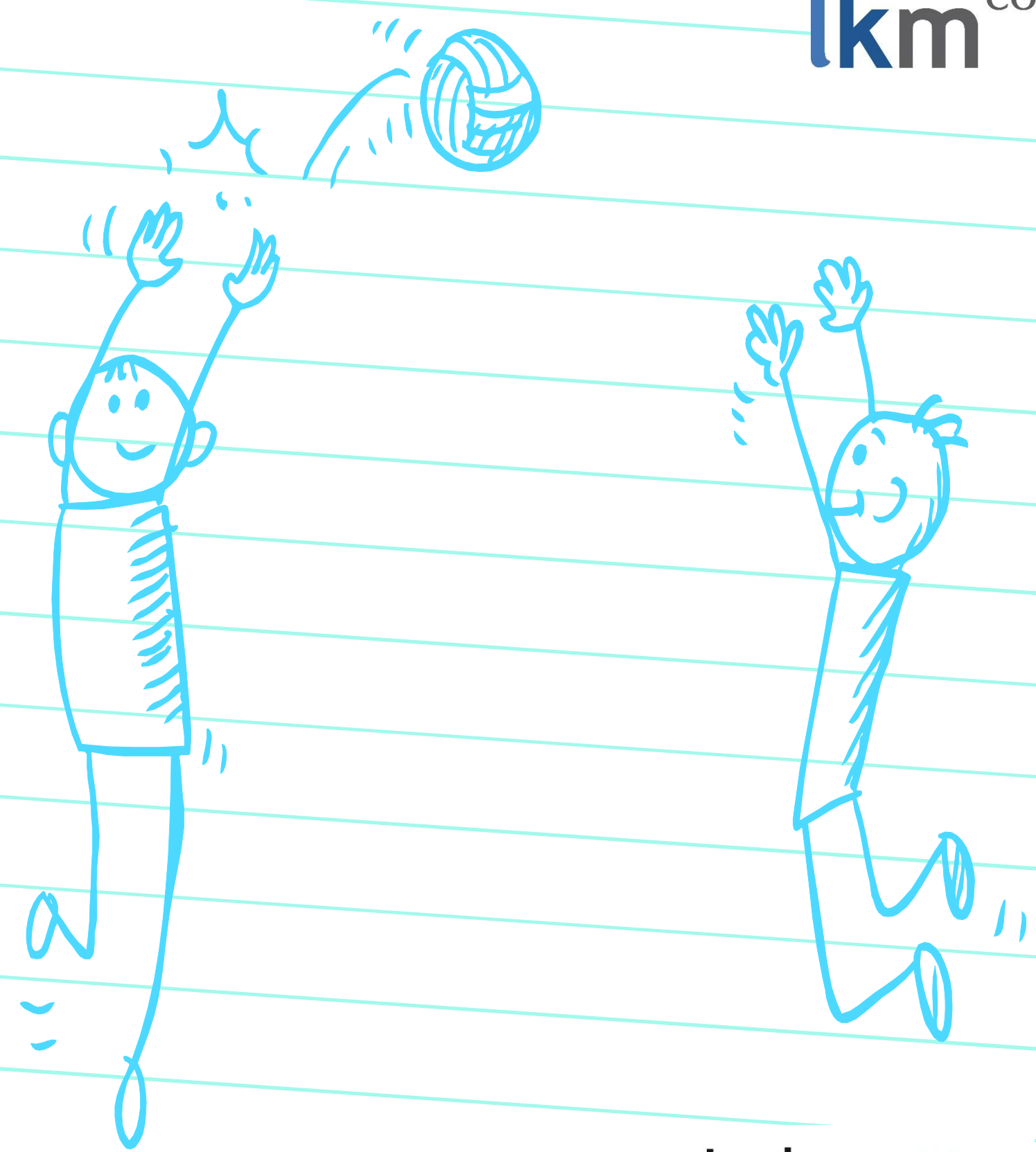


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An inclusive future





Dr Meenakshi Parameshwaran is Research Associate at LKMco. She holds a DPhil in Sociology from the University of Oxford. Her research interests included educational inequality, social class, ethnicity, and compositional effects. She was previously Evaluation Officer at Teach First. Before that, she held post-doctoral academic positions at the University of Manchester and the University of Oxford. She is a qualified secondary mathematics teacher and a primary school governor. She is also a part-time quantitative researcher at the FFT Education Datalab.



Loic Menzies is Director of LKMco, a Tutor for Canterbury Christ Church University's Faculty of Education and a trustee of the charities UnLtd and sexYOUality. He was previously Associate Senior Manager and Head of History and Social Sciences at St. George's R.C. School in North West London. Before that he was a youth worker involved in youth participation and young person-led community projects. He now specialises in education policy, youth development, social enterprise and school-based teacher training. He holds a degree in Politics, Philosophy and Economics from Magdalen College, Oxford.



This report was written by the education and youth development 'think and action tank' LKMco. LKMco is a social enterprise - we believe that society has a duty to ensure children and young people receive the support they need in order to make a fulfilling transition to adulthood.

We work towards this vision by helping education and youth organisations develop, evaluate and improve their work with young people. We then carry out academic and policy research and advocacy that is grounded in our experience.

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info@lkmco.org - www.lkmco.org.uk - @LKMco - +44(0)7793 370459

"Society should ensure that all young people receive the support they need in order to make a fulfilling transition to adulthood"

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Final Report

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1. Introduction and executive summary

Inclusive Futures is a unique leadership and volunteering programme which aimed to give young people aged 14-19 years old, with and without disabilities, the opportunity to work alongside each other to support and deliver physical activities in schools and communities. As part of this, the programme aimed to promote inclusion, increase participation in physical activity, plus empower young people and develop their life skills.

Inclusive Futures was based in eight host cities across the UK. Young volunteers were recruited and supported to undertake volunteering at local schools, community sports clubs (known as settings) and major sporting events by a volunteer coordinator based within a sporting organisation. To keep the spirit of 2012 alive, the cities chosen were linked to major sporting occasions at which some of the young people had the opportunity to volunteer at.

The young people, by working together, aimed to influence and increase the capacity of local providers to deliver a fully inclusive physical activity and sport opportunities that benefit and engage all young people in their communities.

A National Inclusive Futures Camp (March 2015) for young volunteers was delivered and each city held regional training camps, events/activities throughout the year.

Inclusive Futures aims to:

- Create a positive change in the perception of disabled people in communities (by both disabled and non-disabled people)
- Unlocked & demonstrate the potential of young people to be agents for change
- Increase the number of people volunteering in their communities
- Enhance young people's life and employability skills
- Empower disabled people to be more integrated in society
- Increase the opportunities for disabled people to participate in activities and the community
- Use major events to inspire and empower people to get (more) involved in their communities

Total number of volunteers recruited

Total*	Disabled
1441	619 (43%)

Gender*	%
Male	48 (633)
Female	52 (685)
Total	100

*Data taken from Volunteer coordinators monthly monitoring reports

Ethnic Background**	%
White	83 (251)
Mixed Ethnic Background	6 (19)
Asian/Asian UK	5 (14)
Black/African/Caribbean/Black UK	6 (19)
Other ethnic group	0.3 (1)

Age**	%
Under 15	13 (39)
15-18	69 (208)
19 or above	18 (56)

**Data taken from LKMco evaluation young volunteers baseline surveys

Executive Summary

Wellbeing

Four wellbeing measures from the Office for National Statistics (ONS) were used at the start of the programme and after six volunteering opportunities. According to all four measures volunteers' well-being increased significantly ($p < 0.05$) over the course of their involvement. Almost all volunteers believed that the programme had changed the way they felt about life.

Most volunteers began the project with positive feelings about themselves and their abilities but the proportion strongly agreeing (that they had positive thoughts and feelings) increased over the course of their involvement. Impact was not limited to volunteers, participants too believed that their involvement had led them to feel more positive.

Disability

The programme is helping improve perceptions and integration of disabled people. This involves both a change in knowledge (e.g. awareness of inclusive practice) and attitude (e.g. thoughts about disabled people's ability to live a full life.) There is evidence for this amongst participants, volunteers and settings and there is reason to believe impact will be sustained beyond the programme's duration and beyond participants and volunteers. Unsurprisingly, the programme's effect on perceptions of prejudice and integration in Britain as a whole is more complex and it seems possible the programme has primarily been helping increase awareness of prejudice.

Empowering young people

Volunteers have become active - physically and in their community, as a result of the programme. This is helping them to feel more connected to their local community and to feel more able to achieve change.

Changes affect settings as well as volunteers with settings generally increasing the extent to which they value young people as part of the community workforce. The vast majority of settings plan to make changes to the way they deliver physical activity as a result of their involvement in the programme.

Engaging volunteers

Inclusive Futures has provided engaged 1,441 volunteers. There is good reason to believe that much of this volunteering will be sustained into the future given the positive attitudes and intentions young people expressed regarding future volunteering as well as the networks they have built up and the skills they have developed. A more

complex picture emerges regarding settings' self-assessments with a small minority appearing to have become more self-critical following their involvement.

Participation in physical activity

Attitudes to physical activity became more positive over the course of the programme and volunteers' physical activity increased.

Inspiring events

Volunteers' attitudes to and engagement with the Olympic and Paralympic legacy increased over the course of the programme and this seems to have played a role in inspiring them to participate in physical activity and sport.

Key processes and delivery

Data from case studies, interviews, focus groups, and survey questions shows that the vast majority of volunteers, settings and participants rate their experience on the programme as good or better and most rate it very highly. The programme has particular strengths around quality local delivery, integration of disabled and non-disabled young people and certain elements of the camps. There is now scope to develop the opportunities and resources available, expectations around impact and consistency of quality at camps.

Recommendations

- Reduce the evaluation burden add inclusivity of the tools by shortening and simplifying surveys and minimising data collection requirements.
- Place case studies at the heart of future evaluation to ensure that young people struggling to access written surveys are fully included.
- Address the shortage of volunteering opportunities by building partnerships with other volunteering and sports organisations in each region. This will help ensure access to more high-quality, regular, inclusive volunteering opportunities and maximise impact in overlapping areas of focus.
- Ensure a consistently engaging and inclusive range of activities are available at all camps by ensuring activities do not go on too long and that there is sufficient variety.
- Ensure opportunities to share best practice across regions are available, for example by "buddying up" volunteer co-ordinators so they can support each other, or by using an online forum to share ideas.
- Provide a greater range of ways of engaging with schools and ensure careful co-ordination between all stakeholders, particularly NGBs.
- Review budgets where possible to ensure that IF events have appropriate equipment and transport facilities.
- Consider extending the lower age boundary to below 14 to engage volunteers before exam and school commitments become too substantial as well as the upper-age boundary for volunteers beyond 19 so that volunteers can progress on completion of the programme.

2. Methodology

Research tools

This report is based on data from six sources:

1. Matched volunteer baseline and endpoint surveys
2. Setting (places where volunteering takes place) baseline and endpoint matched surveys
3. Volunteer regional and national camp surveys
4. Participant (young people who experience events organised by volunteers) perceived impact surveys
5. Case studies of four Inclusive Futures regions (Bath, Manchester, Glasgow, Swansea)
6. Interviews with stakeholders from national disability sport organisations in England, Scotland and Wales.

This data was collected between January and September 2015.

Analysis

For all quantitative survey data, responses were entered into Excel and descriptive statistics generated. Baseline and endpoint survey data from volunteers and from settings was matched using names and locations. For outcomes where change is being measured, only respondents who provided both baseline and endpoint survey data were included in analyses. For outcomes only captured at the endpoint, all respondents who completed endpoint surveys are included (whether or not a matched baseline survey was available).

For qualitative survey data, coding of the open response questions was inductive to capture emerging themes for each question. Inductive coding means categorising text responses without any predetermined codes. This allows the qualitative data to drive the themes that emerge, rather than the research framing the data by using codes prepared in advance.

Survey responses

88 volunteers had provided complete, match-able responses to the both the volunteers baseline survey and endpoint survey by 14th September 2015. Given that there were 1,441 volunteers, this gives a matched survey response rate of 7%. This is a low response rate but it should be noted that this evaluation unfortunately only began part way through the year. On the other hand, 179 volunteers completed an endpoint evaluation, representing a 14% response rate and in many cases we are able to use data on perceived impact from these. This gives a possible margin of error of 7% at the 95% confidence level.

Surveys were completed online or on paper. Volunteer coordinators aided in the completion of surveys, but even with this extra support, it is likely that some young volunteers would not have been able to engage with the survey materials. As such, the findings in this report may be less representative of young people whose disabilities made it difficult for them to complete the survey.

19 settings had provided complete responses to both the settings baseline and endpoint surveys in time for this report. For some questions, it was possible to use endpoint responses on their own- there were 31 of these (compared to 43 baselines). It is not possible to calculate a response rate for settings at this time because information is not available on the number of settings Inclusive Futures is working with.

101 (out of 112) volunteers provided responses to the national camp survey. This gives a response rate of 90% and a margin of error of 4% at the 95% confidence level.

95 (out of 140) volunteers provided responses to the regional camp surveys that took place during the data collection period. This gives a response rate of 68% and a margin of error of 6% at the 95% confidence level.

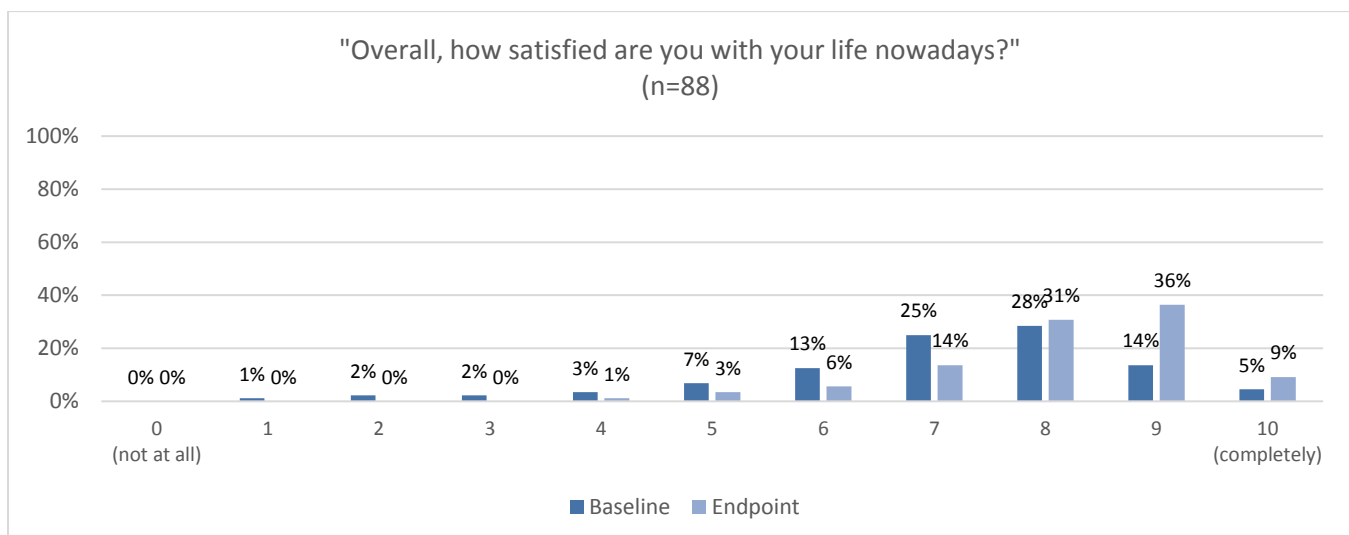
4. Impact on wellbeing

Four wellbeing measures from the Office for National Statistics (ONS) were used at the start of the programme and after six volunteering opportunities. According to all four measures volunteers' well-being increased significantly ($p < 0.05$) over the course of their involvement. Almost all volunteers believed that the programme had changed the way they felt about life.

Most volunteers began the project with positive feelings about themselves and their abilities but the proportion strongly agreeing (that they had positive thoughts and feelings) increased over the course of their involvement. Impact was not limited to volunteers, participants too believed that their involvement had led them to feel more positive. National and regional camps had a particularly notable impact on empathy and happiness.

4.1 People's personal wellbeing increases through participation

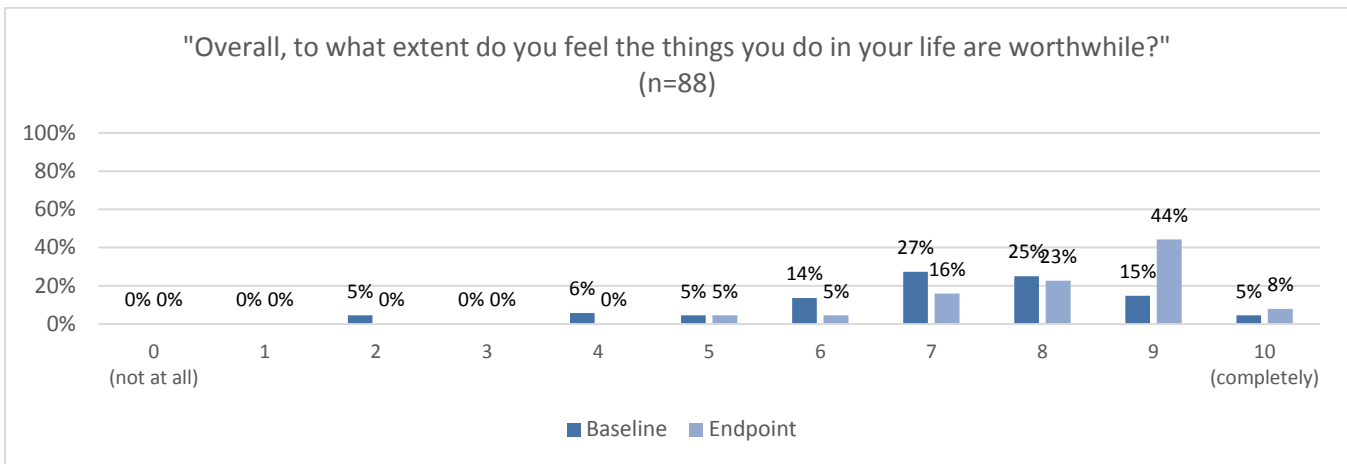
- 45% (40) of volunteers reported a satisfaction score of 9 or 10 after taking part in Inclusive Futures compared to 19% (17) at baseline.



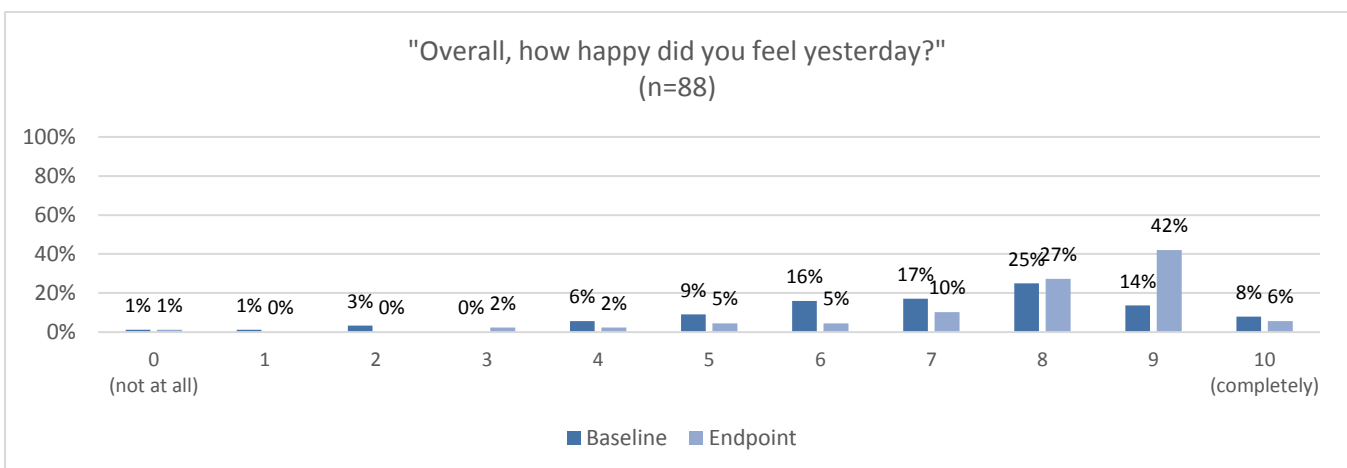
"Before I was on this project, I was always in the house...I was an outsider, introverted...but since being on this project, I've been getting out, talking to others, socialising...this project has helped me achieve things".

Volunteer, Swansea

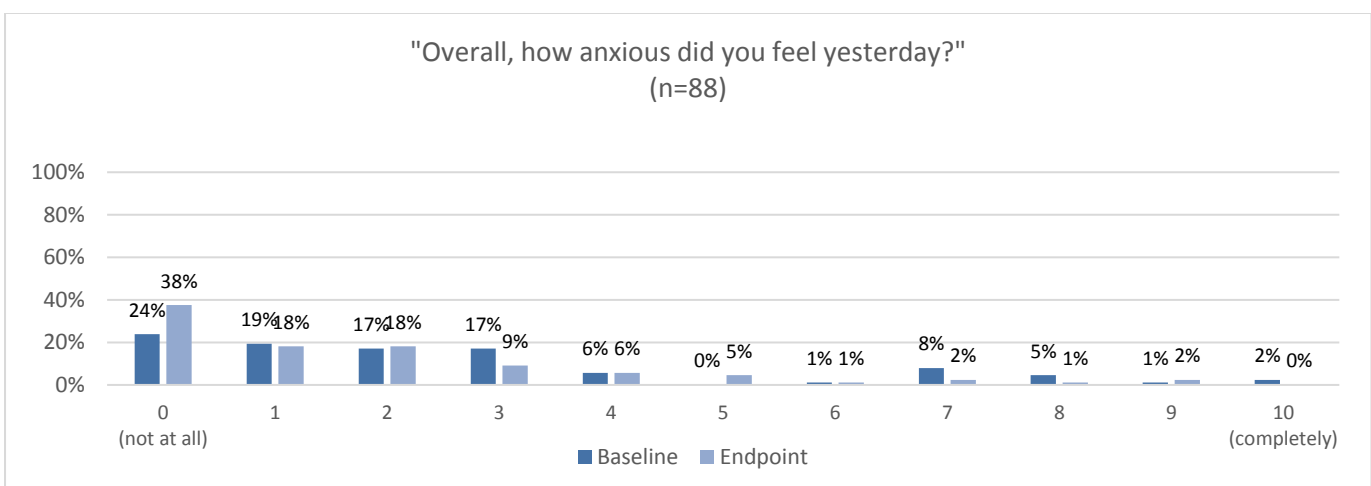
- Over a third of volunteers (67%; 59) reported an endpoint score of 9 or above when asked about the extent to which they felt the things they did in their lives were worthwhile - an increase of 26 percentage points compared to baseline.



- 48% (42) respondents reported a score of 9 or higher at endpoint when asked how happy they felt yesterday. Only 22% (19) of respondents gave similarly high scores at baseline.

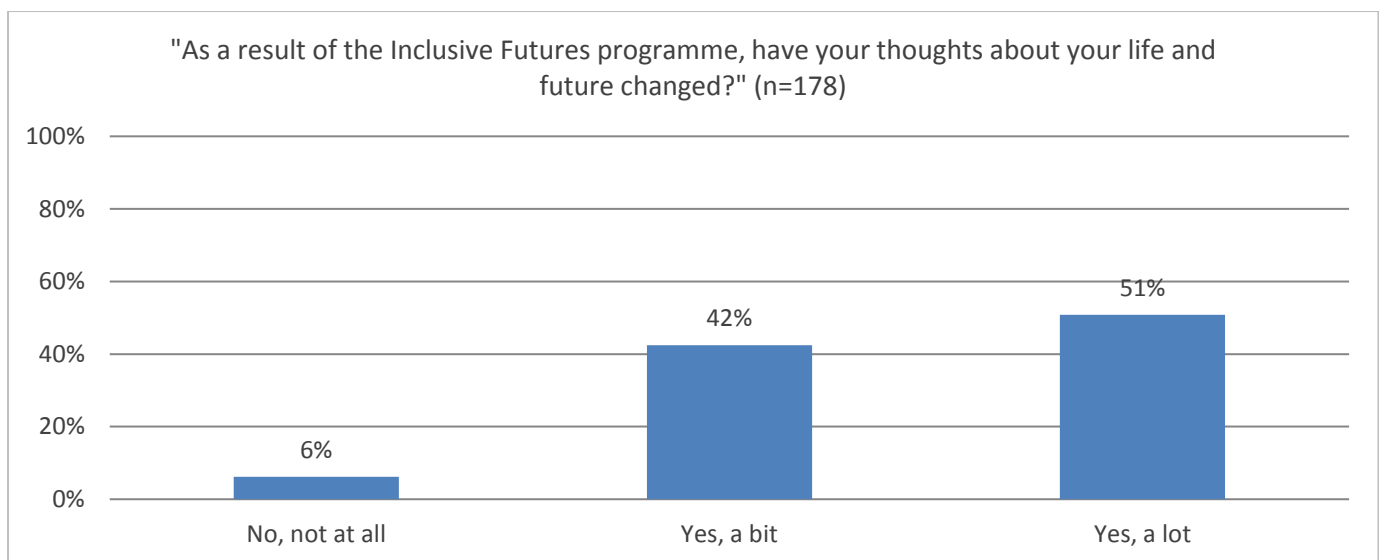


- Reported levels of anxiety dropped between baseline and endpoint for matched sample volunteers. Whilst 24% (21) volunteers reported feeling not at all anxious at baseline, 38% (33) gave a score of 0 at endpoint.
- It worth noting that volunteer co-ordinators report young people sometimes struggled with this question and the fact that it was 'reverse scored' – i.e. a lower score equates to high well-being. They therefore suggested that some of the young people scoring this measure highly may have done so in error.



The summary table below shows average wellbeing measures at baseline and endpoint for volunteers, and compares it to ONS national average responses to the same questions (Office of National Statistics, 2014). It is clear that baseline responses are lower, on average, than national averages, but that endpoint responses are higher. This suggests an increase in wellbeing amongst the matched sample.

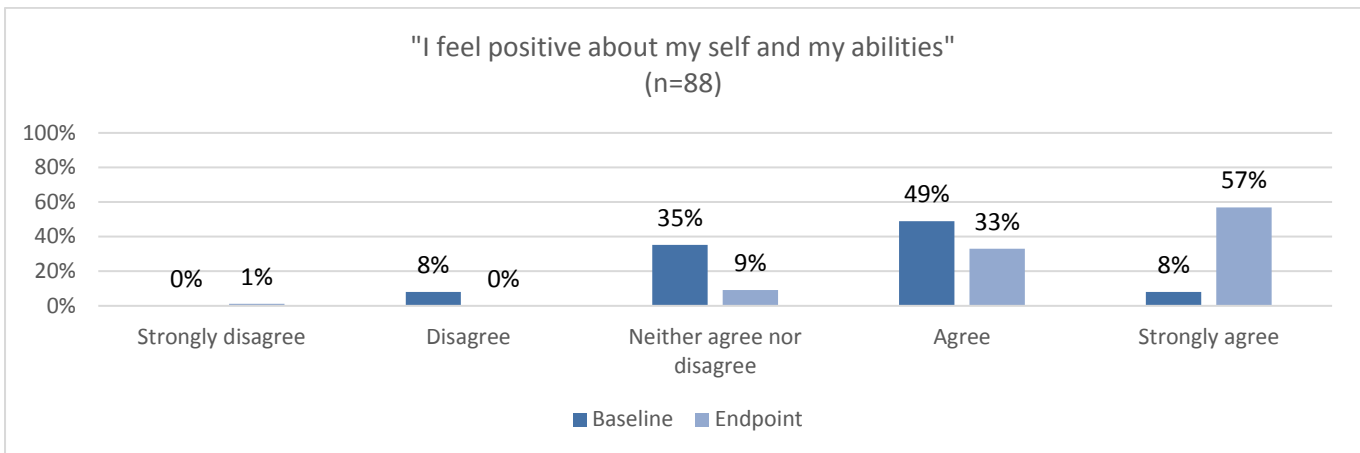
Wellbeing measure	Volunteers (matched) baseline survey average	Volunteers (matched) endpoint survey average	National average
Overall, how anxious did you feel yesterday?	2.6	1.7	2.9
Overall, how happy did you feel yesterday?	6.9	7.9	7.4
Overall, to what extent do you feel the things you do in your life are worthwhile?	7.1	8.2	7.7
Overall, how satisfied are you with your life nowadays?	7.1	8.1	7.5



51% (91) of volunteers reported that their thoughts about life and their future had changed a lot as a result of the Inclusive Futures programme. Given the data above, data on confidence, ability to meet new people, and their life and employability skills (see section 7) and case studies, it seems safe to assume that most of the 93% of volunteers whose thoughts about life and the future had changed, had done so for the better.

4.2 Positive attitude to self and ability

Although half of respondents (57%; 50) agreed that they had a positive attitude to self and ability at baseline, and more than a third (35%; 24) neither agreed nor disagreed, after six volunteering opportunities, the vast majority of matched volunteers reported that they strongly agreed that they felt positive.



The national camp

Qualitative evidence suggests that the national camp had a positive impact on volunteers’ attitudes to self and ability. National camp volunteers commented that:

“[I] Know that I can do what I want and that no matter what ability still can do it.”

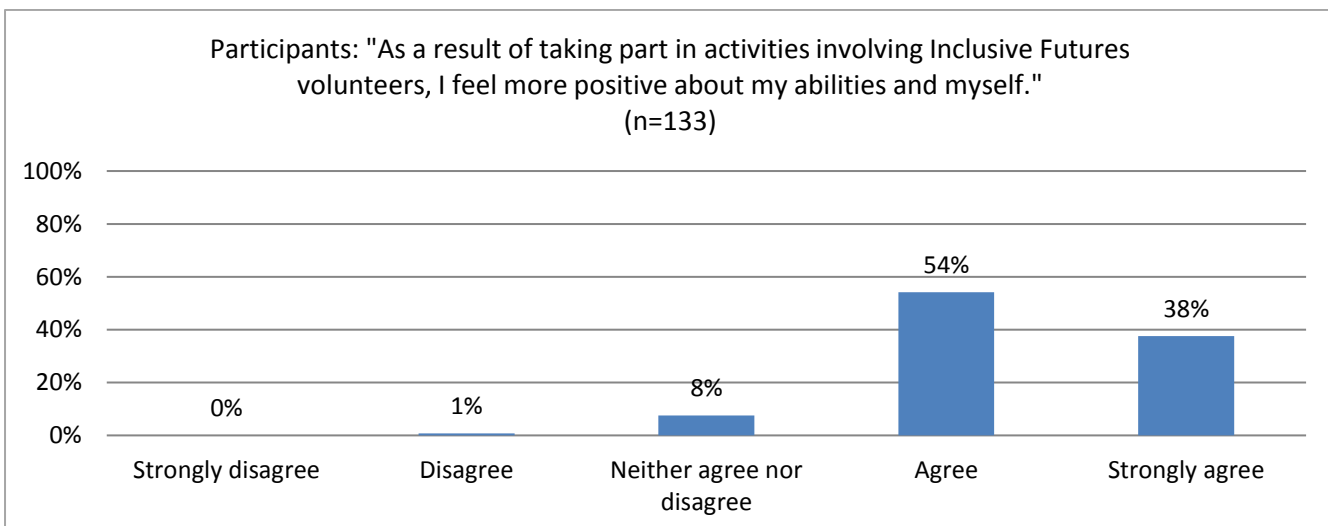
Camp attendee

“Outlook on my life and situation has been changed. 'If I can, you can'.”

Camp attendee

Participants

Participants’ involvement in the programme is less intensive but nonetheless, there is evidence that the programme is also impacting positively on them. Of the 93 respondents to the participants’ survey, 57% (53) agreed that they felt more positive about their abilities and themselves after taking part in IF, whilst 32% (30) strongly agreed.

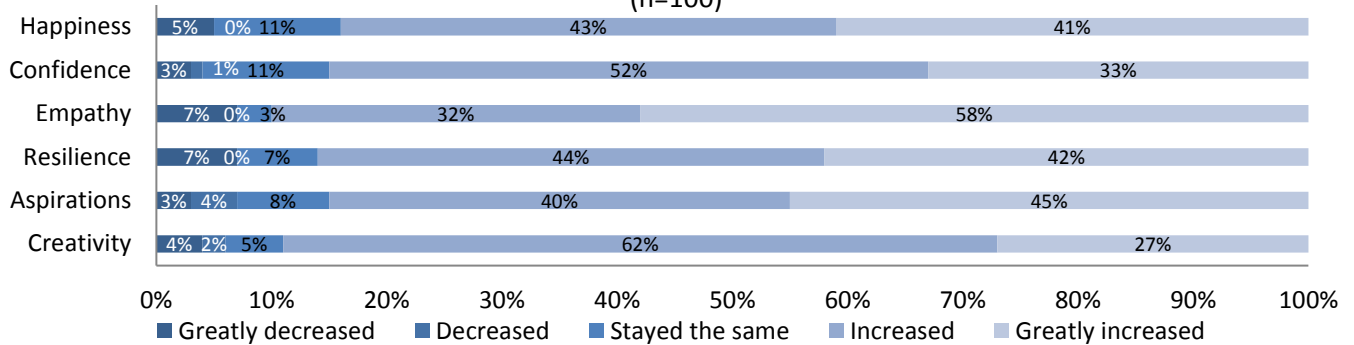


4.3 Volunteers have enhanced life and employability skills

Empathy was the area of greatest perceived impact at the national camp with 58% (58) reporting it had greatly increased, whilst happiness was the most pronounced area of perceived impact at the regional camp with 48% (44) reporting a great increase. Creativity was the area of least impact at both camps.

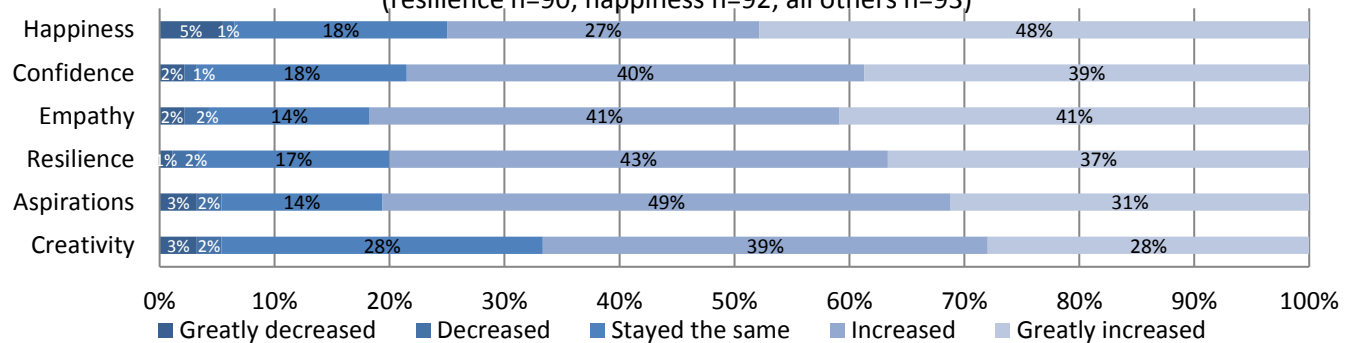
"As a result of taking part in the Inclusive Futures national camp, how, if at all, do you think the following have changed?"

(n=100)



"As a result of taking part in the Inclusive Futures regional camp, how, if at all, do you think the following have changed?"

(resilience n=90; happiness n=92; all others n=93)



5. Impact on disability

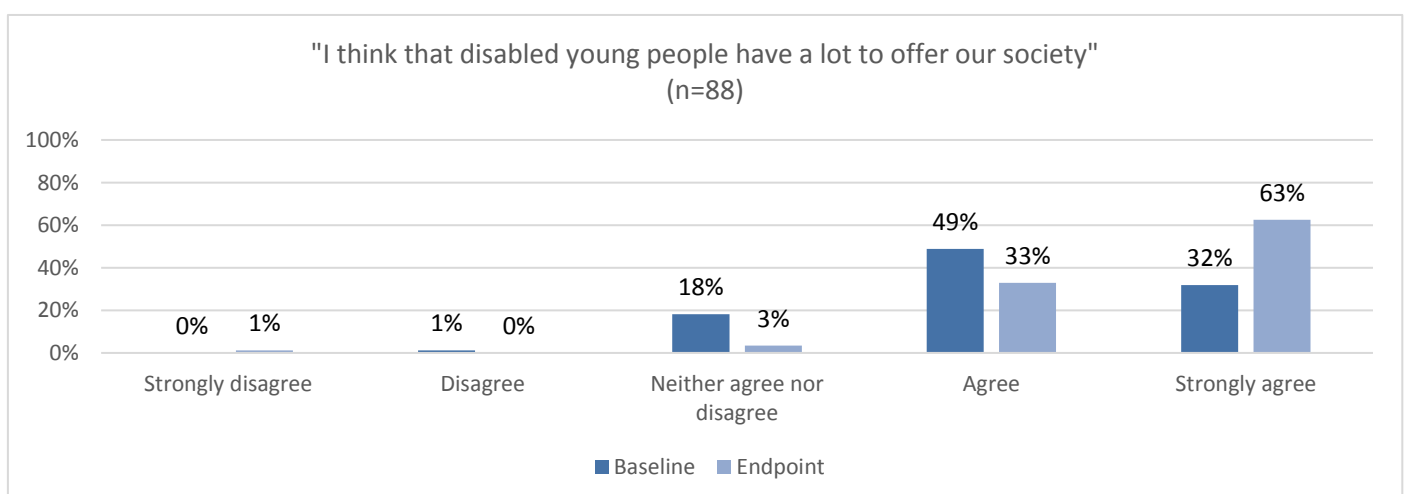
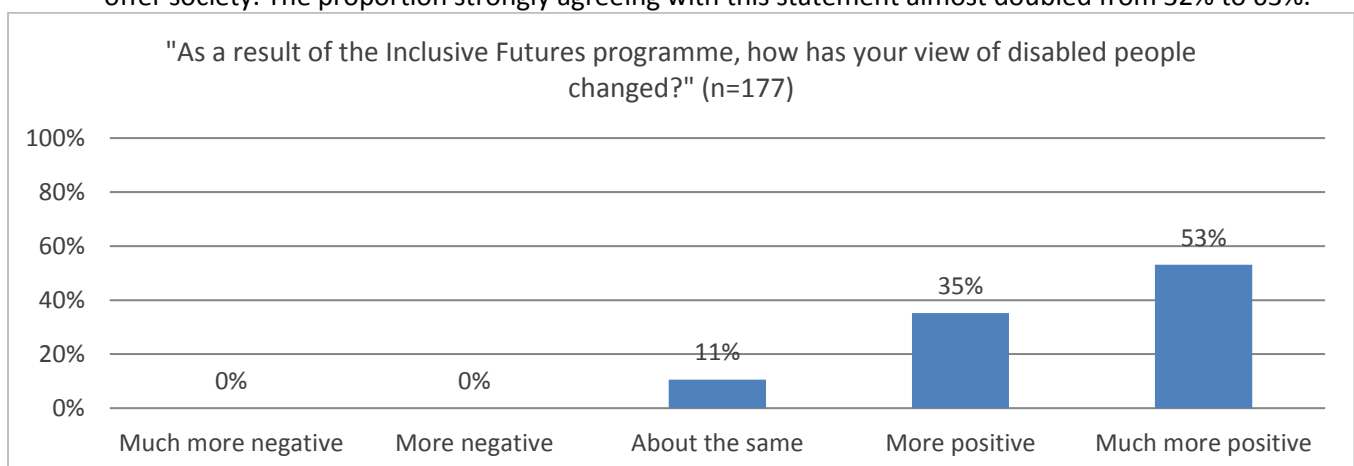
The programme is helping improve perceptions and integration of disabled people. This involves both a change in knowledge (e.g. awareness of inclusive practice) and attitude (e.g. thoughts about disabled people’s ability to live a full life.) There is evidence for this amongst participants, volunteers and settings and there is reason to believe impact will be sustained beyond the programme’s duration and beyond participants and volunteers. Unsurprisingly, the programme’s effect on perceptions of prejudice and integration in Britain as a whole is more complex and it seems possible the programme has primarily been helping increase awareness of prejudice.

5.1 Positive attitudes towards disabled people

“Non-disabled kids have had their perceptions changed about disabled young people, and had their eyes opened about what their challenges might be.”

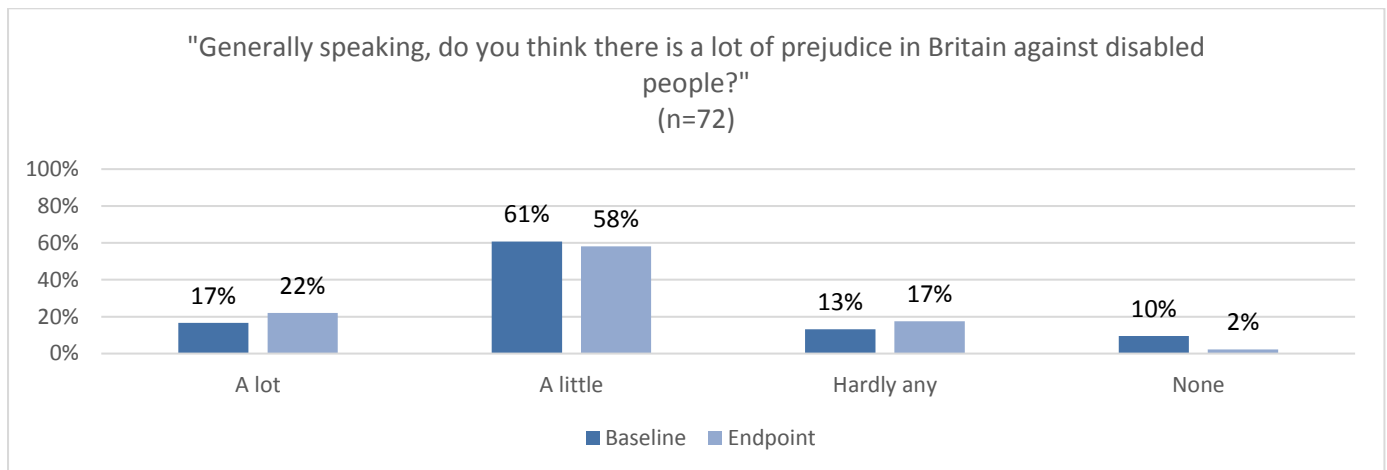
Stakeholder, Disability Support Wales

- 53% (94) of volunteers had a much more positive view of disabled people as a result of taking part in IF, suggesting the programme had a strong impact on volunteers’ views.
- After being involved in Inclusive Futures, volunteers were more likely to think disabled people have a lot to offer society. The proportion strongly agreeing with this statement almost doubled from 32% to 63%.



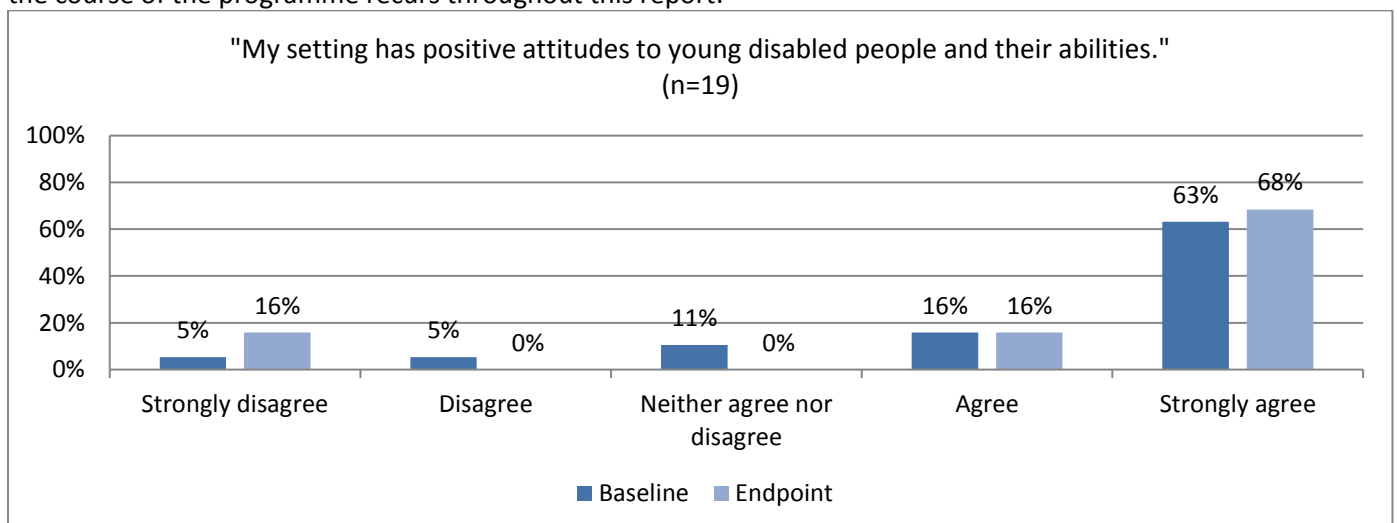
5.2 Positive change in the perception of disabled people in communities

A mixed picture emerges in terms of changes in perceptions of prejudice. 17% (14) of matched volunteers in the endpoint survey thought that there was “hardly any” prejudice against disabled people in Britain, compared to 13% (11) at baseline. Meanwhile the proportion who felt there was ‘a lot’ of prejudice increased from 17% to 22%. This is not necessarily surprising or problematic, since non-disabled volunteers may have been less aware of prejudice prior to taking part in IF, and then learnt more about the challenges disabled people face as a result of the programme. As a result, higher proportions reporting perceived prejudice could be an indication of greater awareness and empathy. The measure is also very broad, capturing prejudice in Britain as a whole, so there is a limit to how much impact participating in IF is likely to have on perception of what is happening in the nation as a whole.

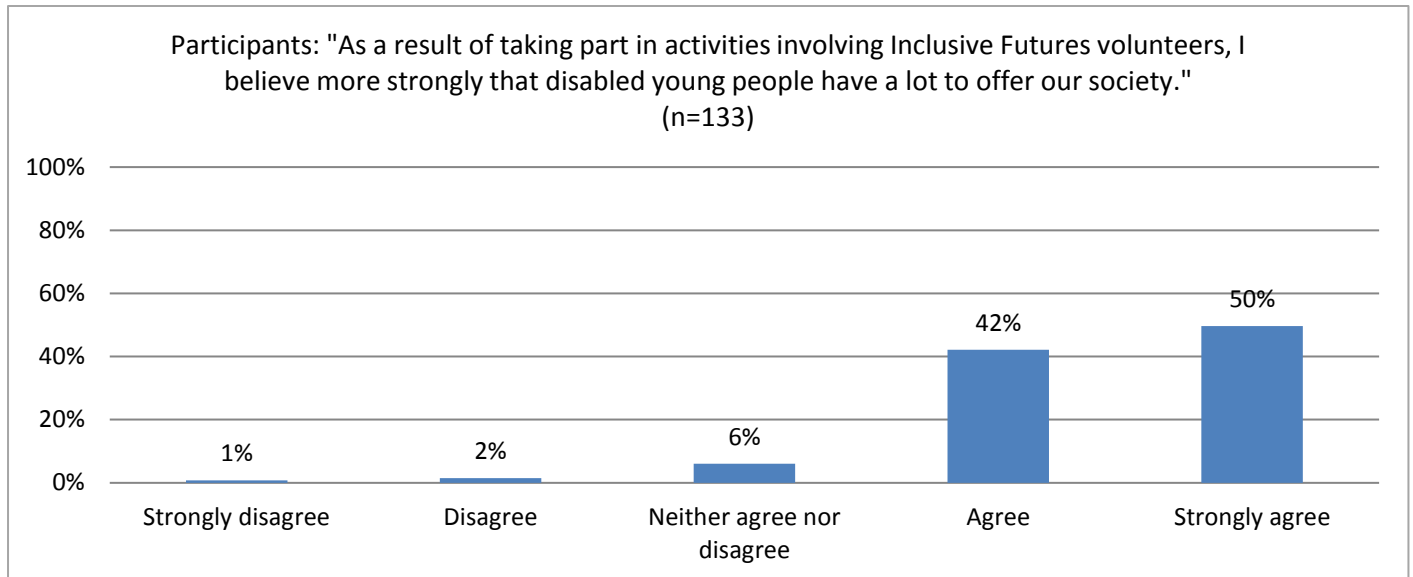


Settings report positive impact on their attitudes to young disabled people. However, a large proportion (59%; 10) strongly agreed that their attitudes to young disabled people were positive at the baseline stage, indicating that participating settings were already positive about young disabled people and their disabilities.

An unexpected finding is that a greater proportion of settings strongly disagreed that their setting had positive attitudes to young disabled people at endpoint (18%; 3) compared to at baseline (6%; 1). Small sample numbers mean this finding should be treated with caution, and as with the previous measure on perceived prejudice in Britain, there are logical explanations for this increase. It is plausible that some settings have become more aware of negative attitudes towards disabled people since taking part in IF. Again, this raising of awareness and empathy would be a valuable effect of participation in IF. The finding that two settings have become more self-critical over the course of the programme recurs throughout this report.



Participants' attitudes have also changed for the better with 42% (39) strongly agreeing that the programme has impacted on their perception of what disabled young people have to offer our society. A further 48% (45) participants agreed, suggesting that working with IF volunteers is helping to change participants' attitudes towards disability.



5.3 Young people and young disabled people are integrated

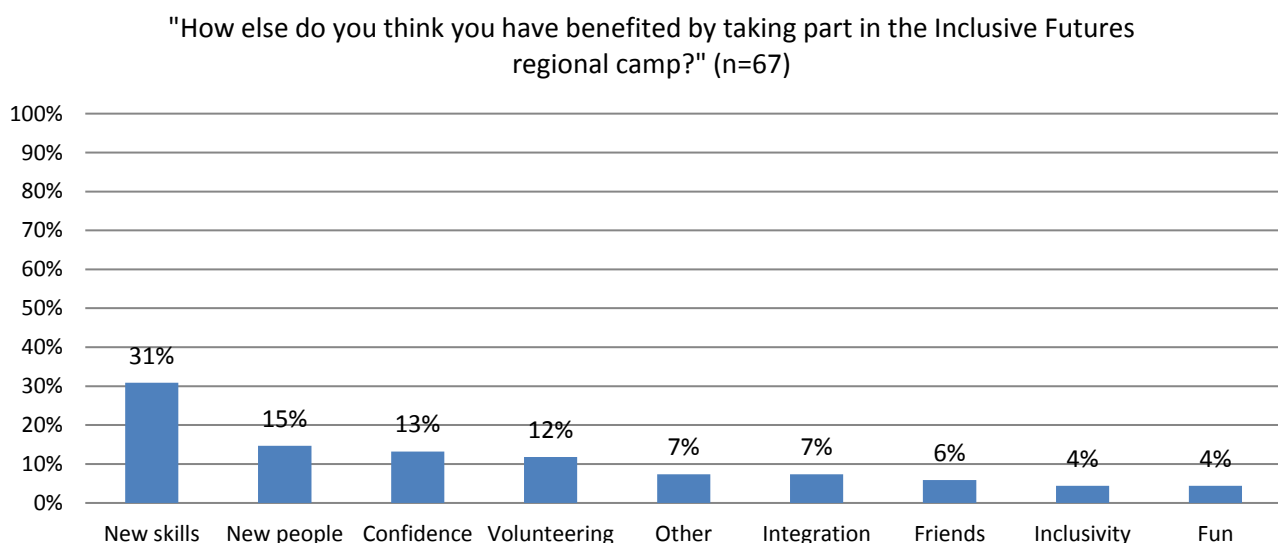
Volunteers' comments on the national camp reveal the role the camp played in integrating disabled and non-disabled young people.

"I have met great people who have hard challenges in life and also have powered through"

"Created a network of people across the UK that can help with ideas/how they overcame certain obstacles"

"I know how to make new friends and feel more determined to succeed"

15% (10) of volunteers mentioned meeting new people as a benefit of taking part in the IF regional camp, whilst 7% (5) explicitly mentioned integration and 4% (3) mentioned inclusivity.



Case study evidence shows that barriers are being broken down in a deliberate manner. For example, the Inclusive Sports Day in Glasgow ensured that groups were of mixed ability so that people from different backgrounds and abilities could get to know one another and understand differing experiences and perspectives. Similarly, activities witnessed during the Bath IF case study showed that young people are supporting and encouraging each other across ability backgrounds, and that perceptions of who can be a leader and what inclusivity means are being changed.

“Before I started I did not know if I could do inclusivity but now I know how to... I now see different abilities not just able and disabled”

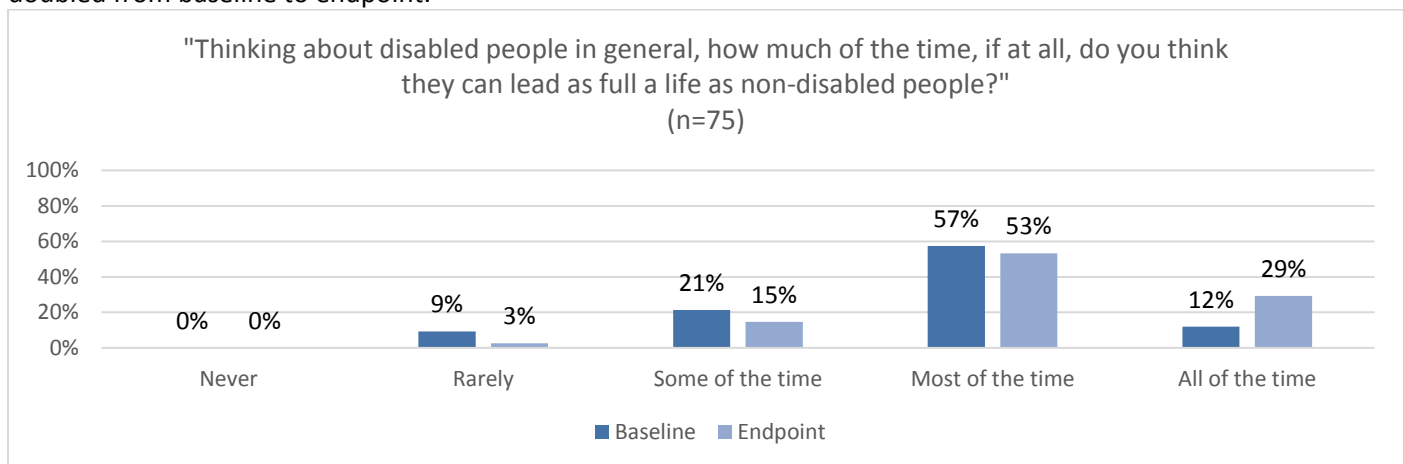
Volunteer Mentor, Bath

5.4 Disabled people feel more integrated in society

“For the first time in a long time I felt I was a part of something, always being involved with everyone, having laughs and smiles”

Volunteer at National Camp

A quarter of volunteers (24%; 19) reported at the endpoint that disabled people could lead as full a life as non-disabled people “most of the time”. This is compared to 10% (8) at baseline. Only 1% (1) of volunteers responded “never” at endpoint, compared to 13% (10) at baseline. The proportion responding “all of the time” more than doubled from baseline to endpoint.

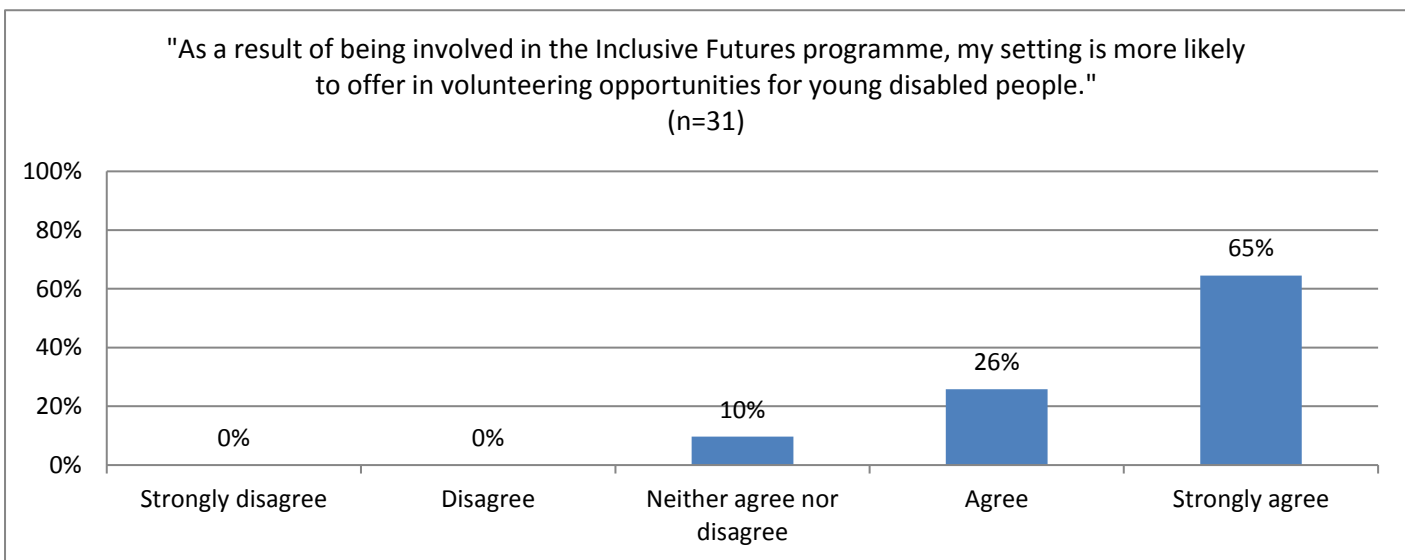
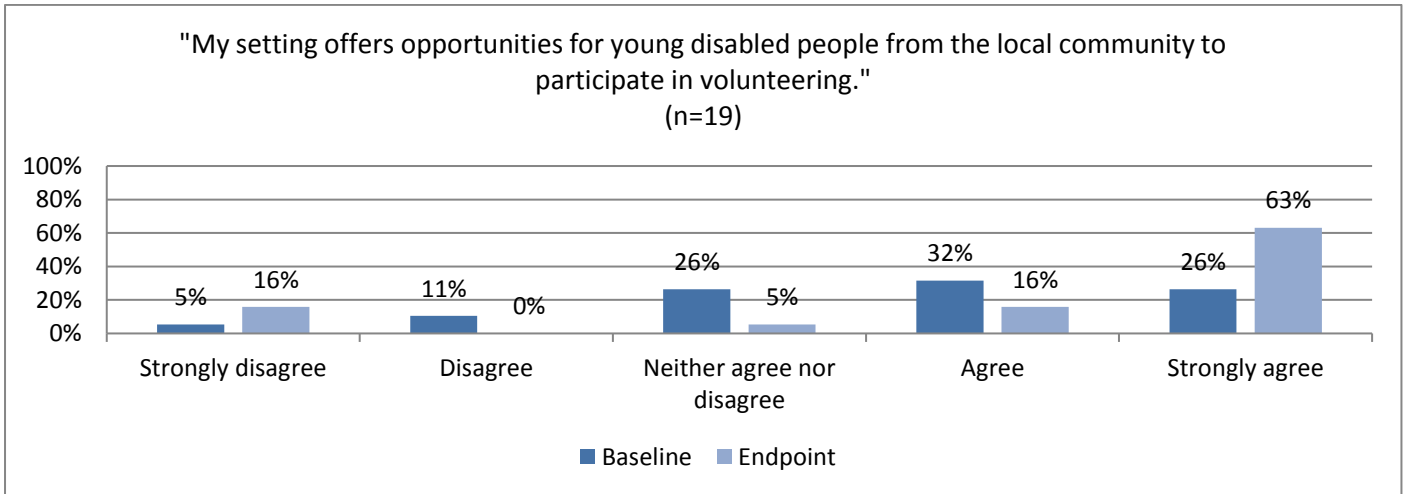


5.5 Disabled people are better able to participate in activities and the community

“There’s been a definite shift in thinking and confidence within young disabled people in terms of what they can do”.

Stakeholder, Disability Support Wales

Although the sample size here is particularly small, the programme is showing some impact in this area, with the proportion of settings strongly agreeing that their setting offers opportunities for disabled people more than doubling and 91% (28) of settings saying they were more likely to offer young disabled people opportunities to volunteer. Qualitative evidence also indicates that participation in IF has driven an increase in local community volunteering opportunities at settings, particularly because there are otherwise very few opportunities targeted at young disabled people.

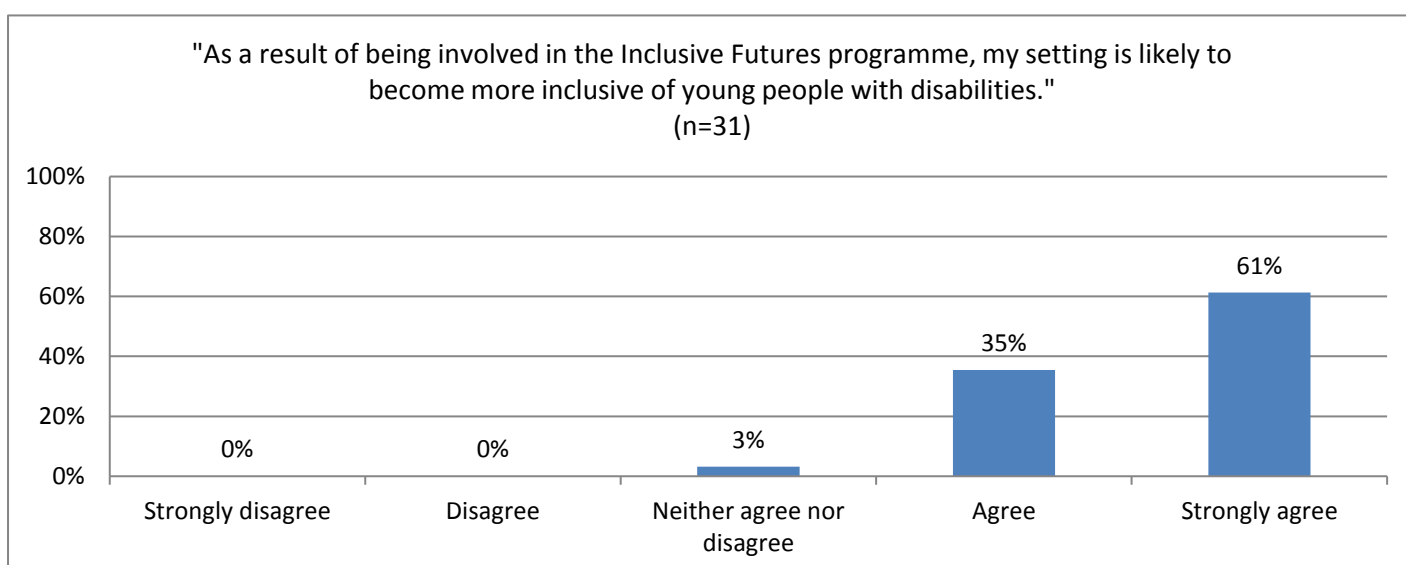
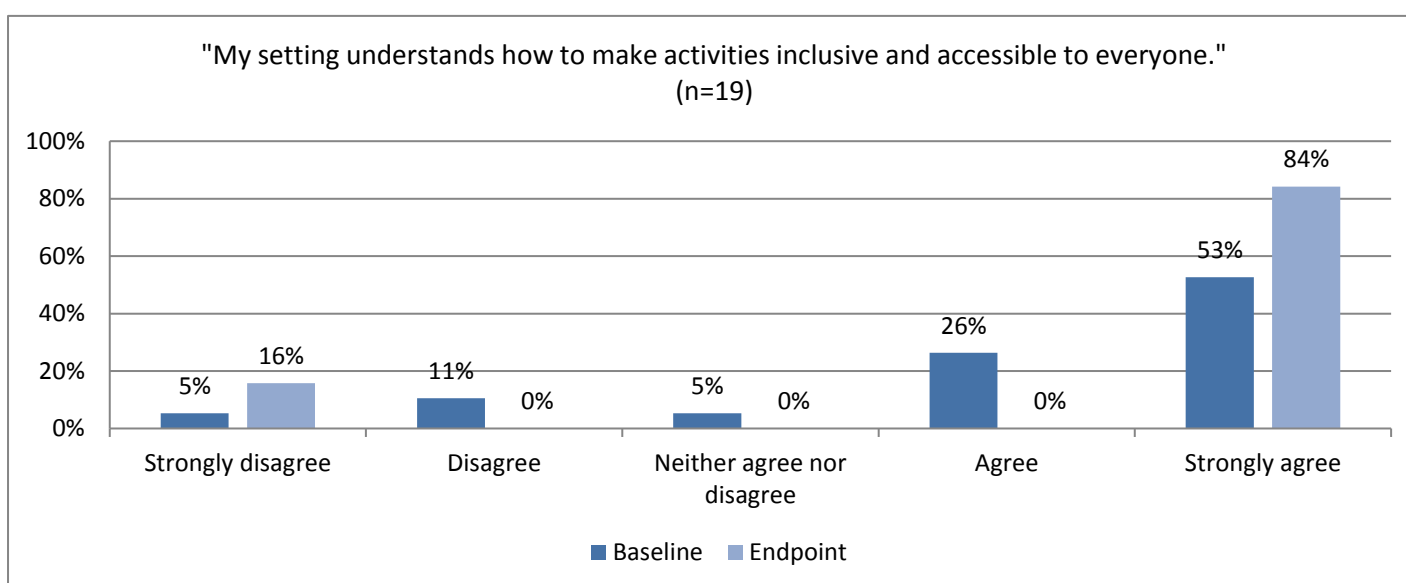
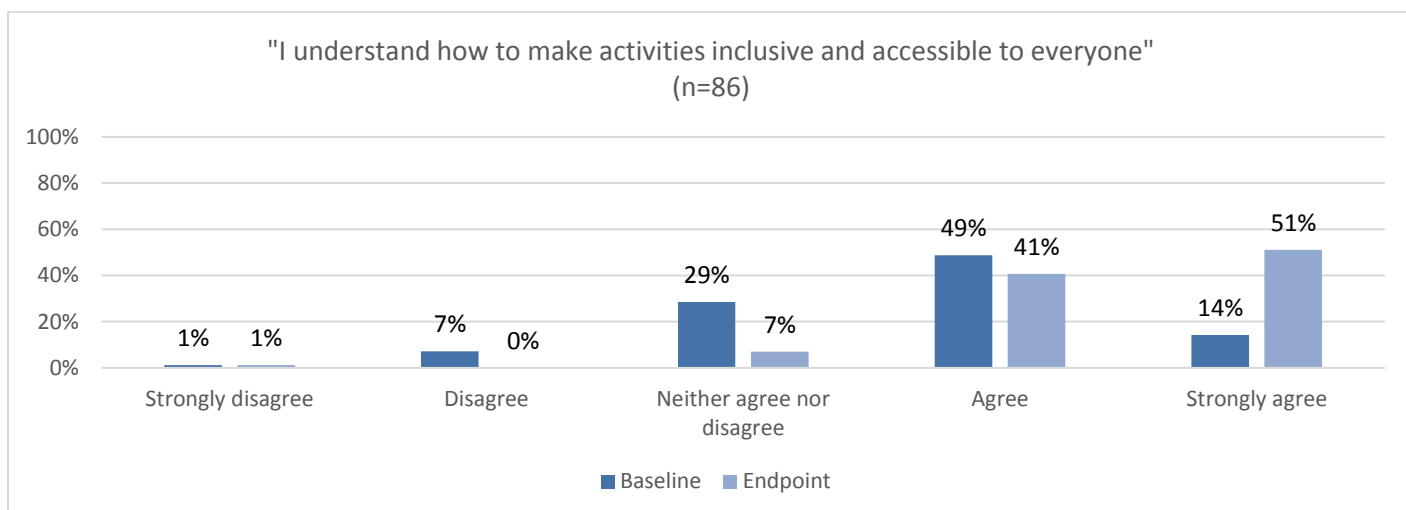


5.6 Awareness of inclusive practice

"On the Friday, no one was talking, barely any confidence, but by Sunday, we all learnt valuable skills confidence, respect and most importantly, inclusion"

National Camp attendee

Volunteers and settings both report increases in their awareness of inclusive practice. 51% (44) of young volunteers strongly agreed that they understood how to make activities inclusive and accessible for everyone; as did 71% (12) settings. 96% (28) reported that their setting is likely to become more inclusive of young people with disabilities as a result of being involved in IF. This suggests that IF's reach goes beyond its direct relationship with volunteers with awareness of inclusivity spreading to the venues and settings and this bodes well for the sustainability of the programme's impact.



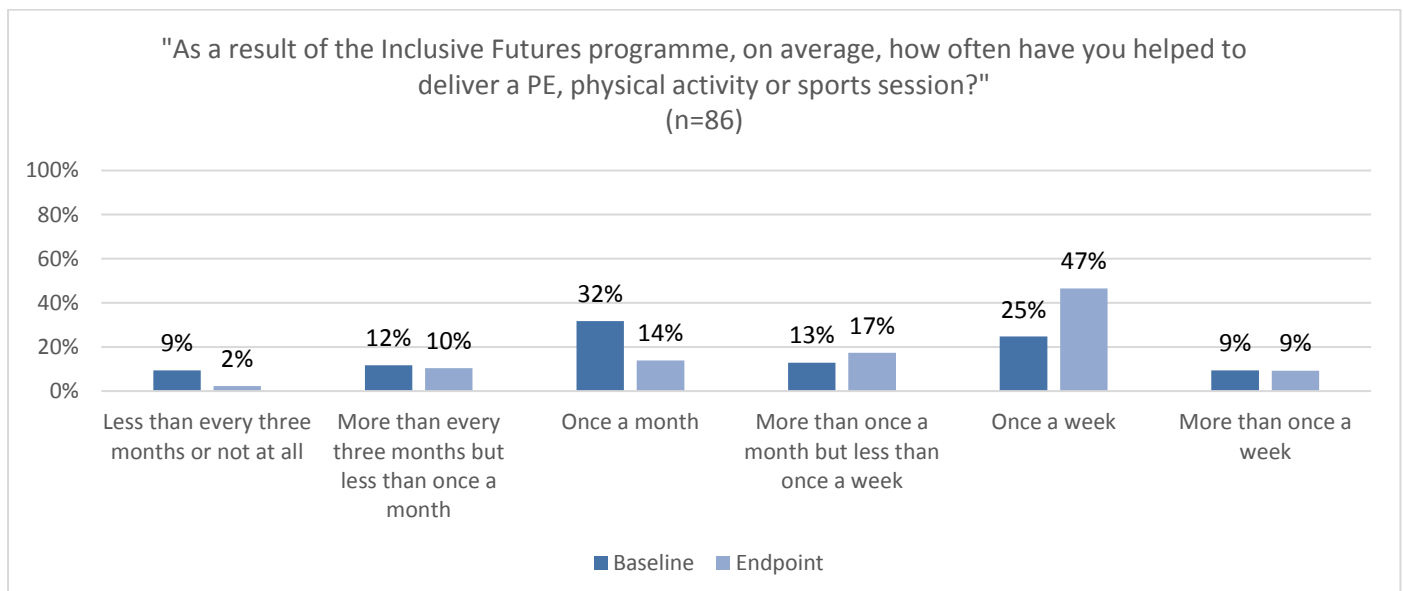
6. Impact on empowering young people

Volunteers have become active - physically and in their community, as a result of the programme. This is helping them to feel more connected to their local community and to feel more able to achieve change.

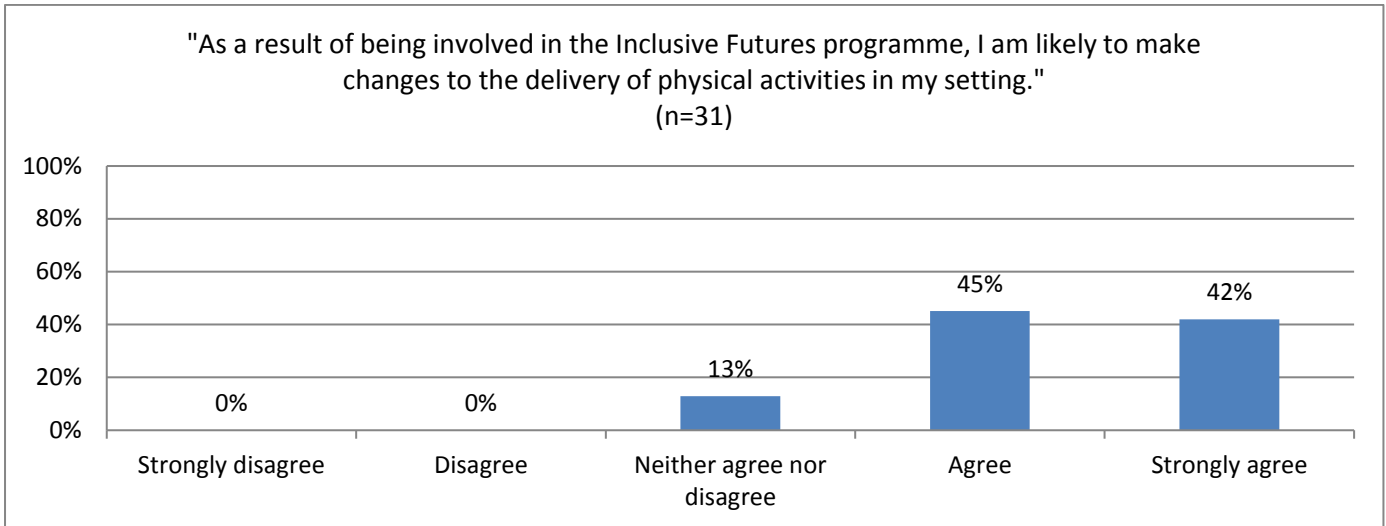
Changes affect settings as well as volunteers with settings generally increasing the extent to which they value young people as part of the community workforce. The vast majority of settings plan to make changes to the way they deliver physical activity as a result of their involvement in the programme.

6.1 Young people influence and enhance local sport and physical activity provision

There was an increase in volunteer’s involvement in providing physical activities. The majority of young volunteers (56%; 48) were delivering a sports session once a week or more at endpoint. This is compared to 34% (29) of volunteers delivering sessions once a week at baseline. 9% (8) of volunteers had volunteered less than every three months or not at all at baseline. By endpoint this was only 2% (2).

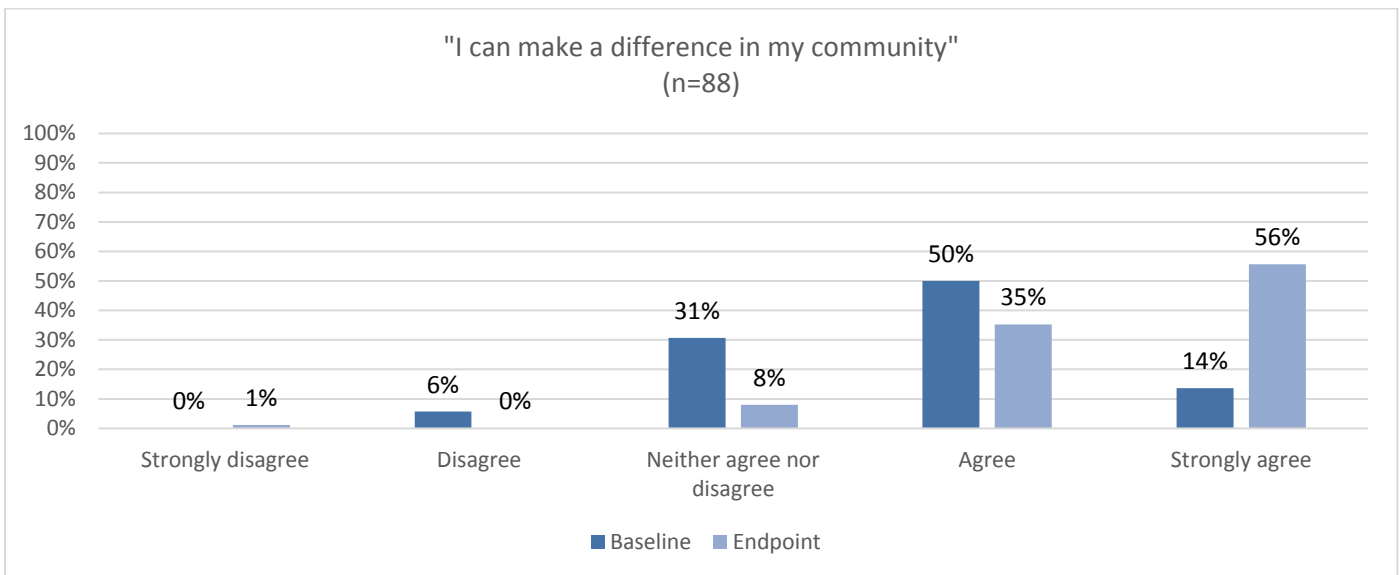


Taking part in IF has led to 94% of settings agreeing or strongly agreeing that they are likely to make changes to the delivery of physical activities in their setting, suggesting that the influence of IF volunteers has changed settings’ understanding of how physical activities can be delivered to disabled and non-disabled young people.



6.2 Potential of young people to be agents for change is unlocked and demonstrated

Only 14% (12) of volunteers at baseline strongly agreed that they could make a difference in their community. By endpoint, 56% (49) of volunteers strongly agreed, suggesting that IF increases young people’s sense of being agents for change. As we saw in section 5.5, settings are also now more likely to offer disabled young people in particular opportunities to participate in volunteering.

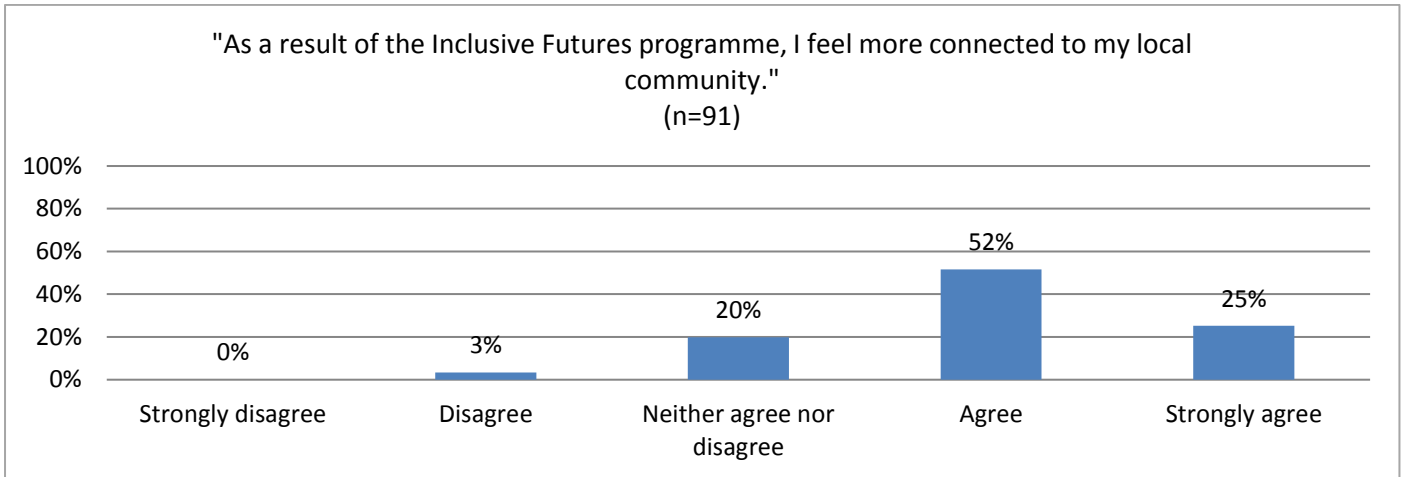


6.3 Sense of connection to local community

“[generally] I'm not as connected to the local community as I'd like to be but [as a result of the programme] I've been to places I'd never have been otherwise.”

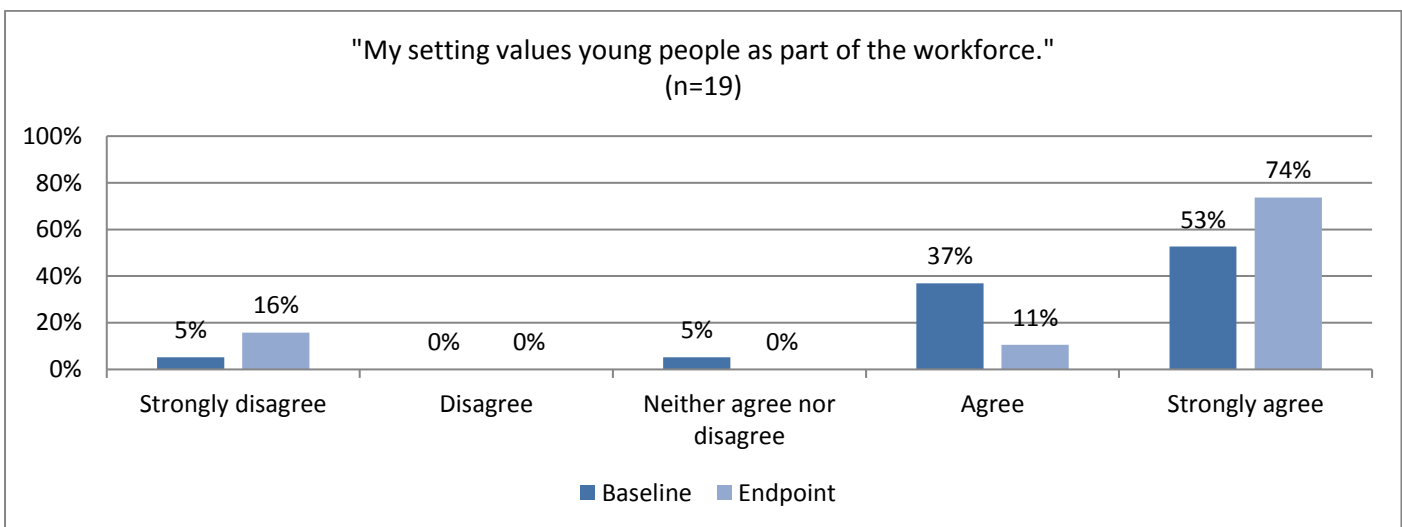
Volunteer Mentor, Bath

Taking part in IF has led to 52% (47) of participants agreeing that they feel more connected to their local community, and 25% (23) of volunteers strongly agreeing that this is the case.



6.4 Valued as part of the community activity workforce

A greater proportion of settings strongly agreed that they valued young people as part of the workforce at endpoint (76%; 13) than at baseline (47%; 8). However, 18% (3) of settings at endpoint strongly disagreed that their setting valued young people as part of the workforce. This is compared to 6% (1) setting at baseline. Again, this increase in strong disagreement could be because of settings' previous lack of awareness of shortcomings in the way they valued young people and it is also important to note that this represents only two settings.

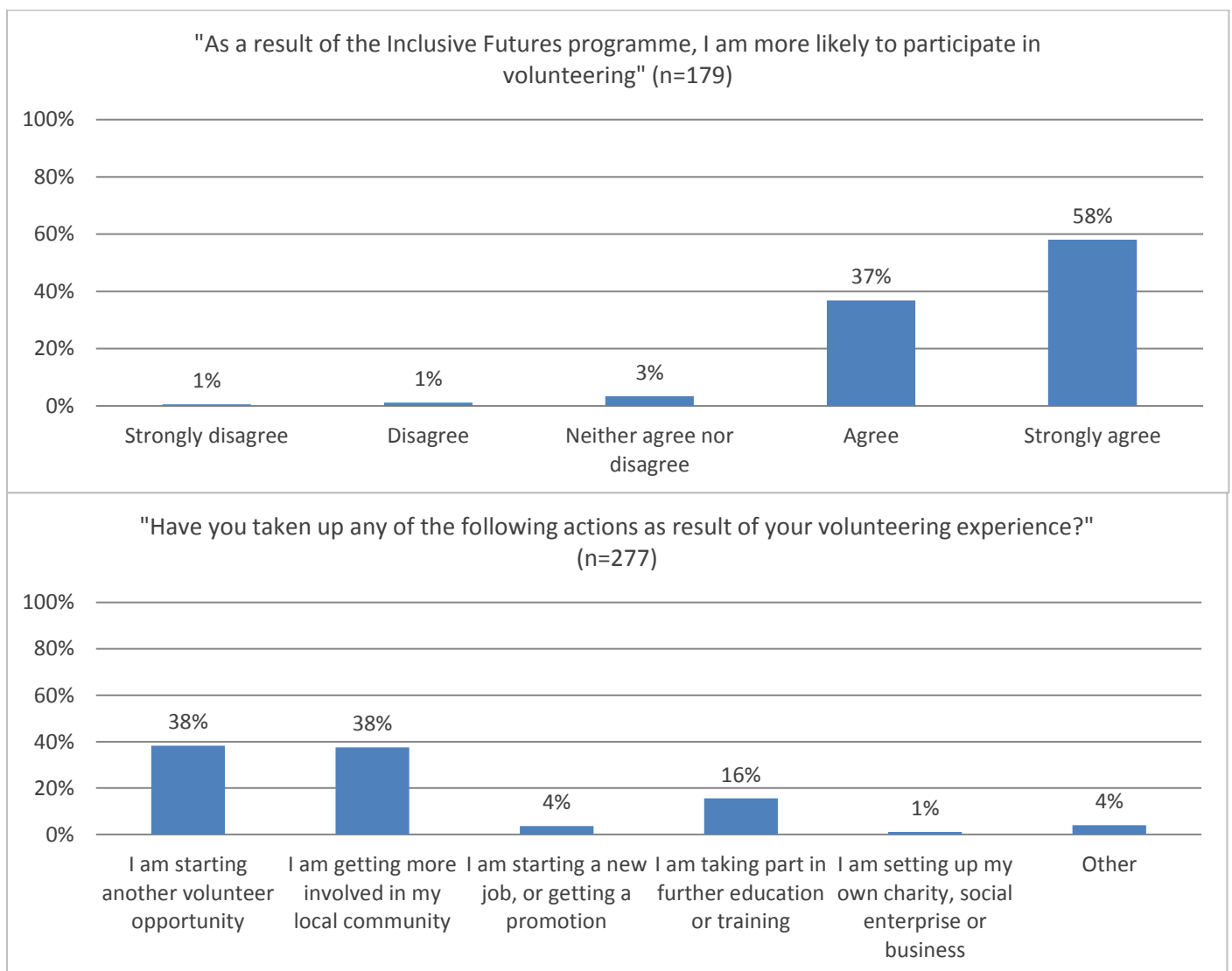


7. Impact on engaging volunteers

Inclusive Futures has engaged 1,318 volunteers. There is good reason to believe that much of this volunteering will be sustained into the future given the positive attitudes and intentions young people expressed regarding future volunteering as well as the networks they have built up and the skills they have developed. A more complex picture emerges regarding settings' self-assessments with a small minority appearing to have become more self-critical following their involvement.

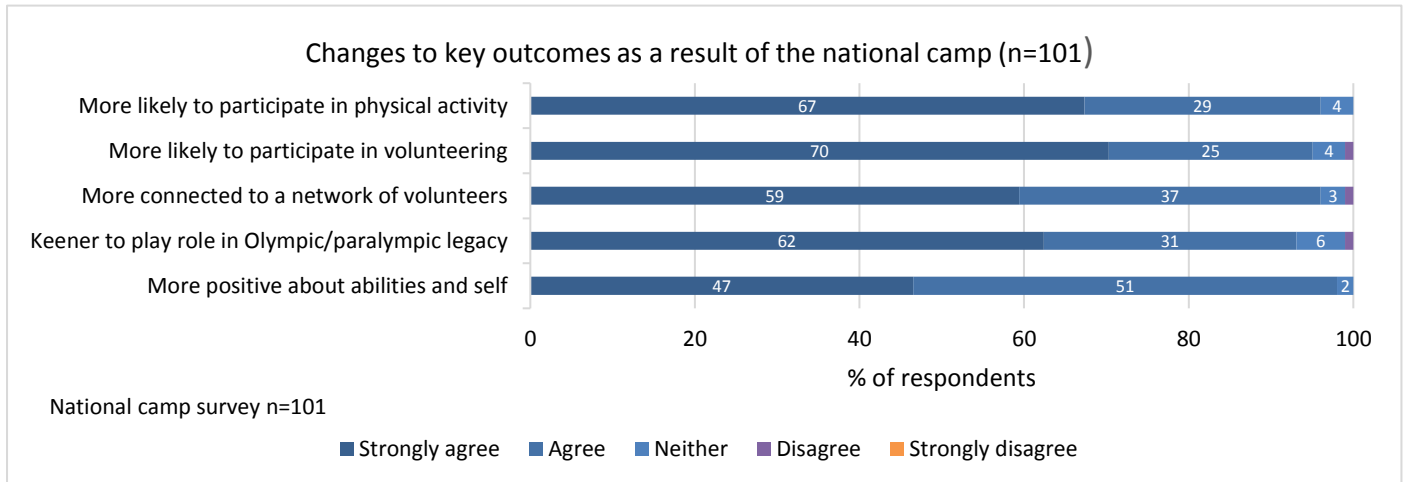
7.1 Attitudes to volunteering

As well as 1,318 volunteers participating in community engagement activities as part of the programme, there is evidence that the programme will have a sustained impact on young people's volunteering with 95% (170) of young volunteers reporting that they were more likely to participate in future volunteering and 58% strongly agreeing that this was the case. More specifically, 38% (105) of young volunteers reported that they are getting more involved in their local community as a result of volunteering through Inclusive Futures and 38% said that they are starting another volunteering opportunity.

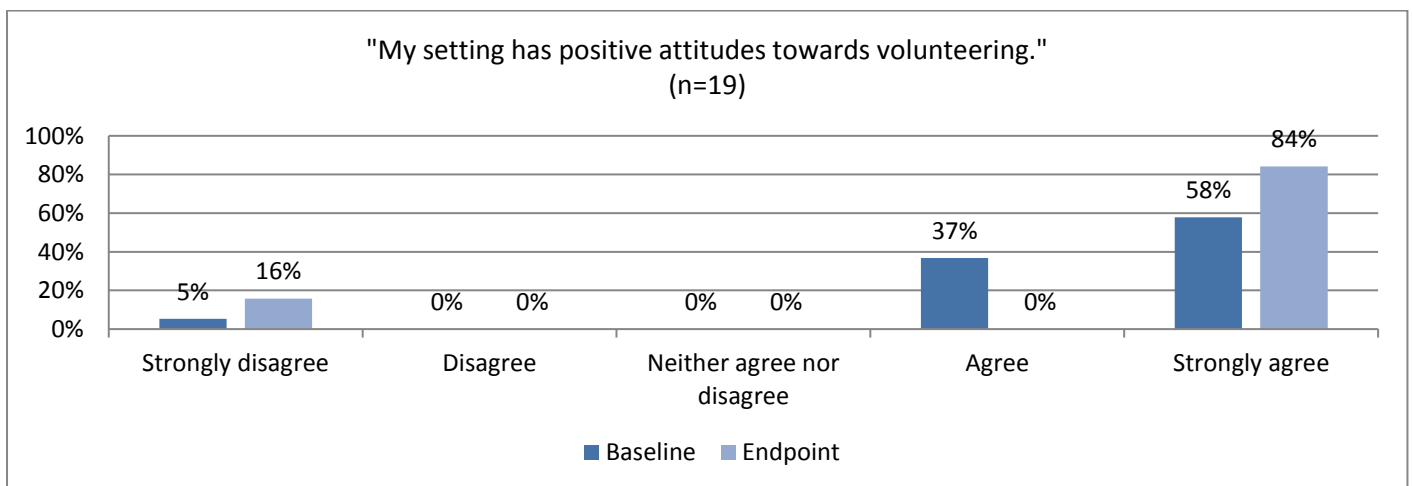


Feedback from the national camp suggests that it played a role in promoting volunteering by giving young people opportunities to share experiences.

“It was good because it's an eye opener to other volunteers and myself about different opportunities out there”
Volunteer, National Camp



If young people are to volunteer they need to be well supported and welcomed by settings. It is therefore encouraging that there was an increase in the proportion of settings agreed or strongly agreed that they had a very positive attitudes to volunteering. However, there was also an increase in the proportion strongly disagreeing that their setting had a positive attitude. Again this change only represents two settings and may relate to a change in awareness, but it would be useful to investigate in future years.

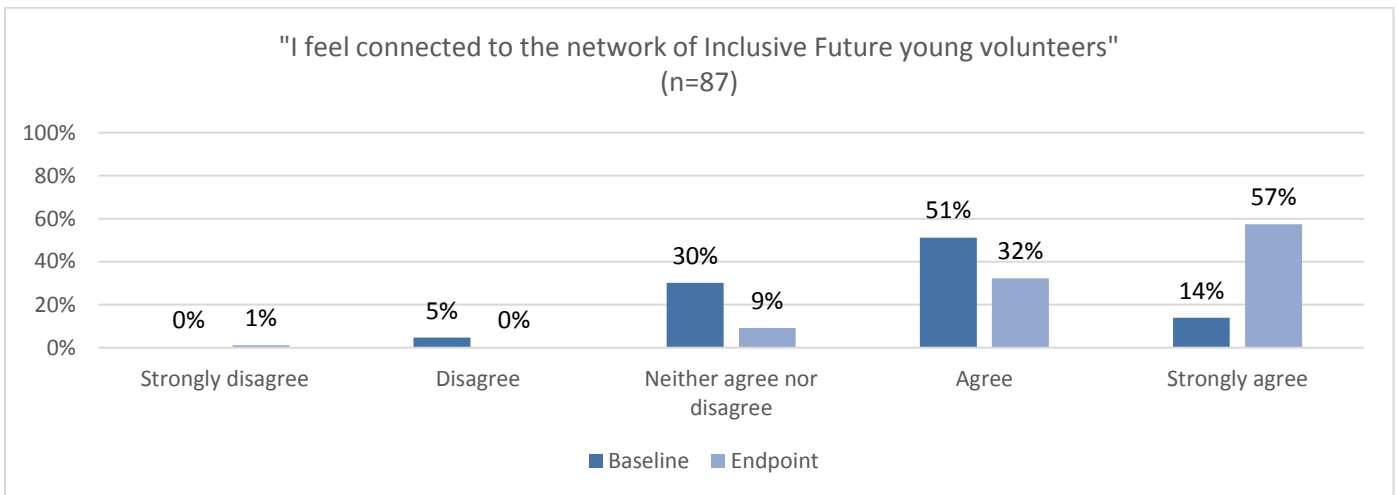


7.2 Young people feel connected to a network of young volunteers

“I have met new amazing people”

National Camp attendee

One of the ways that the programme may help to encourage sustained volunteering is by creating a strong network of volunteers. Although 65% (48) of volunteers said at baseline that they felt connected to a network of IF young volunteers, nearly a third (30%; 22) neither agreed not disagreed, and 5% (4) disagreed entirely. By endpoint, only 9% (7) neither agreed nor disagreed and overall agreement rose to 89% (66) of volunteers. There was a 43 percentage point increase in the numbers of volunteers who strongly agreed: rising from 14% (10) to 57% (42) of volunteers.



8. Participation in Physical activity

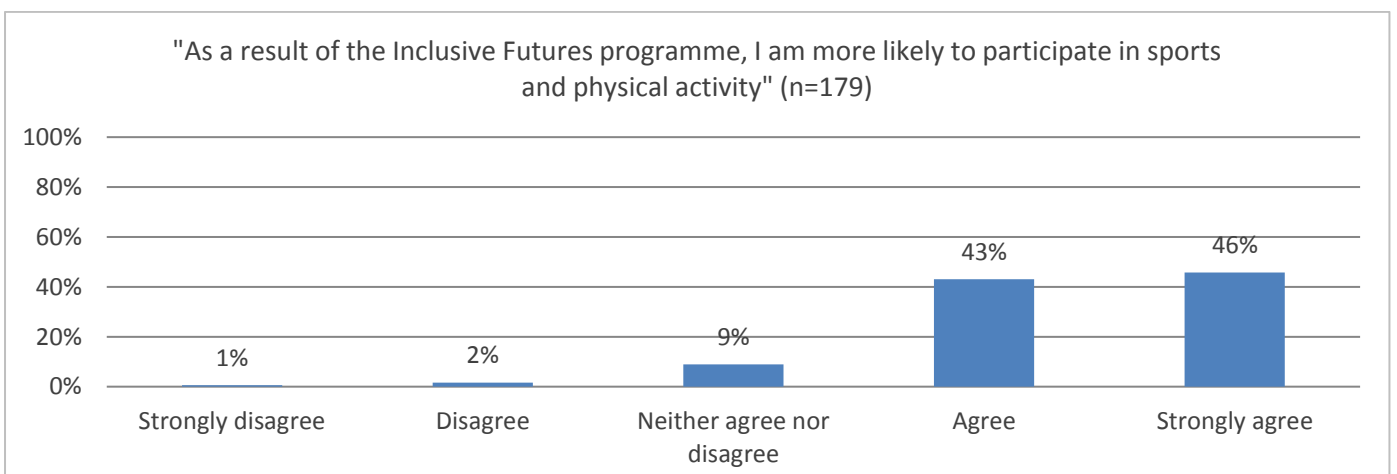
Young people developed more positive attitudes to physical activity over the course of the programme and participated in activity more by the end than at the start.

8.1 Attitude to sports participation

"Some of the volunteers haven't had a good positive experience of sport and now they seem really keen on it. When I first went in and said 'do you want to come to the uni and do some sport' they were like 'ohhhh no!' but now they're like 'when are we next coming up'... they're really chirpy about it."

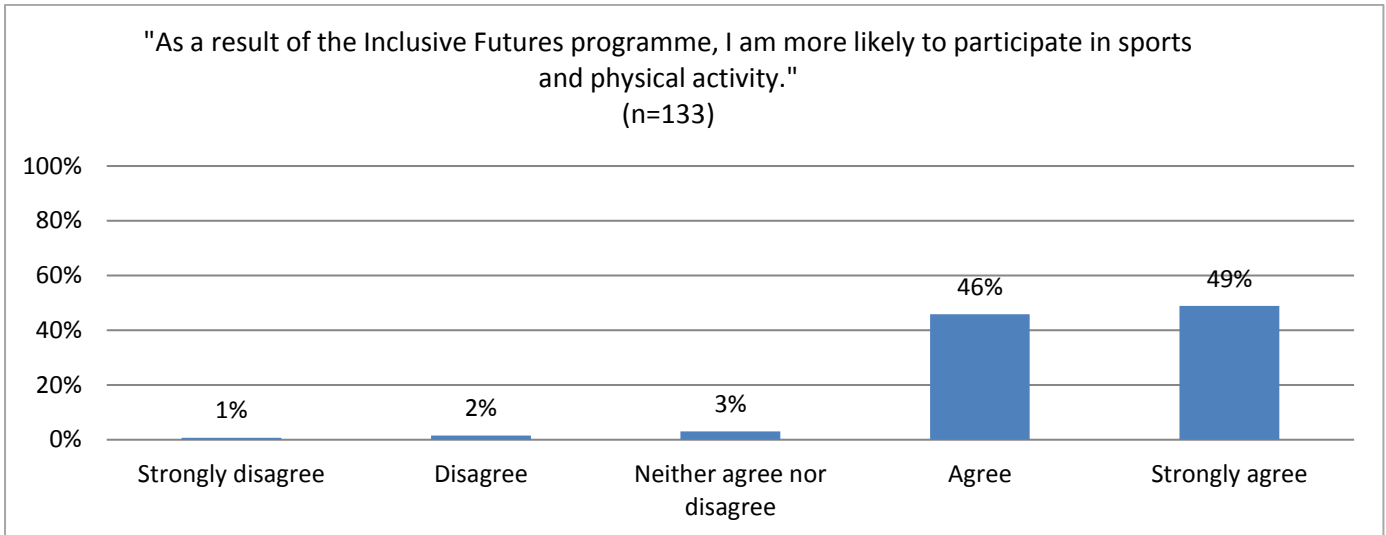
Volunteer Coordinator, Bath

89% (159) of volunteers reported being more likely to participate in sports and physical activity, as a result of working with IF, 46% (82) of which strongly agreed that this was the case, suggesting the programme had a strong impact on their attitude to sports participation.



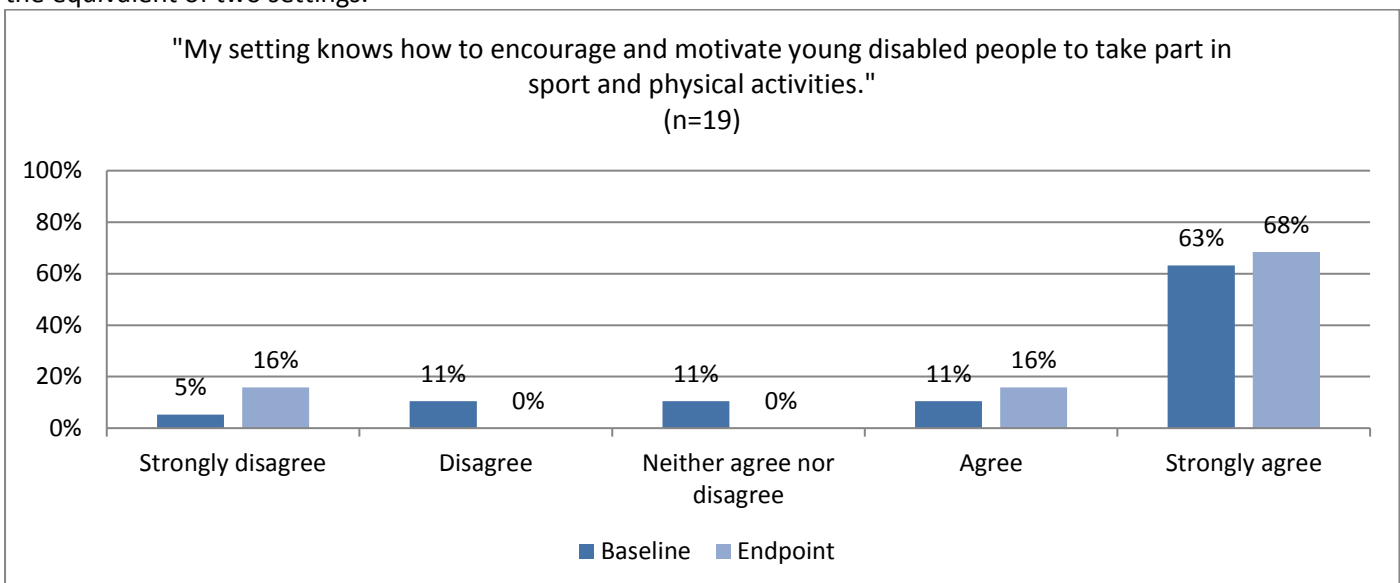
Participants

This was also the case for those who participated in the programme, with 95% (126) reporting that they were more likely to participate in sports and physical activity as a result of their experiences and almost half of participants (49%; 65) reporting that they strongly agreed with this statement.



Settings

Prior to working with IF, the majority of settings agreed they knew how to encourage and motivate disabled young people to take part in sport and physical activities at baseline with 74% (14) agreeing that they knew how to do this and 63% (12) strongly agreeing. There was a decrease in the proportion that neither agreed nor disagreed and who disagreed, resulting in a small increase in the proportion agreeing or strongly agreeing however a increased proportion also strongly disagreed. As has been found in the case of other outcomes relating to settings and inclusion, there are therefore questions about the extent to which settings' confidence in inclusion increases. However, small sample sizes mean that these findings should be treated with caution given that they relate to only the equivalent of two settings.



8.2 Increased participation in physical activity

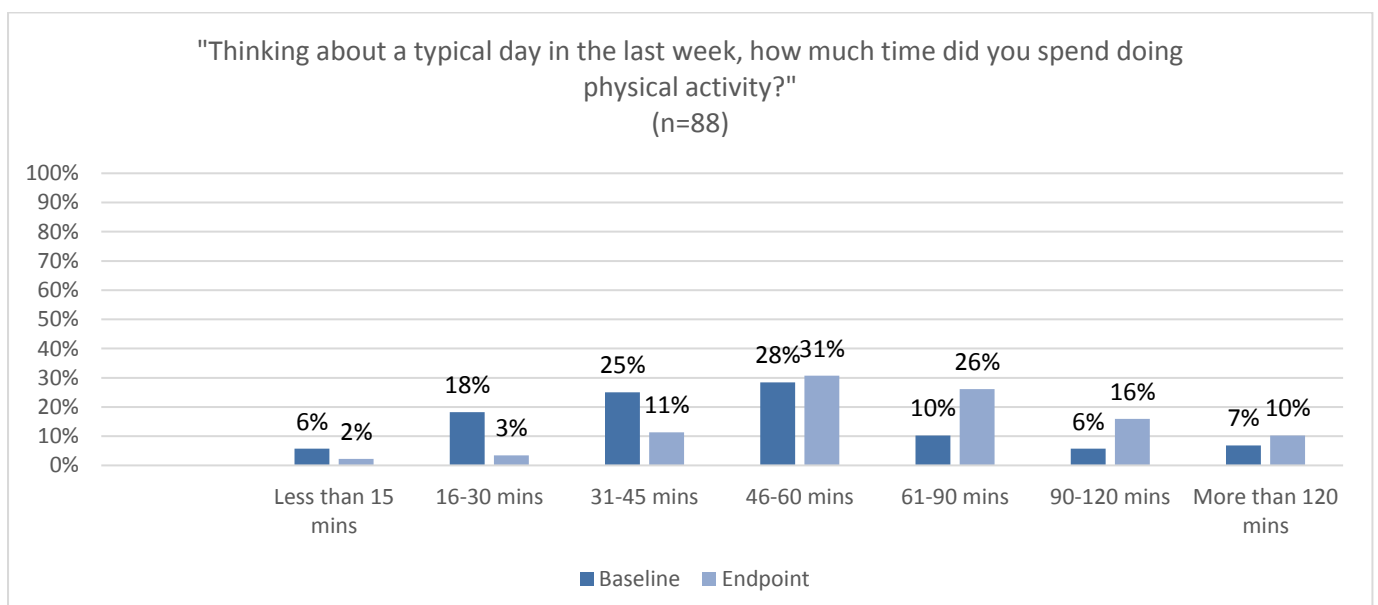
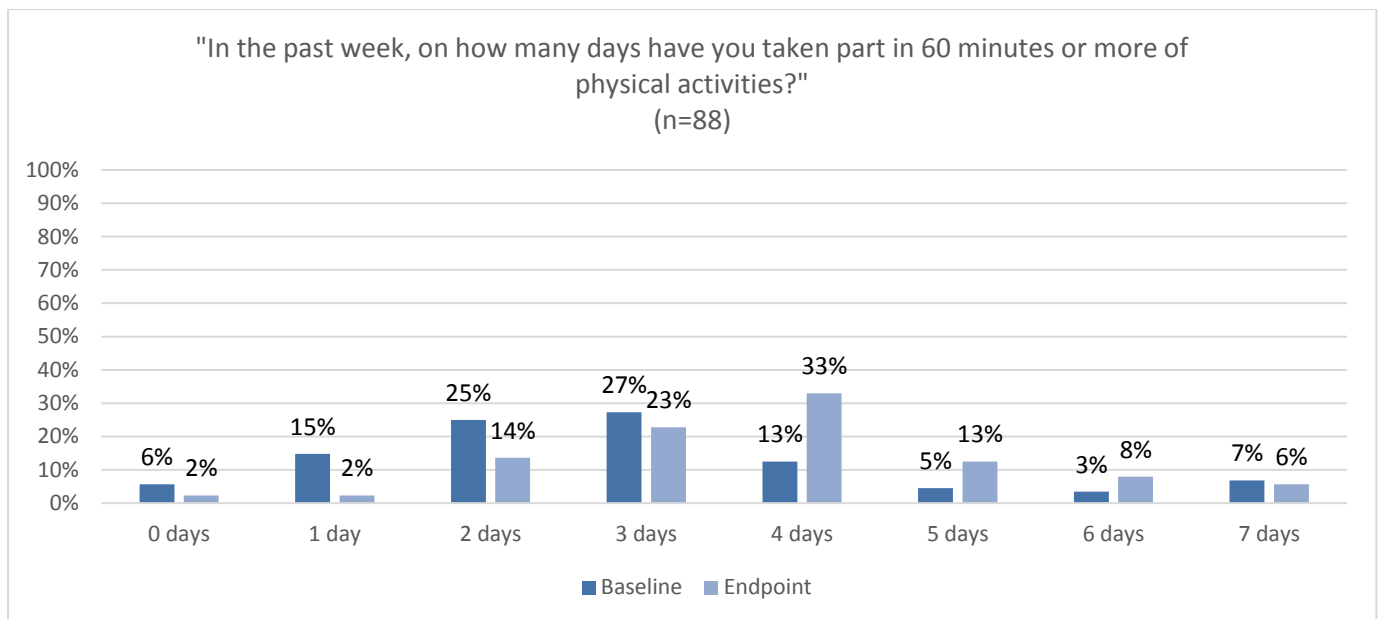
"Previously I didn't like sports. Occasionally gymnastics, but I just thought this isn't for me, I'm in a wheelchair. Now I'll have a go at anything"

Volunteer in Glasgow

After being involved in Inclusive Futures, volunteers were more likely to report that they were taking part in frequent physical activities with the average number of days a week a volunteer had exercised in the previous week increased from 2.9 to 3.8

Low rates of physical activity were reduced: at baseline, 6% (6) of participants said they had taken part in physical activities on none of the days in the past week, and 15% (13) reported they had only done so on one day in the past week. At endpoint, this dropped to 4% (4) volunteers reporting 0 - 1 days of physical activities. Furthermore, whilst prior to the programme only a quarter (27%; 24) of volunteers had taken part in sustained physical four or more days in the previous week, after the programme more than half (59%, 52) had done so.

The proportion of volunteers taking part in 60 minutes or more of physical activity in a typical day more than doubled from 23% (20) to 52% (46) between baseline and endpoint. Those who reported spending less than 30 minutes doing physical activity dropped from 24% (21) to 5% (4).



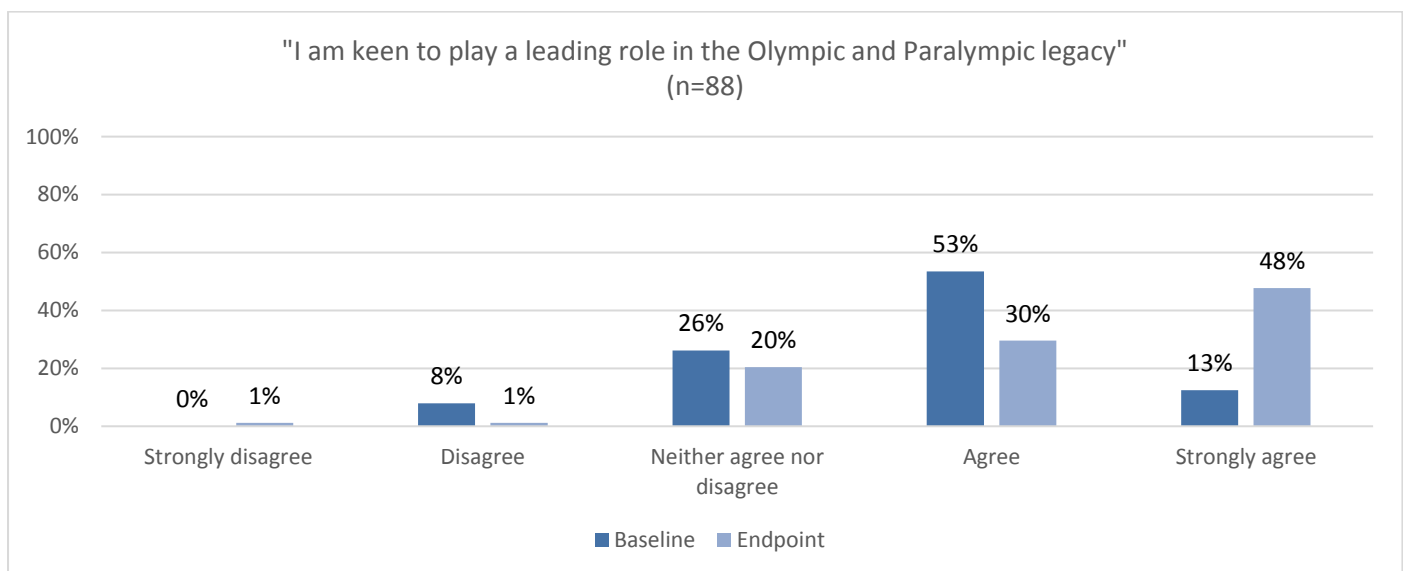
9. Impact on inspiring events

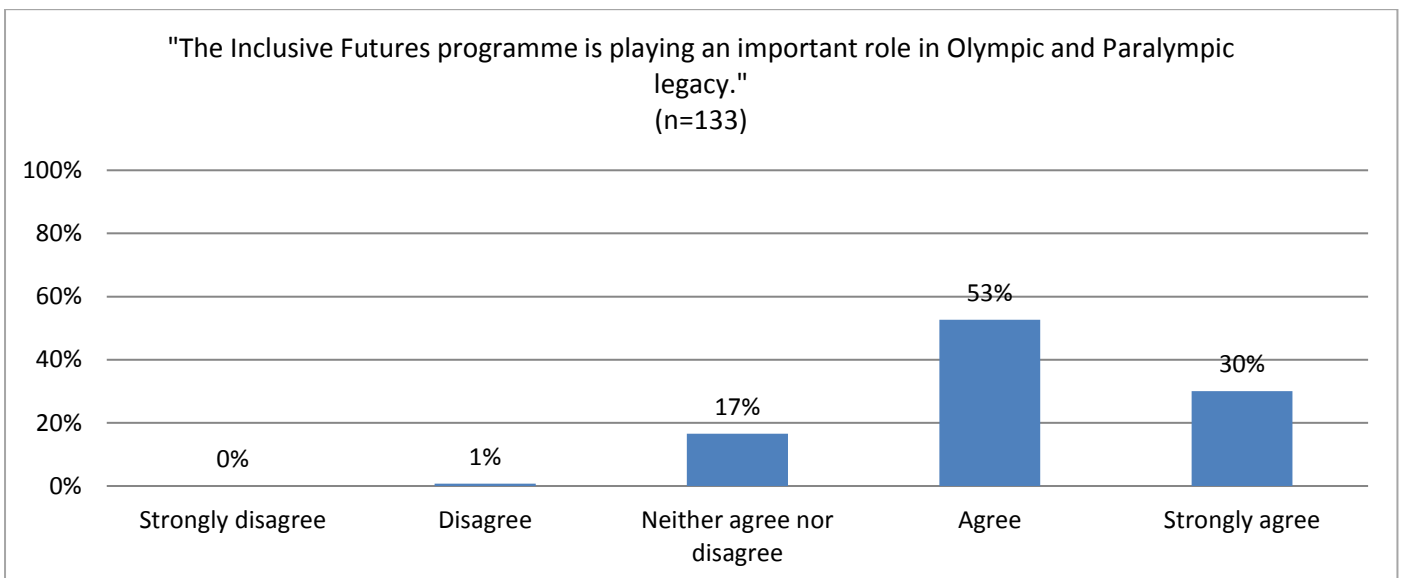
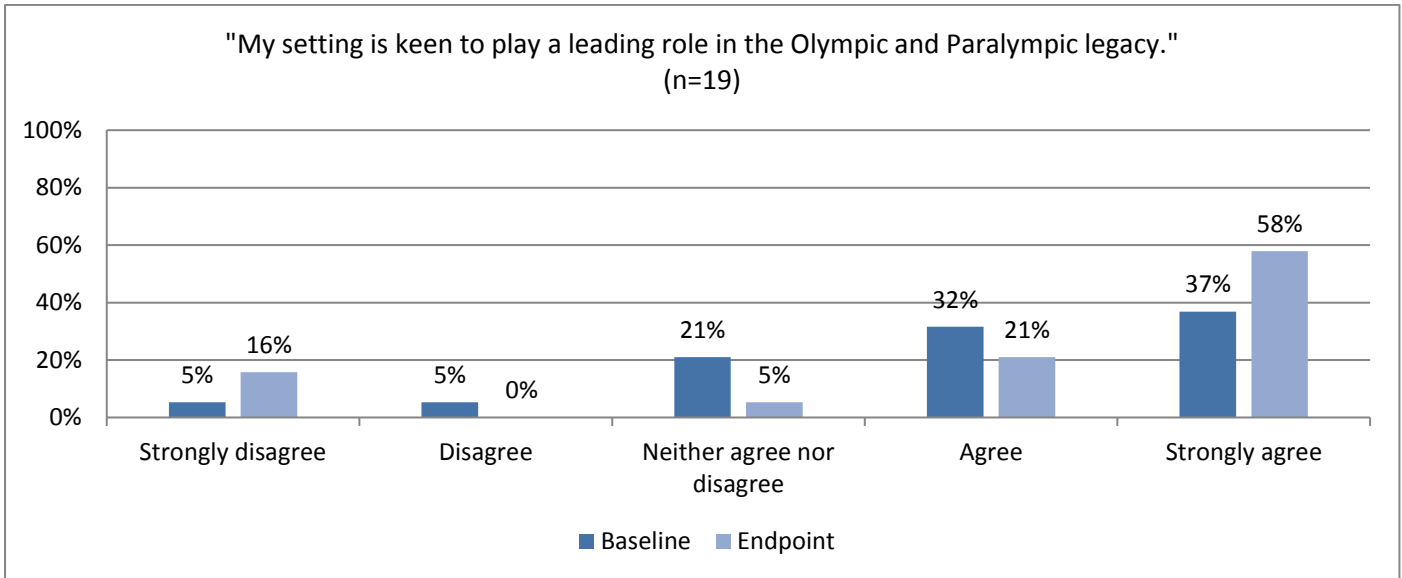
Volunteers' engagement with the Olympic and Paralympic legacy increased over the course of the programme and this seems to have played a role in inspiring them to participate in physical activity and sport.

9.1 Desire to be part of the Olympic/Paralympic legacy

After being involved in Inclusive Futures, volunteers were more likely to say they were keen to play a leading role in the Olympic and Paralympic legacy. The proportion strongly agreeing with this statement rose between baseline and endpoint from 13% (11) to almost half of volunteers (48%; 42).

Settings, similarly, were more likely to strongly agree that they were keen to play a leading role in the Olympic and Paralympic legacy. There was a 10 percentage point increase in the proportion of settings who either agreed or strongly agreed that this was the case (69%; 13 to 79%; 15) and the proportion strongly agreeing rose by 21 percentage points (37%; 5 to 58%; 8). Meanwhile 83% (110) of volunteers felt Inclusive Futures was playing an important role in the Olympic and Paralympic legacy. Almost a third (30%; 40) strongly agreeing that this was the case.



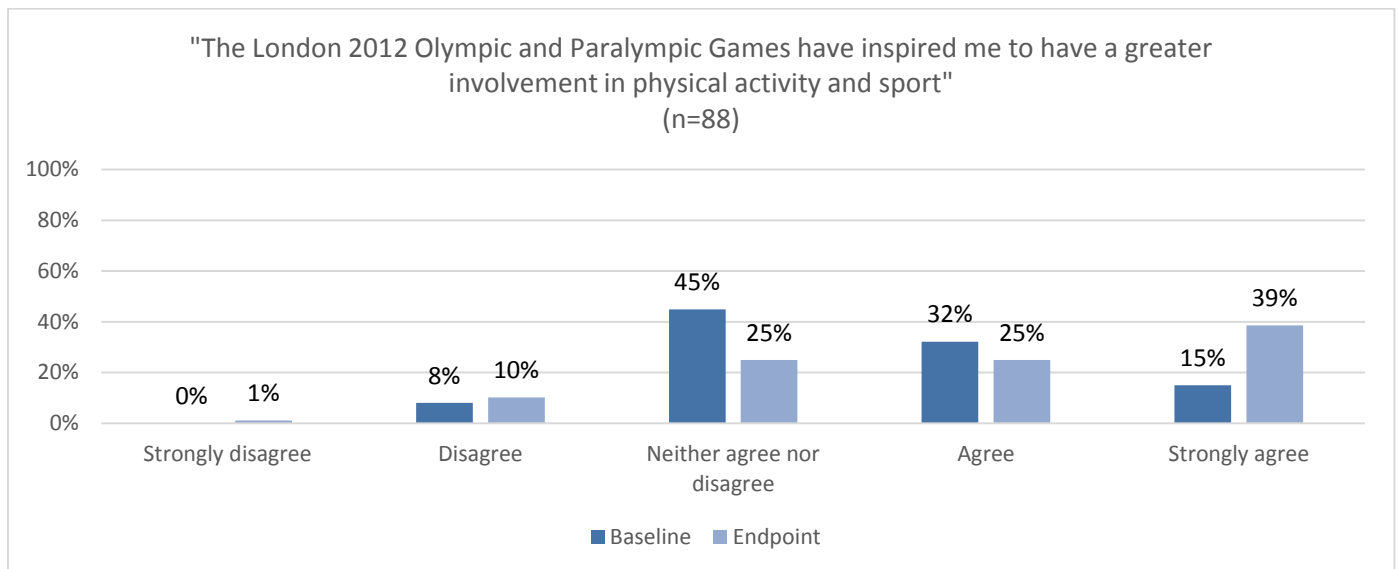


9.2 Inspired by 2012 Olympic and Paralympic games

“Meeting the paralympians - they were inspirational”

Volunteer, National Camp

After being involved in Inclusive Futures, 39% (34) of volunteers strongly agreed that they had been inspired to have a greater involvement in physical activity and sport by the London 2012 Olympic and Paralympic Games. This was a 25 percentage point increase from baseline, when only 14% (12) strongly agreed with the statement.



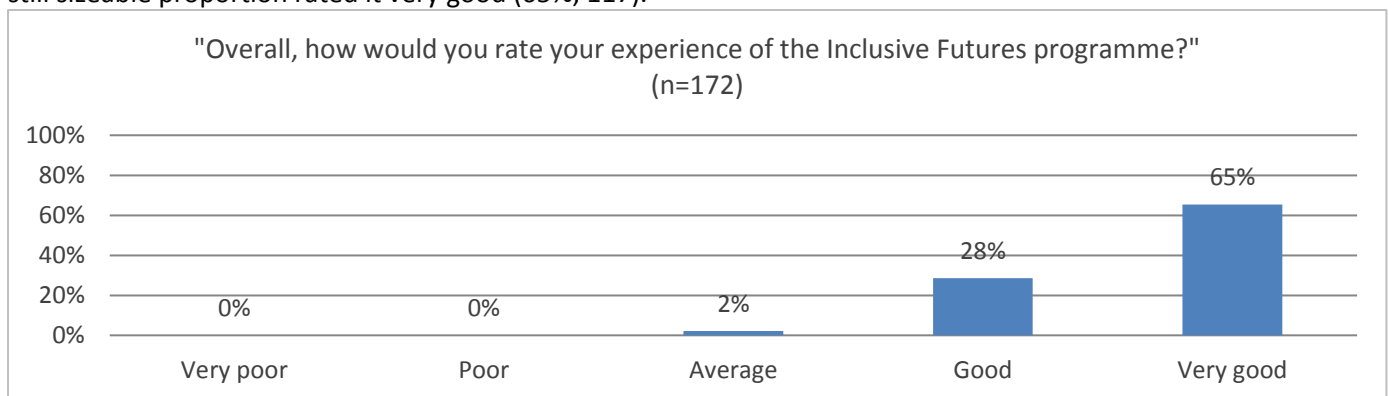
10. Key processes and delivery

Data from case studies, interviews, focus groups, and survey questions shows that the vast majority of volunteers, settings and participants rate their experience on the programme as good or better and most rate it very highly. The programme has particular strengths around quality local delivery, integration of disabled and non-disabled young people and certain elements of the camps. There is now scope to develop the opportunities and resources available, expectations around impact and consistency of quality at camps.

10.1 Overall views on the programme

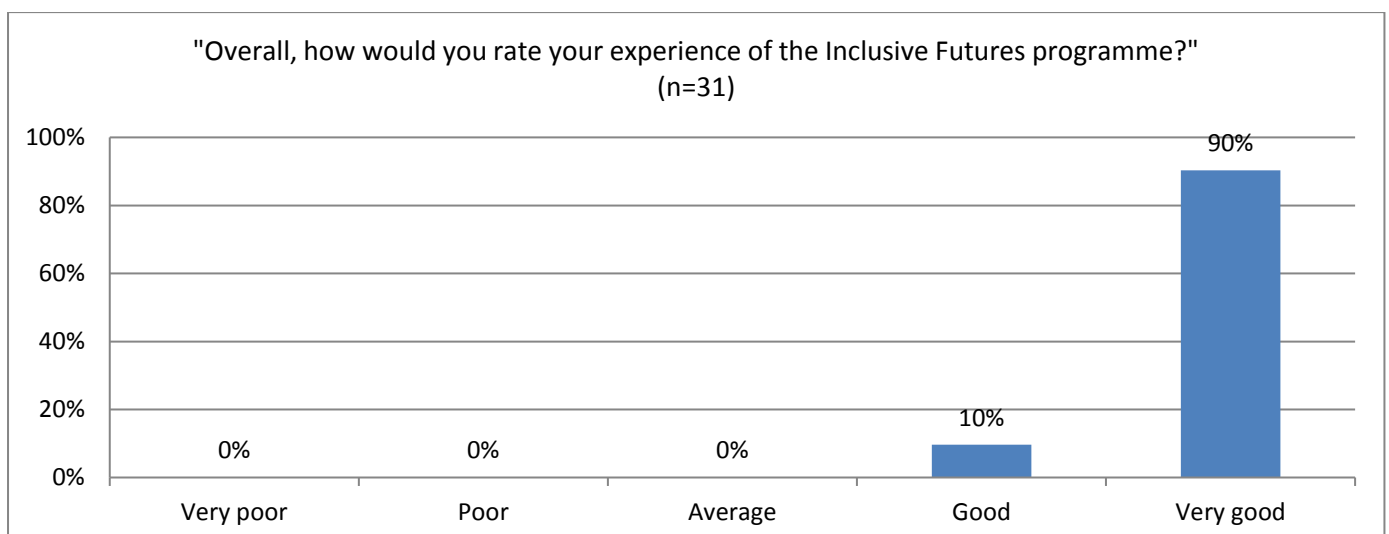
Volunteers

Endpoint volunteer surveys were very positive with no respondents describing their experience as poor or very poor. The vast majority (93%, 96) volunteers described their experience as “good” or “very good” and a rather smaller but still sizeable proportion rated it very good (65%, 117).



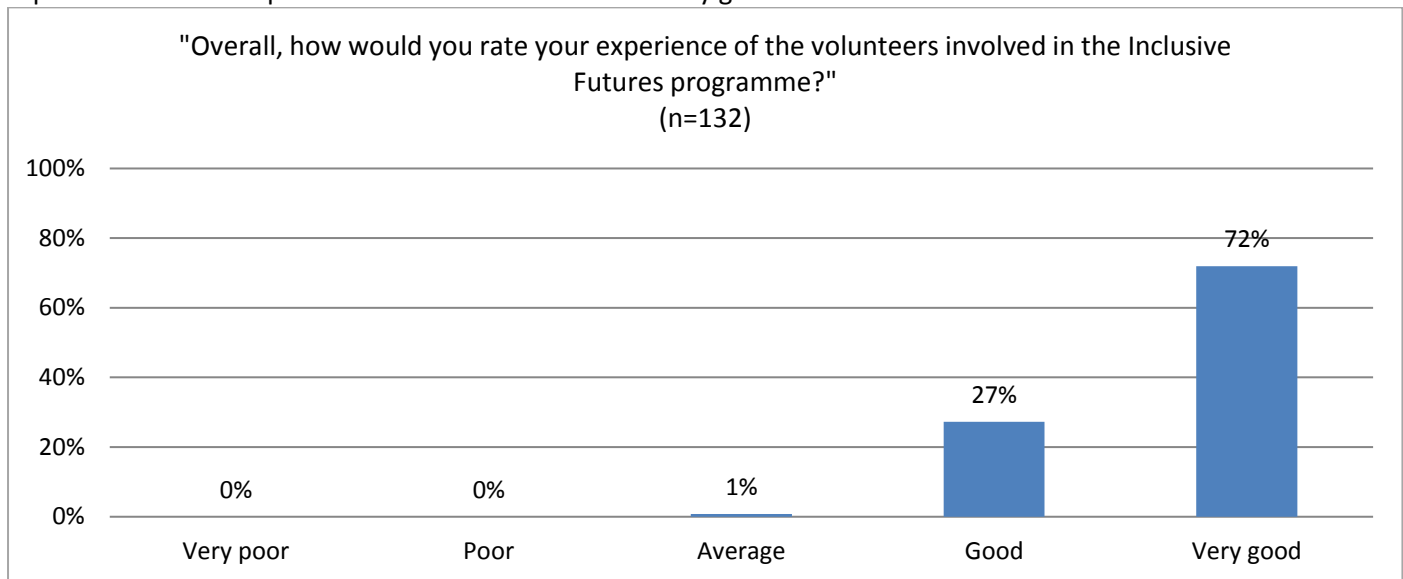
Settings

Settings also had universally positive views of the programme, suggesting that responses noted earlier (in which settings were critical of the provision they offered) were not due to negative experiences of the programme. 100% (31) of settings described their experience of the Inclusive Futures programme as “good” or “very good” and the vast majority considered their experience “very good”.



Participants

99% (131) of participants had positive views on the volunteers they worked with and three quarters (72%, 95) reported that their experiences of IF volunteers were “very good”.



10.2 Strengths

1. Quality local delivery

Qualitative data from case studies (see Appendix 2), focus groups with VCs and their line managers and telephone interviews with three national disability sport organisations (Scottish Disability Sport, English Federation of Disability Sport, Disability Sport Wales) suggests that the programme was well delivered. Volunteer coordinators, line managers, and national disability charity stakeholders identified the following as key strengths of programme delivery this year:

- regional flexibility and independence
- strong teams and networks, including partnerships with other charities and programmes
- staff and volunteer commitment
- targeted approaches to recruitment and activity organisation, particularly for disabled young people
- training, coaching and support

Focus group feedback from volunteer coordinators and their line managers supported these findings. In particular, VCs and their line managers reiterated their positivity about the flexibility and independence they were given to organise and tailor the programme to specific regions. Similarly, the level of commitment of volunteer coordinators and associated staff members (e.g. volunteer mentors and coaches) was highlighted in interviews as a real asset of the programme.

2. Integration of Disabled and Non-Disabled Young People

“Non-disabled kids have had their perceptions changed about disabled young people, and had their eyes opened about what their challenges might be”.

National Stakeholder

National stakeholders noted the important role IF is playing in providing opportunities for disabled young people, integrating disabled and non-disabled youngsters, and providing opportunities for leadership. This was partly thought to be because the programme gives young disabled a particular role and supports them through coaching as well as because the programme ensures the right environments are provided.

“Most programmes would say disabled people are welcome, but they don’t always provide a suitable environment. Inclusive futures ensures they have the right support to be able to do that.”

National Stakeholder

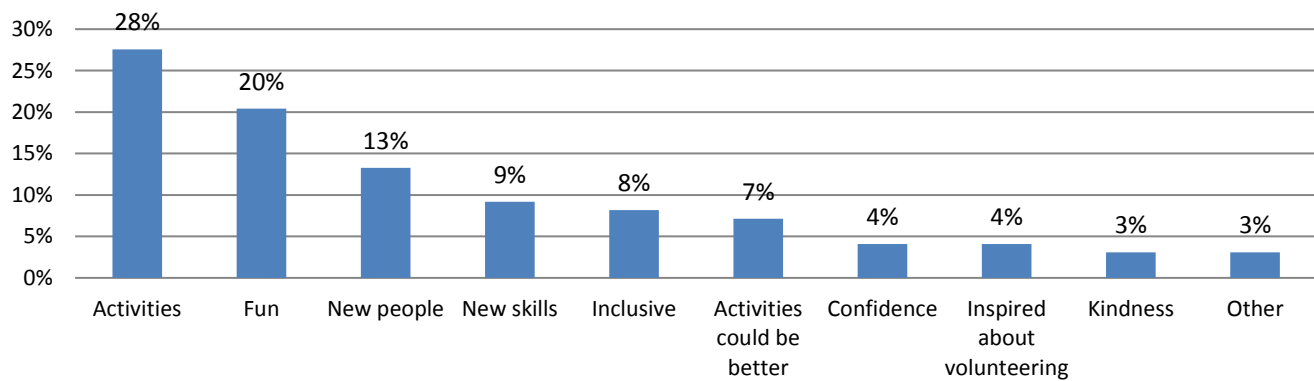
“The focus around coaching and volunteering was a strength. Too frequently we focus on them just doing sport rather than leading it”.

National Stakeholder

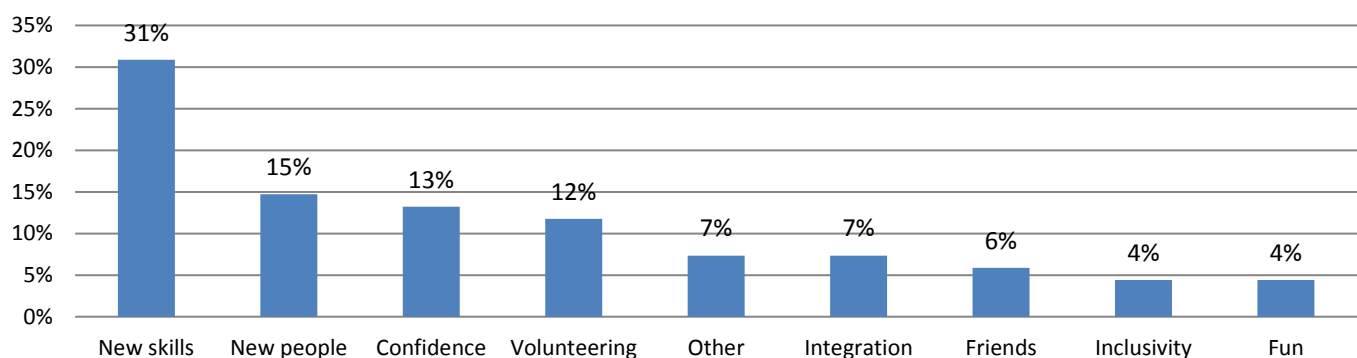
3. The regional and national camps

Qualitative feedback from volunteers at the regional and national¹ camps shows that young people are pleased with how these events are being delivered. Volunteers especially enjoyed the social aspects of the camps and felt that they benefited from the chance to learn new sports and skills.

"Why did you choose this rating for your experience of the Inclusive Futures regional camp?" (n=88)



"How else do you think you have benefited by taking part in the Inclusive Futures regional camp?" (n=67)



10.3 Areas for development

Qualitative evidence suggested the following areas for improvement

1. Opportunities and resources

A shortage of volunteering opportunities was identified as a limiting factor to the success of the programme. For example, Manchester had recruited a substantial number of volunteers, but found it challenging to keep them

¹ A detailed report on the national camp was included in the interim report and can be found in Appendix 1. As such, findings from the regional camp are focused on here.

engaged in the programme because regular, high-quality, inclusive volunteering opportunities were limited. Additionally, the lack of an exit route from the programme was noted as something to be addressed so that young people taking part in IF have further volunteering and sports opportunities to move on to.

Difficulties around transporting volunteers and their equipment to event venues, and also in providing adapted equipment for disabled young people, were also mentioned by VCs across regions. Evidence gathered from the VC focus group and the Swansea case study indicated that best practice was not being effectively shared across regions.

2. Coordination and sharing practice

Line managers and stakeholders reported some difficulties working with NGBs for example around expectations and opportunities for participation. This is also an area flagged up in case study 4. However, there was recognitions that it would take time to change mind-sets:

“NGBs are more and more under-resourced and disability is lower priority.”

Regional line manager

“Working with NGBs around how inclusive practice can get better. This is scary for many NGBs, who are unable to deliver inclusive sports. In the main it is a struggle here, and IF are having to push the inclusive message (NGBs don’t know how to do this, although there are some exceptions).”

Regional line manager

3. Unrealistic expectations of impact

Feedback from VCs, line managers and stakeholders indicates some tension between the high expectations and targets, and local teams’ ability to deliver. Some VCs and line managers also thought that evidence of impact was expected unrealistically soon after the programme had begun.

“One project never challenges perceptions. Sometimes I think we’re trying to be too simplistic. It won’t do it in isolation, we need different types of projects going on. But all things make a difference, it is a contributing factor”.

National stakeholder

There was also some frustration with uniform numerical targets for volunteer numbers, regardless of local area context or the quality of volunteer engagement.

“The targets are quite high, so they could do easy thing and get bums on seats, or they could make bigger difference with smaller numbers”.

National stakeholder

“But it’s never about numbers, it’s about quality of experience. Even very small numbers can have huge impact on those people’s lives. People who say it’s a numbers game are wrong. It’s much better to give quality support although with fewer numbers.”

National stakeholder

4. Opportunities for progression

VCs and line managers suggested that the current age band (14-19) of eligible volunteers be extended to allow greater numbers of older volunteers to take up leadership and mentoring roles within IF.

5. Consistency of delivery at camps

Despite the strengths of the camp noted above, a small number of regional camp survey comments (7%; 6) were critical of the activities provided and consistency of quality therefore needs to be ensured:

“The activities went on for a bit too long. There was no morning break. Didn’t see the relevancy of the memory game. The day was well run in parts.”

Volunteer at regional camp

“There could have been more fun things to do. Some sessions seemed too long. My favourite was wheelchair rugby.”

Volunteer at regional camp

11. Conclusions and recommendations

11.1 Conclusions

The Inclusive Futures programme is impacting on all its intended outcomes and much of this impact is profound and deeply important to the young people involved. The Youth Sport Trust has been successful in leading a programme in a range of geographical locations which is delegated but co-ordinated.

Although it is ambitious to combine a focus on inclusivity, wider well-being, physical activity and volunteering, the programme is doing this remarkably successfully. At the heart of the programme's success is the fact that disabled and non-disabled young people are being brought together with a fun and positive purpose.

Next year, a greater number of case studies will make it possible to understand more about how settings are changing and developing their understanding of inclusivity and youth-participation. It is in this area that it has been least possible to draw conclusions. Nonetheless, surveyed settings' gave unanimously positive feedback on the programme overall.

11.2 Recommendations

- Reduce the evaluation burden add inclusivity of the tools by shortening and simplifying surveys and minimising data collection requirements.
- Place case studies at the heart of future evaluation to ensure that young people struggling to access written surveys are fully included.
- Address the shortage of volunteering opportunities by building partnerships with other volunteering and sports organisations in each region. This will help ensure access to more high-quality, regular, inclusive volunteering opportunities and maximise impact in overlapping areas of focus.
- Ensure a consistently engaging and inclusive range of activities are available at all camps by ensuring activities do not go on too long and that there is sufficient variety.
- Ensure opportunities to share best practice across regions are available, for example by "buddying up" volunteer co-ordinators so they can support each other, or by using an online forum to share ideas.
- Provide a greater range of ways of engaging with schools and ensure careful co-ordination between all stakeholders, particularly NGBs.
- Review budgets where possible to ensure that IF events have appropriate equipment and transport facilities.
- Consider extending the lower age boundary to below 14 to engage volunteers before exam and school commitments become too substantial as well as the upper-age boundary for volunteers beyond 19 so that volunteers can progress on completion of the programme.

12. Appendix 1: National camp report

The Inclusive Futures programme included a number of residential components. Each region held its own regional camp during the year. Additionally, a national camp was held from the 27th to the 29th March in Loughborough. The purpose of the national camp was to bring together IF volunteers from all regions to inspire, learn, connect and celebrate.

Impact on volunteers’ attitudes and opinions

National camp survey data was used to explore impact on the following five Inclusive Futures outcomes relating to attitudes and opinions:

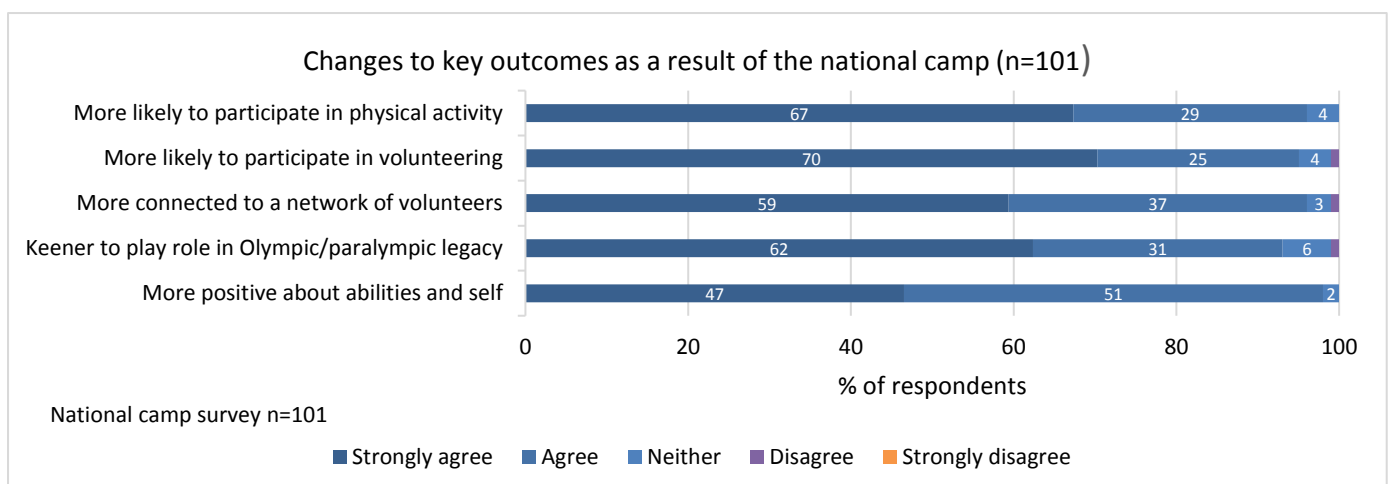
- Positive attitude to self and ability
- Positive attitude to volunteering
- Positive attitude to sport participation
- Desire to be part of the Olympic/ Paralympic legacy
- Young people feel connected to network of young volunteers

Changes on these outcomes was measured by asking volunteers attending the national camp to rate their agreement with each of the following statements:

- As a result of the national camp, I feel more positive about my abilities and myself.
- As a result of the national camp, I am more likely to participate in volunteering.
- As a result of the national camp, I am more likely to participate in sports and physical activity.
- As a result of the national camp, I am keener to play a leading role in the Olympic and Paralympic legacy.
- As a result of the national camp, I feel more connected to the network of Inclusive Futures young volunteers.

Response options were: strongly agree; agree; neither agree nor disagree; disagree; strongly disagree.

- For each of these five outcomes, at least 93% (94) of volunteers reported a positive impact. 86% (87) reported an impact across all five key Inclusive Futures outcomes.
- The outcome that stood out was positive attitude to volunteering, with 70% (70) reporting that they “strongly agreed” that they were “more likely to participate in volunteering” as a result of the national camp.
- There was also a very positive impact on attitudes to sport participation with 66% (67) reporting that they “strongly agreed” that they were “more likely to participate in physical activity” as a result of the national camp.
- The lowest impact was on attitudes to self and ability. 47% (47) reported strong agreement and 51% (52) agreed that the national camp had made them feel more positive about their abilities and self. However, only 2% (2) respondents did not report a positive impact on this outcome.



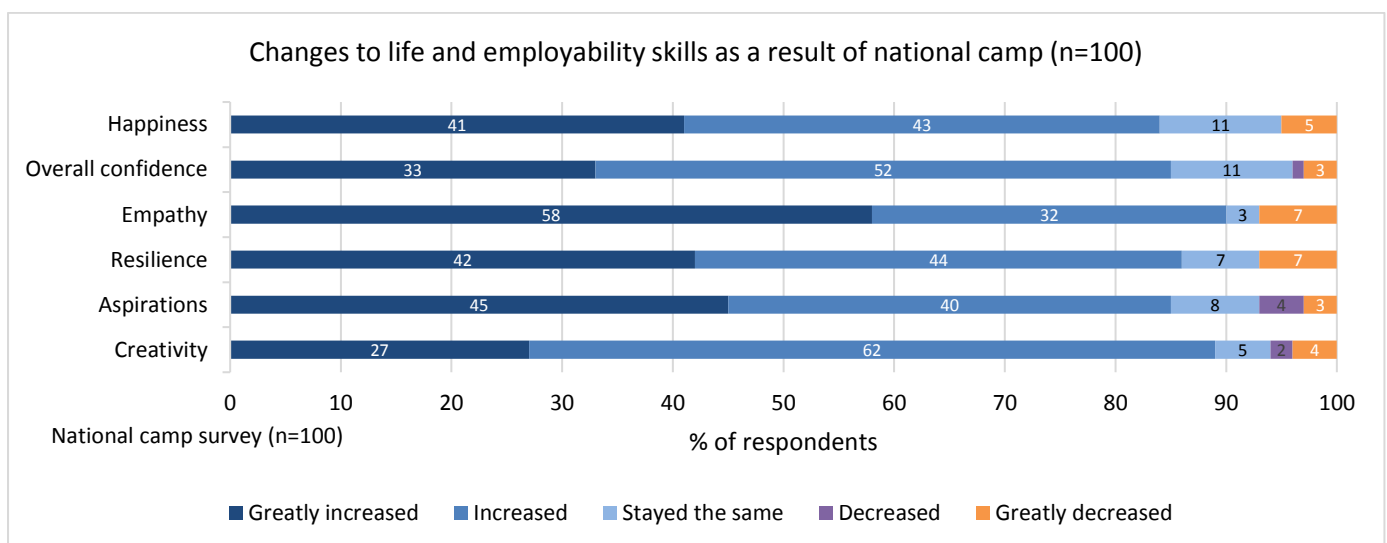
Impact on life and employability skills

National camp survey data was also used to explore impact on volunteers’ life and employability skills with volunteers asked: “As a result of taking part in the Inclusive Futures national camp, how, if at all, do you think the following have changed?”

- Your ability to come up with new ideas (creativity)
- The feeling you can achieve anything you want to (aspirations)
- Your ability to stick at tasks until you succeed (resilience)
- Your ability to appreciate how other people are feeling (empathy)
- Your overall confidence (confidence)
- Your happiness (happiness)

Response options were: greatly increased; increased; stayed the same; decreased; greatly decreased.

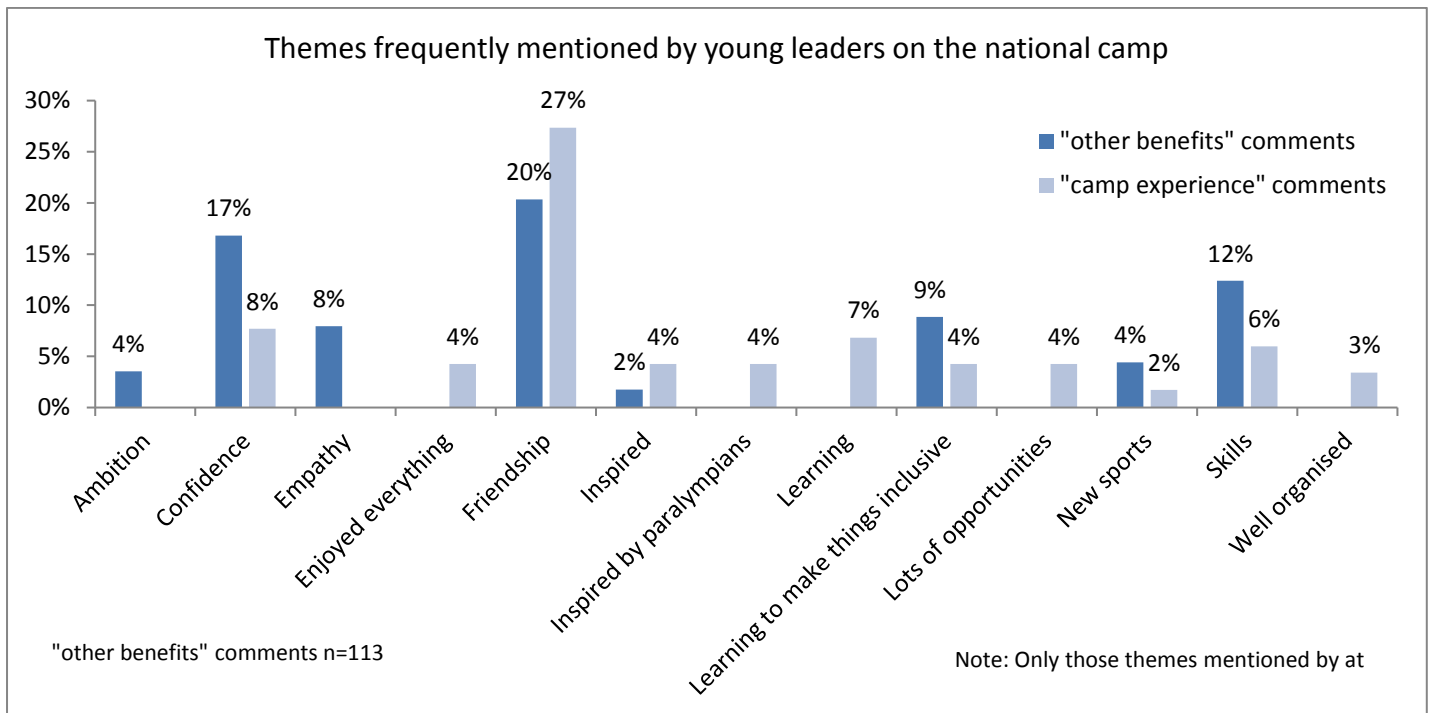
- For each life and employability skill, at least 89% (89) of volunteers reported a positive impact. 75% (75) reported an impact across all six life and employability skills.
- The outcome that stood out was empathy, with 58% (58) reporting this had “greatly increased” as a result of the national camp. Resilience also had a healthy response, with 42% (42) reporting this had “greatly increased” and 44% (44) reporting it had “increased”.
- The lowest impact was on creativity. Only 27% (27) reported that it had “greatly increased”. Nonetheless, almost 90% (89) reported positive impact in this area. Similarly, although only 33% (33) reported their overall confidence had “greatly increased”, 85% (85) reported a positive impact of the national camp on overall confidence.



Qualitative analysis

Volunteers attending the national camp were also asked to describe any other benefits they had experienced by taking part in the national camp.

- The most common themes were around friendship (20%; 23), confidence (17%; 19), and skills development (12%; 14). These themes also appeared frequently in comments in which volunteers’ justified their overall experience and rating of the national camp.
- 43% (43) volunteers commented that their overall experience of the camp was good or very good because they had made new friends or had enjoyed meeting new people. Improved confidence was mentioned by 10% (10) as an explanation for their overall camp rating; the same percentage commented that learning new skills was why they had rated the national camp positively.



Friendship

The most common theme was around friendship, with 23 volunteers responding that they had benefited from the national camp through making new friends, strengthening existing friendships, and building networks.

“Making new friends and got even closer with some of my best friends”

“Moving out of my comfort zone and meet new people”

“I have met new amazing people”

There is some evidence that new friendships have also helped volunteers become more empathic and determined.

“I have met great people who have hard challenges in life and also have powered through”

“Created a network of people across the UK that can help with ideas/how they overcame certain obstacles”

“I know how to make new friends and feel more determined to succeed”

Confidence

The second most common theme was around confidence, with 19 volunteers mentioning that the national camp helped them feel more confident when talking with new people.

“I am more confident speaking to strangers”

“I have achieved being more confident in talking to anyone”

Volunteers also reported feeling more confident when giving presentations after the national camp.

“I have improved my ability to talk in [a] group”

“Got more positive speaking out loud and what I can achieve”

Improvements in overall confidence were mentioned, including confidence around disability.

“I've become more confident in terms of sport and disabilities”

“Knowing I can be in a group of people who stand and walk and not be afraid to join in”

Skills development

Skills development was the third most common theme. Fourteen volunteers described various skills they had developed through the national camp.

“I have developed many skills from being at the IF camp”

“I feel that my coaching ability has improved but also my leadership skills”

“I've learned and developed a variety of skills”

Comments were frequently focused on inclusivity with ten volunteers reporting that they had benefited through learning about how to make activities more inclusive.

“I feel I have learnt a lot within helping make sports activities more inclusive, enjoyable and also being able to adapt the activities”

“More inclusive - more empathetic”

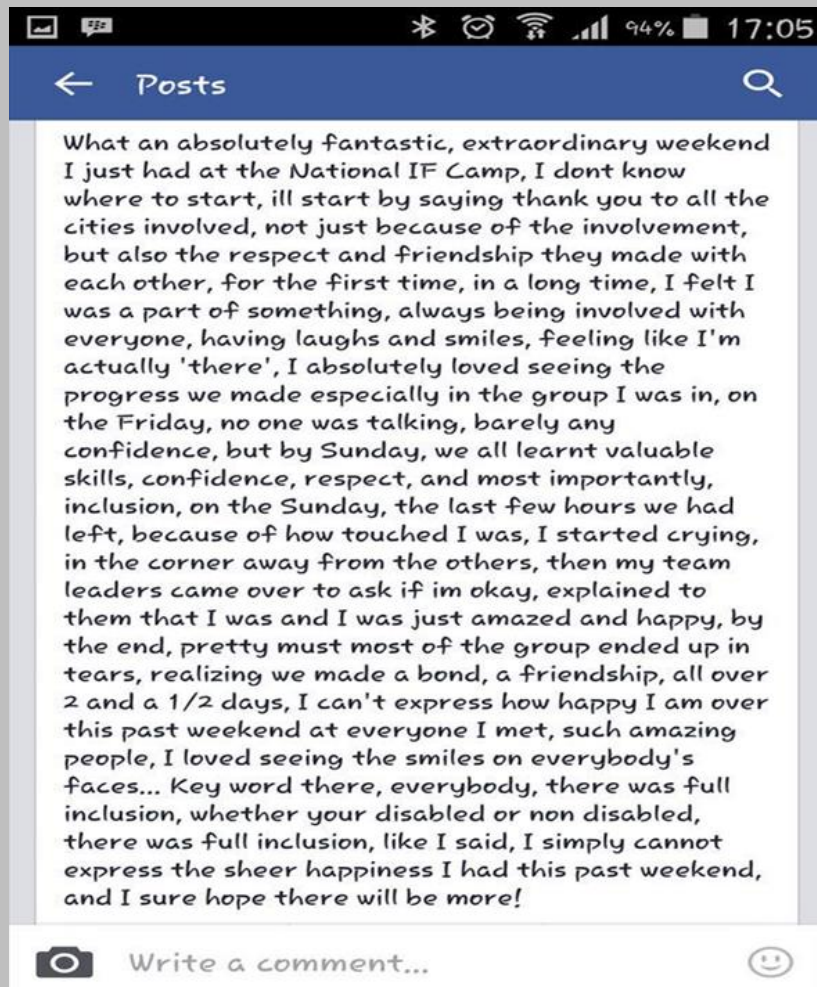
“I am more confident in leading sessions with students who are both abled and disabled”

“Adapting ideas to be more suitable for everyone”

A range of other benefits were less commonly reported by volunteers. These included learning to empathise and understand different types of people (6), playing and learning new sports (4), having fun (3), and being independent away from home (3).

Mini case study – Jordan at the national camp

The evidence below comes from Disability Sport Wales, who received this feedback through Facebook from a young volunteer, Jordan. As is clear, Jordan had a very positive and inclusive experience at the national camp. The feedback was not solicited but instead posted unprompted by Jordan on Facebook. He and his guardians have approved its use in this report.



Processes for change in volunteers

The responses volunteers gave to the question asking them to explain their national camp rating were very similar to responses on the other benefits of the national camp.

Being inspired

Being inspired, whether by speakers, Paralympians, or fellow volunteers, was a common theme. 19% (19) commented on being inspired.

“Meeting the paralympians - they were inspirational”

“I was inspired by the athlete mentors”

“The inspirational talks by the leaders and paralympic mentors was outstanding”

“There were lots of very inspirational speakers”

New opportunities

9% (9) said they had rated the camp positively because of the new and different opportunities.

“It was good because it's an eye opener to other volunteers and myself about different opportunities out there”

“Had different opportunities and chances to show what you can do”

“Lots of different activities for all to get involved with. Great organisation by YST staff”

Great experiences

Positive responses to the ratings question were sometimes given because the whole national camp experience had been positive for the young leader. 12% (12) reported that they had enjoyed everything about the national camp and had had a “great experience”.

“Love the hotel, the food, team leaders. Everything! Loved everything!”

“I found the whole experience very inspirational and enjoyed all the activities”

“Was an amazing experience to have the chance to take part in, enjoyed myself loads”

“I felt as though the experience was something you couldn't get anywhere else!”

“It has been a great experience and I have met lots of inspiring people”

13. Appendix 2: Inclusive Futures Regional Case Studies

The following case studies explore key outcomes for the Inclusive Futures programme in Glasgow, Bath, Swansea and Manchester. The case studies were carried out between February and April 2015. The case studies highlight what impact the programme is having on volunteers and participants, and how the volunteer co-ordinator is working to secure these. The outcomes have been grouped into four key areas:

- Attitudes to and participation in volunteering
- Connecting young people to the local community and inspiring them through the 2012 Olympic legacy
- Attitudes to and participation in sport
- Challenging perceptions of and attitudes towards young disabled people, and valuing inclusive practice

The case studies conclude with factors contributing to success and challenges faced, which are intended to inform future delivery. Findings are based on observations and informal interviews with volunteers and the volunteer co-ordinator.

Glasgow Inclusive Futures

Shannon, the volunteer co-ordinator (VC) for the Inclusive Futures Programme in Glasgow, is 22 and from the East End of Glasgow. Prior to her current position, her background was in local community work, such as participating in programmes tackling anti-social behaviour and offering dance sessions in local centres on a voluntary basis. Shannon was, and is, well known in community. She is energetic, enthusiastic and good-humoured, with close links to the local community and an understanding of the local issues that shape it.

The main attraction for her of taking the VC role was that she had already been a volunteer herself in Glasgow city council's disability sport programme. This meant that she had already had experience of working on a community-based inclusive sports project. Although she would have taken the post anywhere, the fact that she was already embedded in her local community was useful in terms of access to key contacts and pre-existing networks.

“You approach [the programme] the way that you feel is the best for your young people because, at the end of the day, you are the person who knows them best”

- Volunteer Coordinator

Shannon has recruited 14 to 19 year olds, with diverse physical and learning difficulties and disabilities, and those with none, to the Inclusive Futures programme. She has used connections from her previous roles to access young people, targeting organisations such as schools, colleges, youth organisations, and disability clubs. She has prioritised contacting people face-to-face, as this has been the most successful method for her.

Attracting volunteers has been difficult at times, with the many commitments that young people currently have, especially exams. Despite this, she currently has 110 volunteers on the books, forty-six of whom are classified as having a disability. Fifty-two volunteers are currently out on active placements outside of school time during the week.

Inclusive Sports Day for Schools

This case study focuses on the second *Inclusive Sports Day* for schools in Glasgow. Shannon organised this event, hosted by a local school with Inclusive Futures volunteers. The aim of the event was to spread the word about the Inclusive Futures programme widely across the city. The host school's own Inclusive Futures volunteers led the day's sports sessions which included wheelchair rugby, sitting volleyball, football for the blind, and boccia. The day was attended by 73 school students, of whom 10 were young volunteers on the Inclusive Futures programme. Shannon was keen to point out that the socio-economic demographics of the four schools attending the event were different and that the way she ran the programme aimed to be inclusive in this sense too.

During the observed session, the volunteers were confident and self-motivated. There was very little direction needed and the hall was busy and animated with no sign of nerves in any of the volunteers. School students taking part in the event were put into mixed groups so as to promote integration.



Volunteers leading the warm-up at the Inclusive Sports Day



A student being instructed in wheel chair rugby

Student volunteers, who had planned the sessions, led each of the four sports. The wheelchair rugby session was supported by a national coach of the game, who was also the ambassador for Inclusive Futures Glasgow-wide. Like Shannon, he had a great deal of experience working on projects similar to Inclusive Futures prior to taking this position and runs a wheelchair rugby club outside of his responsibilities on the programme. He provided, at his own personal cost, the 15 wheelchairs that the participants used in the session – equipment valued at approximately £45,000. Without his financial backing, this part of the programme, which is proving very popular, would not be available.

Groups of students took part in each sport for twenty minutes so that by the end, they had all tried everything. The teachers from the host and participant schools lined the walls as the volunteers led the sessions. The VC’s primary role during the event itself was to call the end to each session and ask all to rotate.

The participants and volunteers all took their sport and work seriously. All participants and volunteers appeared to be enjoying themselves and concentrating on the activities taking place. There was enthusiasm to take part and try out the new sports. The volunteers led their student participants in the activities, and there was no reluctance by the participants to be led by a group of peers as opposed to a teacher.



Volunteers (in pink vests) lead three sports

“I think you’ve all been outstanding and you’ve worked so hard. It’s amazing to see where you’ve come from.”

- Host schoolteacher to her volunteers

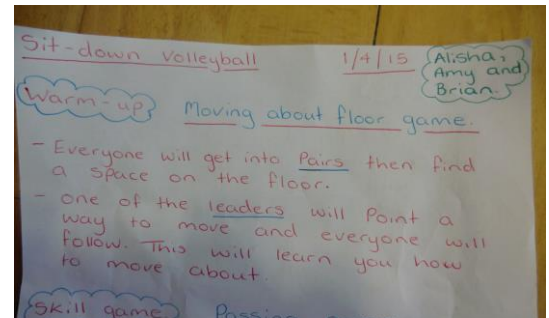
Impact on outcomes

Attitudes to and participation in volunteering

There are four key ways in which the programme has helped increase volunteering:

1. Increasing volunteers’ self-confidence
2. Providing volunteering opportunities
3. Providing transport to help volunteers attend events
4. Showing volunteers how they can progress in their volunteering

Shannon doubts that the volunteers, particularly those with disabilities, would have been involved in volunteering without the programme. At the start, volunteers had low self-confidence and this had to be carefully addressed to avoid recruitment problems. Interviews with volunteers suggest that barriers to confidence are gradually being overcome through the Inclusive Futures programme: *“We wouldn’t have volunteered without this. This is the only opportunity we’ve had to do it. I don’t think any of us would really have had the confidence to, either”* (Volunteer). Young volunteers’ leadership skills and organisational skills have also been developed as a result of their involvement in planning and leading sports sessions: *“My organising skills are much better now. And how to plan lessons and lead them”* (Volunteer).



Volunteers learn to organise and lead by planning their own sports sessions.

Shannon has also taken volunteers’ to events run by the Scottish Disability Sport and this has positively affected attitudes to volunteering. At these events, volunteers are offered training and inspiration for running their own sessions. Volunteers also have a chance to learn about the career opportunities available to them in the charity sector and the exit routes they can take following their volunteering.

Glasgow volunteer mini case study

One volunteer was very keen to talk, at length, about the impact the Inclusive Futures Programme had had on him. Sultan Haneef, a 21-year-old male, had been volunteering on the programme for three months. Prior to this, he’d completed two years in college and achieved a sports and recreation qualification. After some time looking for a job with no joy – largely because of lack of experience – Shannon suggested that Sultan build his experience using voluntary opportunities on the Inclusive Futures Programme and he began as a volunteer swimming coach. Shannon then aided his application to Coach Core (through Glasgow Sport) and he was offered a one-year, 50% work, and 50% training apprenticeship. Sultan is certain that without the Inclusive Futures Programme, he wouldn’t have made this important step on his career path: *“[If I hadn’t had the opportunity to volunteer] right now, I would be lost, to be honest with you”*. The concern, of course, must be that there will not be enough exit routes for the volunteers to continue their activities as the programme reaches its end.

Shannon acknowledges that there are many volunteers who volunteer only for the larger events as opposed to week-on-week placements. However, there are still a large number of volunteers who engage with the programme and are willing to volunteer. As Shannon said: *“They keep asking ‘when’s the next event; when’s the next event...’ I’ve got people volunteering 6 or 7 nights a week. I wouldn’t imagine that they would be volunteering and, if they were, it definitely wouldn’t be as much if it wasn’t for Inclusive Futures.”* Shannon is confident that they will keep up their volunteering after the programme ends.

Connecting young people to the local community and inspiring them through the 2012 Olympic legacy

Connections to the community

Linking to another Youth Sport Trust programme – Sporting Memories – several of the volunteers have worked on boccia sessions for adults in the local community, particularly those with mental health issues and the elderly. This has introduced the volunteers to people in their local community that they might never have met otherwise and helped them to gain more of a sense of community.



An inclusive boccia session

“By the end they were all up and dancing. It was just brilliant. It’s things like that that people remember for a long, long time.”

- Volunteer Coordinator

A programme has also been set up where secondary school students run sessions in feeder primary schools with the aim of making school transition easier by introducing friendly, community links between upper primary and lower secondary students. Volunteering is therefore building bridges between different sections of the community.

Connections to a national network of volunteers

There was some evidence that the programme was creating a wide, new community of volunteers. The weekend before the Inclusive Sports Day, the Glasgow Inclusive Futures volunteers had travelled down to Loughborough for the Inclusive Futures National Volunteer Camp. All the volunteers interviewed reported that this had been a great opportunity - for many it was a highlight of the programme as a whole. The main reason for this was that they met new people and extended their network of friends beyond Glasgow. Extended friendships were linked to improvements in self-confidence as one volunteer explained: *“Through this camp I became so confident, I was really nervous at first as there was so many different cities attending the camp. However I made so many friends from it and it was such a special and exciting experience”* (volunteer’s written report of the Loughborough camp).

Inspiring young people through the 2012 legacy

Inclusive Futures began in Glasgow very shortly before the 2014 Commonwealth Games were held in the city. This gave a unique context to the programme as it unfolded in the city. Volunteers discussed how the Games:

- had raised the profile of sporting activities in general
- provided them with their first opportunity to volunteer
- given them access to brand new, state-of-the-art sporting facilities

Although volunteers were not able to talk in such an excited way about the impact of the 2012 Olympics or any on-going legacy from that, it is clear that they have been inspired by the Commonwealth Games: *“[with Glasgow 2014] as soon as you opened your front door, you could hear the sports. It was so inspiring”* (volunteer).

Attitudes to and participation in physical activity and sport

Since becoming involved in the Inclusive Futures Programme, volunteers reported more positive attitudes to physical activity and sport, and increased participation. Broadening the range of sports that the volunteers had encountered was key to many of them feeling that they had much greater enthusiasm for sports. Shannon is confident that the volunteers will keep up their participation levels after the Inclusive Futures Programme ends and observations and interviews on the day supported her view:

“Previously I didn’t like sports. Occasionally gymnastics, but I just thought this isn’t for me, I’m in a wheelchair. Now I’ll have a go at anything”

- Volunteer

Challenging perceptions of and attitudes towards young disabled people and valuing inclusive practice

Shannon does not believe that attitudes towards young disabled people were previously particularly negative, but she is certain that the attitudes towards inclusivity have evolved enormously as a direct impact of the programme. The change in attitudes has not been one of moving from a negative stereotype of people with disabilities to a neutral one, but of one disability no longer being seen as a barrier.

Volunteers have taken part in training sessions to improve their skills in making sports and activities inclusive. This has principally focused on adapting activities so that different types of people can take part together: “...Even if someone’s in a wheelchair, try and adapt [the sport] to make it easy for them to join in... like sit down volleyball... everybody enjoys it” (volunteer). The focus is therefore on making activities inclusive and enjoyable for all participants: “we try and make [the sport] more fun for everyone so that they want to do it again” (volunteer).



All the student participants and volunteers at the end of the Inclusive

Key success factors in Glasgow

- **Community connections:** Shannon is a well known, community based volunteer coordinator, who brought key contacts and experience to the post and was already respected by many of the potential participants. The broader team is deeply committed and passionate.
- **Method of contact:** The VC uses face-to-face contact, not emails or phone calls, to enthuse the volunteers.
- **Regular meetings:** All volunteers are invited to regular meetings, which Shannon runs as a sort of steering group. This allows all volunteers to feel ownership of the programme.

Key challenges in Glasgow

- **Time:** Volunteers are often unable to free up enough of their time to actually commit to programmes of voluntary work.
- **Capacity:** Human resources are tight and the programme is currently relying on the VC and ambassador working above and beyond their job descriptions to make the programme work.
- **Transport:** Transporting volunteers, participants and equipment to and from events is proving to be a large hidden cost and will be a challenge to the continuation of the programme should any funding be withdrawn.
- **Equipment cost:** The cost of the equipment can be prohibitive. In the case of wheelchair rugby, the equipment, valued at £45,000, is provided by the ambassador at no cost to the programme. Without this support the programme would be hard to fund.
- **Bringing schools together:** Running inter-school events is seen by the VC as vital to the success of the programme. Timetabling issues and clashes between schools mean that she cannot run as many of these as she would like.
- **Increasing the depth of volunteer engagement:** There are currently many volunteers, but only a limited number volunteer on a weekly basis.

Bath Inclusive Futures

The local volunteer coordinator, Becca, has substantial experience of coaching and has had previous involvement in disability sports. She now has 73 volunteers ‘on the books’ although some are more active than others.

Becca took a very proactive approach to recruiting volunteers by:

- Meeting with the councils’ lead on inclusivity to identify potential partnerships, including the school;
- Presenting to teachers to gather interest.

Twenty older volunteers have taken an enhanced role and act as mentors to younger volunteers. We refer to these as ‘volunteer mentors’. Becca has also reached out to a wider area; by working with an older demographic group in Portsmouth, she feels this has shown the programme can work anywhere.

Three Ways School Curling Club

Three Ways School is a community special school serving pupils with a wide range of needs. Sixteen IF volunteers are involved in the club, which has been set up through IF, and which takes place twice a week with two volunteers at a time running the sessions on rotation. As well as running the club, volunteers have taken responsibility for promotion and recruitment of participants. Those involved in the curling club are considered some of the most active volunteers involved in IF Bath and they will soon be getting involved in an inclusive football club, which we also touch on in this report.

The project kicked off with ‘upskill’ sessions, which Becca planned with teachers from the school. On the day volunteers tried ten sports and were trained in communication and leadership skills. They then voted on which activity they wanted to set up a club for and voted unanimously for curling. Becca emphasises that all the strands of the project are different, so whilst this group created a new club, which would not otherwise have existed, other volunteers have joined existing groups.

In the observed session, one volunteer organised participants, kept the score and adjudicated, whilst another took photos and videos. A third volunteer was due to be involved but decided not to on the day so found a substitute.

Attitudes to and participation in volunteering

During the observed session, volunteers took their responsibilities extremely seriously. They dealt with the group with fairness, authority and good humour and encouraged participants throughout, adapting to their differing needs. They also resolved any disagreements or difficult situations calmly and fairly - for example when scores were subject to dispute or a participant sat in front of the mat. Becca sees this as a key part of the programme, saying it is important to help young people develop and recognise their leadership skills through volunteering. Perhaps as a result of this, volunteers now have a proactive attitude towards volunteering, coming up with their own ideas and working with Becca to make them happen. She and the teacher say this is a substantial change from the start of the programme when volunteers were reluctant to speak or make eye contact.

Volunteers welcome their role and enjoy it, displaying a positive attitude to volunteering. As one put it: *“It’s good helping out for people who find it harder to move. It’s good to help.”* Becca says that seeing the obvious change in people’s lives has motivated them to do more.

Volunteers have been involved at several levels: older, university-aged volunteers work as volunteer mentors,



A ‘try it out card’ from the up-skill day

supporting their younger peers. The volunteer mentor we interviewed had extensive previous involvement in volunteering and described it as “phenomenal”. He is now working on a new initiative as part of IF to start an inclusive football team.

Connecting young people to the local community and inspiring them through the 2012 Olympic legacy

Because the project had been run through the university sports centre, there have been many opportunities to build links between the community and university, including volunteers being interviewed by the campus radio station. This is encouraging given that initially, young volunteers were reluctant to come into this unfamiliar space. The process of going into unfamiliar spaces has been two-way, with the volunteer mentor explaining that *“[generally] I'm not as connected to the local community as I'd like to be but [as a result of the programme] I've been to places I'd never have been otherwise.”* An inclusive sports roadshow has now been planned and this aims to further increase community buy-in and participation.



Volunteers being interviewed by the Bristol student radio station

Inspiring young people through the 2012 legacy

Becca highlighted the fact that being linked to the university was helpful because there were often Olympic athletes training on the next court. She believes that being close to the 2012 legacy has been inspiring for volunteers and participants. Paralympians have also been embedded in the project throughout, participating in the upskill day and more recently, when Ellie Simmonds, alongside Inclusive Futures National Ambassador Kate Grey, worked with volunteers during the National Media Launch for the Inclusive Futures Project. During this event, Ellie and Kate showed their support for Inclusive Futures, raised awareness of the importance of young volunteers, and joined in some showcase activities with the young people.



Volunteers curling with Paralympian, Ellie Simmonds

Attitudes to and participation in physical activity and sport

Becca explained that increasing volunteers' participation in sports is not the main aim of the volunteering but that it is an important and invaluable by-product. This could be seen in the observed session, where the volunteers' role was to organise the session rather than participating in sport themselves. Volunteers also talked about participating in sport through IF, for example during upskill days. Similarly, the volunteer mentor explained he had been less physically active than usual recently due to other commitments but that he participates in physical activity during IF sessions.

Volunteers' skill level in sport has increased as a result of their time visiting the university to participate in activities. For example, the teacher and volunteer co-ordinator commented on the volunteers' skill level in curling, saying that, at first, players struggled to hit the target, whereas now they frequently score ten out-of-ten. One volunteer concurred, saying *“I found it hard at first but I soon got the hang of it”*. Volunteers' enthusiasm for sport has also grown, as the Becca explained: *“Some of the volunteers haven't had a good positive experience of sport and now they seem really keen on it. When I first went in and said 'do you want to come to the uni and do some sport' they were like 'ohhhh no!' but now they're like 'when are we next coming up'... they're really chirpy about it.”*

Increased skill and enthusiasm has fed volunteers' desire to share with others.

"People who are interested in the sport and want to get into it - this is an opportunity for them. Any volunteer who can teach them how to play... that's really good coz then more people can get into the sport"

- Volunteer

The project has sparked wider involvement in sports; for example, a football club was set up in response to some young people feeling "demotivated" by sport in school because they were less able than their peers and were getting bullied.

Participants' involvement in sport

Throughout the observed session more and more young people arrived to join in and the teacher and volunteers were asked several times - "can you take another?" Participants therefore have a positive attitude to participating in physical activity, which is linked to this sports club that would not have existed without IF. Participants' palpable sense of joy was perhaps best articulated by the young volunteer who said:

"When people come here they're all smiley and get on well"

- Volunteer

Becca believes one of the highlights of the project has been shifting disabled volunteers' self-perceptions from a "can't do" to a "can do" mindset and she says participants are hungry for opportunities to participate. This was demonstrated when the football club was launched: "They haven't had a chance to join clubs and now they have that. It's grown so much, we had 10 or 11 on the first (football) session and that's amazing- you don't expect that many the first time."

"Sport isn't just for people who can stand up or run, people who are in a wheelchair can do it too"

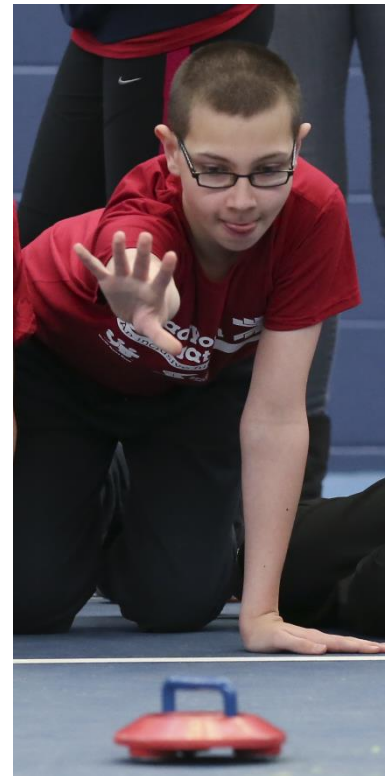
- Volunteer

On the other hand, Becca emphasises it is not always possible to involve everyone and you have to accept that "not everyone's going to want to do it." She feels it is important not to over-pressure volunteers into participation: "as you saw today, one of the volunteer didn't want to do it. You can't be like... 'come on!' - you've just got to let them do it"

Challenging perceptions of and attitudes towards young disabled people and valuing inclusive practice

The volunteers and participants involved in the curling club have moderate learning difficulties and some have other needs, including mobility difficulties and autism. The wide variation in participants' ability levels - both cognitive and physical - was evident throughout the session and extremely well adapted to. Young people with varying needs supported each other by cheering each other on and providing encouragement. One participant who is non-verbal came in to join in with the session and, despite the fact that he apparently "doesn't engage in anything", took part with great enthusiasm. According to Becca, he has "come out of his shell". Inclusivity has therefore become embedded in the curling club's practice, though the fact that the club takes place in a special school may already make it favourable environment.

Able-bodied volunteers have become more aware of inclusivity and as the volunteer co-ordinator explained, are "no longer fazed by disability". Some volunteers have now also opted to attend courses on disability and inclusivity to



A volunteer practices his curling

develop their understanding of inclusive practice.

“Before I started I did not know if I could do inclusivity but now I know how to... I now see different abilities not just able and disabled”

- Volunteer Mentor

Becca highlights an overturning of the assumption that it is the able-bodied who have to lead activities for those with disabilities. Giving disabled young people a chance to organise and lead activities has shifted perceptions of what disabled young people can do. Furthermore, it is not only able-bodied volunteers whose engagement with inclusivity has developed. Disabled volunteers are also enthusiastic about making it possible for everyone to participate. One young volunteer says: *“Helping out for people who can’t move as well as others: that’s good because they can play like ‘normal’ people. I reckon it makes a difference to some people because some people who can’t move as well as others still want to try out sports.”*



Other Benefits

The volunteer mentor has secured a placement at Goldman Sachs for his second year at university and believes this is partly as a result of his volunteering experience since it provided him with numerous examples at interview. Participation may therefore be yielding employability benefits for some volunteers. This may partly be a result of Becca’s proactive efforts to identify and promote training opportunities. Younger volunteers’ enhanced confidence may also have wider benefits since both teacher and co-ordinator described big changes in this area.

“They learn leadership, they’re learning how to talk to others, they’re being really encouraging like you saw- that was really nice. They’re being a lot more sociable.”

- Volunteer Co-ordinator

The Bath IF project has put considerable emphasis on intergenerational work, both through the volunteer mentor role and through inclusive events. For example, young volunteers have taught inclusive sports to event attendees three times their age. Such intergenerational mixing has given the disabled young volunteers even more confidence to work with different types of people.

Key success factors in Bath

- **Partnership and networks:** The project has benefited greatly from partnership, whether with the university, local council or schools. These have provided many opportunities, as well as networks of volunteers and participants.
- **Flexibility and tailoring:** The programme is not standardised and the volunteer co-ordinator emphasised the importance of tailoring projects to individuals and giving them choice. *“We try to make it as easy as possible to get involved... the Three Ways School kids don’t have transport so we do clubs in their schools.”*
- **Duration:** One volunteer emphasised the importance of long running projects where you can build relationships, emphasising that this was better than one-off events.
- **Use of social media:** Twitter and Facebook have allowed Becca and Paula, the social media intern, to promote activities and celebrate the project’s achievements. Relationships with schools and local organisations have been built through social media, volunteers recruited, and success shared with the wider community.

Key challenges in Bath

- **Length of engagement:** Becca noted that it takes a while to recruit volunteers and participants and to build relationships. The length of engagement is crucial. The project therefore needs to be long-term and 18 months is too short in her view.
- **Monitoring multiple activities:** Because so much is going on in the region it can sometimes be tricky to keep so many things going on in parallel - but this is also one of the project’s strengths.
- **Level of challenge:** One of the volunteers, who has an autistic spectrum disorder, said that he wouldn't change anything, except perhaps increasing the distance in curling.

Manchester Inclusive Futures

Manchester's Inclusive Futures Volunteer co-ordinator, Nick, holds a degree in Sports Science and has also taken part in sports volunteering. As he explains: *"I am grateful for what volunteering did for me in my career, and I want to inspire that in young people...let them know that through volunteering in sport, they can acquire the skills, the communication skills and social skills, that might help them in their future."*

Nick is also employed by Manchester City Council's Access Sport Programme, which delivers Sport England's "Ignite" programme. This provides synergies between programmes and widens the offer for young disabled people.

The volunteers in Manchester have a range of learning difficulties (moderate to severe), and some have complex overlapping needs, such as dyslexia with dyspraxia and autism. They do not have physical disabilities.



The volunteer co-ordinator

The Squash Tournament

This case study took place on the first day of the National Squash Tournament. Although the fifteen disabled volunteers involved in the Manchester IF programme are a balanced mix of male and female, six out of the seven involved on the day of the case study were male.

Young volunteers come from two local special schools and are aged between fifteen and eighteen. Nick has been working with them since September 2014; prior to that, the young disabled people had not volunteered before. As well as the young disabled people, Nick has recruited older volunteers through partnerships with Manchester University and Manchester Metropolitan University, and through the online volunteering portal run by the Volunteer Sports Bureau.



Three volunteers overseeing the National Squash Tournament

At the National Squash tournament, young volunteers provided support by working with local primary children on sporting activities, chaperoning the athletes, carrying out court maintenance, checking accreditation, and working with the Volunteer Sports Bureau's adult volunteers. More generally, the roles that volunteers have taken over the course of the year have varied. For example, during the Sainsbury's School Games there were hundreds of volunteers from all over the country, allowing IF volunteers to work and learn alongside other volunteers. During the Manchester Primary School Disability Swim Gala, IF volunteers were the only ones at the event and so took on the roles of "Team Leaders".

Attitudes to and participation in volunteering

Young disabled people have generally been recruited from local special schools, which have responded enthusiastically since there is no other offer like IF in the area. Nick has built up strong relationships with staff from these schools. For the most part, schools have welcomed the opportunity to involve their pupils in volunteering, particularly since Nick emphasises the overlaps between the IF offer and ASDAN qualifications, Duke of Edinburgh awards, and other leadership programmes.

Non-disabled volunteers have been approached through colleges and in contrast to the co-ordinator's expectations, this has proved more challenging; whilst there was initial enthusiasm during the regional training camp in November, enthusiasm has dropped since then. Nick believes this is due to a lack of information being passed on from teachers to young people.

Volunteers have a very positive attitude towards volunteering saying it makes them feel more confident and happy about helping. This was demonstrated during the squash tournament with volunteers confidently displaying their leadership, particularly around primary school participants.

One volunteer, who suffers from mild autism and has other learning needs, has such a positive attitude towards volunteering that he is hoping to join the IF team in the future so that he can become even more involved in volunteering and sport. He explains that *“it’s just a once in a lifetime experience, and it’s not an opportunity I’d want to turn down, because you get to help people, and that’s what I’m good at.”* He suggests it is the sense that he is making a difference that inspires him to do more. He expects to keep volunteering for as long as he can, particularly given that the availability of further training means he can develop his skills, experience and independence.

“Because they can see the smiles on other people’s faces, it makes them feel as if they are doing something good. And the communities and organisations, they appreciate what they young people are doing too.”

- Volunteer Co-ordinator

The special schoolteacher accompanying the young volunteers also commented on personal skills, saying that the programme had helped boost volunteers’ confidence and given them an experience that they would not otherwise get. She said that these pupils were not ones that were particularly academic, and that volunteering gave them a chance to shine outside the school environment. Volunteers said they enjoyed the opportunity volunteering gave them to socialise with other people.

Nick believes that his young volunteers will continue to volunteer after Inclusive Futures because they have got so much out of it, in terms of skills, confidence and experience, and because they enjoy helping so much. The young volunteers feel valued and so they want to keep volunteering. Nick says that he does not believe that the young volunteers would be volunteering without the support of Inclusive Futures. Although there are other volunteering organisations in Manchester, none really cater for disabled young people and their needs.



The young volunteers being briefed on their responsibilities before the children arrive.

Connecting young people to the local community and inspiring them through the 2012 Olympic legacy. Before volunteering, many of the IF volunteers felt that they could not contribute as much because of their disabilities. Through volunteering, the young people are now much more positive about the difference they can make and feel an increased connection to the community, as Nick explains: *“For the young kids themselves, they feel as if they are giving something back to the community as well, when they might not have had an opportunity to do so before”.*

The Manchester Primary School Disability Swim Gala is one example of when young volunteers contributed back to the local community through the support they provided. Nick says, *“the kids are really passionate about helping other people – volunteering is a way they can help”.* Another community event supported by IF volunteers was the Sainsbury’s School Games, which was an inclusive sports tournament modelled on the Olympics. For many young volunteers, the School Games was their first large-scale sports event, where they could represent their local community and work with a network of volunteers and participants from all over the country.

Alongside the School Games, the young volunteers have also connected with the 2012 Olympic legacy at their Regional Training Camp. This was attended by 2012 Paralympic athlete Matt Walker, who inspired the young volunteers by sharing stories of his own sporting journey. Nick elaborates on how Matt inspired the young people: *“His speech at the regional training camp showed the volunteers that, in life, not everything is easy, you have to face hurdles and challenges to achieve your goals...now he [Matt] can carry on the legacy of 2012 by showing young people that if you are passionate and willing to work hard to achieve your goals, then it can be done.”*

Attitudes to and participation in physical activity and sport

Volunteers are taking part in weekly physical activities in wide range of sports including squash, wheelchair basketball, outdoor water sports, Health-Fit sessions, canoeing, skiing, squash, and BMX. Connections with Access Sport colleagues have provided opportunities for participation in sports that would not otherwise be available. Through high-level sports events, like the National Squash Championship, and through volunteering at community sport events, young volunteers are also inspired to participate in physical activities. For example, one IF volunteer explained that he had increased his sporting activity by taking part in basketball and table tennis. He is now joining a gym so he can do more exercise:

“I like the sports side of things. It means that you’re getting active, you’re getting involved, you’re helping other people.”

- Volunteer

Challenging perceptions of and attitudes towards young disabled people and valuing inclusive practice. Some settings were previously reluctant to work with young disabled people because they lacked the skills or resources. Nick believes that their attitude has now changed because they have learned that disabled young people’s needs are not as different to non-disabled people as they might have thought. Inclusive practice has therefore been promoted amongst providers.

“It’s inspirational [for providers and organisations] to see young disabled people taking part in their project because I think it just boosts everyone’s morale and creates a greater team cohesion.”

- Volunteer co-ordinator

Young volunteers have learnt about inclusivity through training courses and practical volunteering experience. As part of the Regional Training Camp, young volunteers learnt how to adapt sports to make them inclusive. There have also been courses on deaf awareness and accessible sports. Disability awareness, sports leadership courses, and coaching are also planned. One volunteer explained he has learnt more about differences between people and that he now finds it easier to identify different people’s needs so he can adapt things to suit them.

“If you see a child on the bench, you’re not just going to leave them there. Maybe higher up in mainstream, they might leave them there, because they can’t tell if the child is special or not. But here, we know to ask them why they don’t want to join in, and then we’ll create an event that’s easier for them.”

- Volunteer

Volunteers have engaged deeply with what they have learned about inclusivity, for example one young volunteer explained how to make sports more accessible by making the pitch smaller or reducing the number of players. Volunteering has made this young person think more about what other people are like, making him realise that there are other people worse off than him whom he can help. This improvement in self-perception, and the chance to take on responsibility and be creative to include others, has helped empower the young volunteers so that they are more positive about disability and not see it as a barrier.

Other benefits

Although two volunteers felt that the programme had not changed them, three others reported it had impacted positively on them, by giving them new skills, providing them with new opportunities, and allowing them to make a difference to their community. One argued that travelling to new places had expanded his horizons and shown him what things are like beyond Manchester. Another young volunteer said that he had recently secured a part-time community job working with children doing drama activities, mentioning that he really enjoyed working with children, and had learnt how to work with them through IF.

Key success factors in Manchester

- **Flexibility:** Volunteer co-ordinators have the freedom to respond to local need and set things up as they see fit. As Nick explained, *“The Youth Sport Trust never said this is how you do it, this is how we want you to do it. They have given us the creative element so we can inspire the young kids.”*
- **A focus on young disabled people:** Whilst other organisations in the region might welcome young disabled people, it is not a core part of their work. The Inclusive Futures programme is therefore unique.
- **A wider community:** Because the programme is nationwide, young volunteers feel part of something bigger, which gives them a sense of belonging and community.
- **The availability of training:** This ensures young people feel committed to the programme since it will be rewarded through training and qualifications.
- **Support from schools:** Support staff from the special schools have accompanied young volunteers to events in order to ensure opportunities fully cater for disabled volunteers’ specific needs. Their buy in is crucial, as is effective communication between the co-ordinator, schools, and young volunteers.

Key challenges in Manchester

- **Buy in from some schools:** Although the National Camp is an important opportunity, not all the schools and colleges have responded positively. Nick was disappointed not to receive a more positive response from the colleges. They appear too busy to take part in IF and communicate with him.
- **Engaging more volunteers:** This is a challenge particularly with non-disabled young people. Although they were keen at the start, in some cases, interest later dropped, perhaps because of communication breakdowns with teachers at the colleges. The online volunteering portal is one way around this but teachers’ support remains an important enabler.
- **Lack of volunteering opportunities:** Although there is a large bank of volunteers, they are not able to take part as regularly as Nick would like due to a shortage of volunteering opportunities.
- **Suitability of opportunities:** Not every volunteering opportunity has been suitable for the disabled young people and they were not always used in the best way possible. This has mainly happened at larger events, where volunteer managers were not fully aware of the young disabled people’s needs.

Swansea Inclusive Futures

Inclusive Futures in Swansea launched two months later than in the other regions, with Darren, the volunteer coordinator (VC), taking on his role in July 2014. In contrast to some of the other regions, the VC has focused on recruiting a smaller number of more committed volunteers, who are able to volunteer regularly and help spread inclusive practice in their own schools and sports clubs. This is because the VC believes that it will take a number of years for the legacy of Inclusive Futures to be established, and so he is keen to ensure that the project has strong foundations and does good quality work.

At the time of the case study, there were 60 young people signed up to Inclusive Futures in Swansea, 30 of whom were active and regular volunteers. The VC recruited these volunteers through various pathways, such as the Swansea regional camp, local disability charities, and at the Virgin Media European Athletics Championship. His volunteers are a mix of ages, genders and abilities.

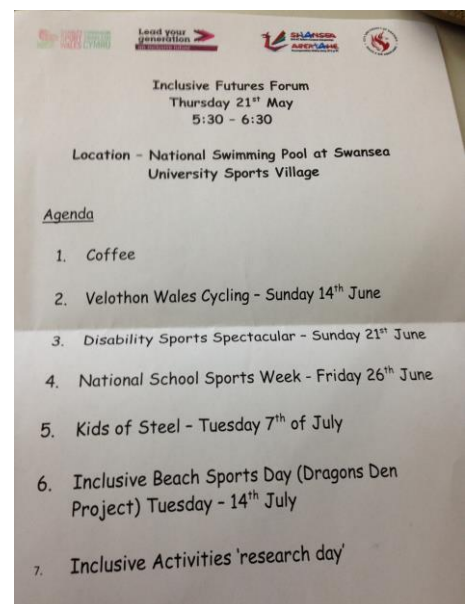
Unique features of Swansea IF

The VC has made an effort to engage with volunteers and participants with learning difficulties. He has done this by setting up a dedicated peer support and mentor programme (called “Roar – roaring with pride”) for young people with learning difficulties from a local secondary school. He has also established connections with local Young Ambassadors (from another Youth Sport Trust programme). By training and engaging Young Ambassadors in inclusive sports provision, the VC hopes to extend the impact of IF in Swansea. Also unique to Swansea IF are the contributions of local disabled athletes (aged 21-30), who act as volunteer mentors, provide training and coaching in their specialist sports, and give extra support to volunteers and the VC. Some of these mentors are based outside of Swansea, which helps extend the reach of the programme.

Volunteer Forum

This case study focuses on the Swansea Volunteer Forum. This is a monthly event unique to Swansea Inclusive Futures. It is organised by the VC and attended by a core group of volunteers and volunteer mentors. The VC decided to run a Volunteer Forum as a way to give volunteers a chance to engage with and shape the Inclusive Futures programme in Swansea.

In May, the forum took place at Swansea University Sports Centre, with four volunteers and four volunteer mentors present. The VC explained that between 10 and 12 young people typically attend, and that the forum has been kept small to allow more interaction and focused discussion to take place between attendees. Attendees were both disabled and non-disabled, and were mixed in terms of gender and age. The Forum was relaxed and informal, and it was clear that the young people were comfortable and able to share their ideas with each other and the VC.



The agenda for the Volunteer Forum, organised by one of the volunteer mentors

Attitudes to and participation in volunteering

All focus group participants had been volunteering before IF, but not on inclusive sports-related projects, as these are not currently provided by Swansea Council. All the volunteers and mentors present demonstrated a positive attitude to volunteering and had participated regularly. Volunteers and mentors reported that they volunteer because they want to spread knowledge and help people; get self-satisfaction from helping; are developing their social and communication skills; like getting out more and socialising with other young people; enjoy being in a group and working together.

“Before I was on this project, I was always in the house...I was an outsider, introverted...but since being on this project, I’ve been getting out, talking to others, socialising...this project has helped me achieve things”.

Similarly, one disabled young leader who has been volunteering in his own school said:

“I do it out of enjoyment...my main volunteering has been on “Roaring with Pride”. I do that as often as I can. We’ve been doing things like sitting volleyball, goalball. Then we also do the other side of it, like getting them to lead their own sessions, and not just doing practical but also bringing in the theory”

Connecting young people to the local community

The volunteers reported that the local community generally has a good attitude to disability but does not really know about accessibility and inclusivity. This is where IF helps, by teaching people how to make a difference. As one volunteer mentor said, IF is about *“teaching people empathy instead of sympathy.”* IF has also connected to the community through their support for events taking place in Swansea, like the IP Athletics European Championships and TATA Kids of Steel. The volunteers reported enjoying running local events, such as sessions in schools to promote sport and healthy activities, noting that the pupils they work with have developed social and communication skills and learnt to better support each other. One mentor felt welcomed by the local community: *“Since being to events in Swansea, I have noticed that the community itself is a very friendly and accepting community”.* Other local authorities in Wales want to replicate the IF programme in their area, which suggests there is more scope and appetite for the programme.

Connecting young people to a national network of volunteers

Volunteers feel part of a national network of volunteers, particularly since attending the IF national camp: *“Our team’s pretty close...but we made a lot of connections in Loughborough,”* said one young leader. Some commented that they had not realised how big Inclusive Futures was until attending the camp, suggesting that they had identified principally with their local organisation prior to the camp. Outside of Inclusive Futures, working with Virgin Media volunteers has helped them feel part of a wider volunteering movement.



Attendees at the Volunteer Forum discuss upcoming sports events and their volunteering ideas

“We felt like quite a small group, before we went to the national camp...but we got involved with other people [there], which made it a lot bigger than we thought it was”. - Volunteer

Inspiring young people through the 2012 legacy

The VC, volunteers and volunteer mentors stated that they were not really inspired by the 2012 Games; instead, one mentor said *“I’m not personally inspired by the Games to do the work I do... I’m inspired by other things, like helping people and doing good”.* The four volunteer mentors said it was unclear what the Olympic legacy actually was and what was meant to be achieved, arguing that sporting National Governing Bodies (NGBs) can be prohibitive with regards to administration and bureaucracy. One mentor expanded: *“you might get a 14-year-old who likes to play wheelchair rugby, but because they’re not 16, they can’t play in our league... and for some people, when they find out there’s no competitive element, then they don’t want to play”.* They also felt that many (but not all) NGBs were not

necessarily inclusive in their work and did not provide an integrated service, which they perceived as limiting the lasting impact of IF events.

Attendees felt that the Olympics had inspired those who were already involved in sports, but had not yet inspired those who were not already taking part. However, it is clear that mentors and volunteers felt they were having some impact on participants: *“It’s the small victories, like if one person comes up to you after a session and asks you what clubs they can go to...it may not be ten people but at least it’s one person who you’ve helped find a place to go,”* said one young leader.

Attitudes to and participation in physical activity and sport

The volunteers had been involved in many events, including inclusive multi-sports events; the IF sports launch event; weekly sports sessions with the Roar group; sitting volleyball and goalball sessions; inclusion sports days at the local college. The volunteers are particularly keen on sport, whilst the mentors (who are athletes) provide access to more expertise and higher quality sport.

“I like passing on my knowledge, trying to expand the number of people who can help other people, because the more you spread knowledge, the better it gets round and the more it can help people.”

- Mentor

The volunteers did not think that they were necessarily more physically active as a result of IF, because they had positive attitudes to sport and participated regularly prior to taking part in IF. The volunteers did, however, think that the pupil participants at their sports groups had benefited through their role-modelling of positive attitudes to sport. For example, one young leader said of the young participants at Roar: *“they’ve now got a really good, positive attitude towards it [sport]. It’s not something that they have to do, it’s something that they want to do...they’ve not had the opportunities in the past. But now, they all go to PE, at least once or twice a week...they don’t just stand in the corner and try and get out of it, now they try and get involved with everyone else.”*

Two volunteers who worked with a local college noted that it was difficult working with older teenagers sometimes, particularly on the leadership and theoretical side of sport: *“as soon as we say let’s go to the hall [to play sports], they’re running. But in the classroom, they’re just mute... but they get surprised by the sports we suggest to them, because they’ve just never done it before.”* They were still positive about the challenges they were facing, however: *“I don’t give up,”* said one young leader.

Challenging perceptions of and attitudes towards young disabled people and valuing inclusive practice

The volunteers were able to talk confidently about positive attitudes towards disabled people and about how to make events and activities inclusive. The VC reported that volunteers are now confident enough to challenge sports coaches and other managers when their practice is not inclusive. Similarly, by organising inclusive wheelchair basketball events at a local leisure centre, the volunteers have encouraged the management there to value inclusive practice. As a result of this influence, the leisure centre is independently setting up more inclusive clubs in the facility.

The local water-sports centre has been influenced too, and will be holding an inclusive beach sports festival through IF. Volunteers are also trying to make their participants become more positive about their attitudes to their own disabilities: *“the potential is there...we’re trying to bring that ability out so that they [the participants] can recognise it,”* said the VC. Although it takes a while to make change happen, both disabled and non-disabled volunteers were positive that they were making a difference to other people’s perceptions about disability. *“We’re doing it to learn, and we are learning,”* concluded one mentor.

Key success factors in Swansea

- **Volunteer mentors:** Using volunteer mentors to provide support and expertise to the VC and volunteers; recruiting these from outside Swansea to give the programme a wider reach
- **Tailored approach:** Catering for what is needed in the area and making a wide range of sports and activities inclusive
- **Targeting specific groups:** Reaching out to groups for whom provision had not previously been available
- **High-quality team:** Recruiting a dedicated, high-quality cohort of volunteers and volunteers

Key challenges in Swansea

- **Recruitment targets:** Recruiting 125 volunteers is challenging, especially as the recruitment target is the same regardless of the size and spread of the city
- **Cross-region partnerships:** Desire for more opportunities to work together with other regions and learn from them
- **High-quality volunteering opportunities:** Not all cities have young people taking part regularly in high-quality volunteering opportunities
- **Transport:** Difficulties around accessing and transporting suitable equipment for inclusive sports
- **Coordination:** Difficulties coordinating busy schedules of volunteers, schools, coaches, and participants
- **Changing mind-sets:** Changing the mind-set of older disabled pupils, who have had negative experiences of sport
- **National governing bodies:** Persuading national governing bodies to become more involved in inclusive sport