



My Sport, My Voice!

Final Independent Evaluation Report June 2016

Skyblue Research Ltd



My Sport, My Voice! Interim Report

My Sport, My Voice! is a programme run by the UK Sports Association for People with Learning Disability (UKSA) supported by Spirit of 2012. Its stated aim is to *“raise the profile of the UK’s elite athletes with learning disability by providing a platform to showcase their sporting achievements and inspire others to succeed.”*¹

Key Points

- The My Sport, My Voice! Programme has identified and enabled athletes to access a number of opportunities to raise their profile and inspire others and to participate in events which give the general public a chance to have their perceptions challenged and their awareness raised. More specifically, they have the opportunity to use the workshops to target community leaders and very directly inspire and catalyse change in the organisations those people represent.
- The Programme has met its target for Athlete engagement and very nearly done so for its target for workshop engagement.
- The Ambassadors self-report enhancement to their personal confidence and skills development at a rate exceeding the Programme’s targets.
- The Programme has vastly exceeded its targets in terms of public exposure, reaching almost 10 million readers as at February 2016 (compared with a target of 1.5 million) along with local radio exposure. The bulk of this has been achieved through one article about Martina Barber in the Daily Mail (readership 5.2 million) and another about Scott Quin in the Daily Record (readership 3.8 million).
- Athletes are able to describe different skills they have developed through the Programme, with self-presentation and organisation particularly commonly identified skills. These areas tie in strongly with the ways in which Athletes hoped to develop over the Programme.
- Changes to local leaders’ attitudes have been more nuanced than seismic – the participants that have attended were already positive about people with learning disability. There is however substantial evidence that the workshops have improved their capability to engage with that community, and also signs that they increasingly view that community as one it would be beneficial for them to engage with.
- Words used by local leaders to describe people with learning disability before the event are indicative of a nice group who maybe don’t get the chances they should from society, but after the event they describe a talented and effective group with a major contribution to make.

¹ <http://www.uksportsassociation.org/mysportmyvoice/>

Conclusions

This Programme has engaged with three different audience groups and delivered the following outcomes:

- **Athletes**

Athletes report increases to their skills, particularly around their public speaking and communication capabilities.

Athletes also report growing confidence and life satisfaction, along with resilience in their lives outside sport.

Athletes from the Programme have moved into a mix of paid and unpaid employment in addition to the wider skills and well-being outcomes achieved, with an example being Dan Pepper becoming an advisory group member for the UKSA.

- **Workshop Attendees**

Workshop attendees have enjoyed a positive experience and have been given the tools and inspiration to begin looking at ways to 'Change 1 Thing'² within their organisations.

Changes in their attitudes and personal behaviours have been variable; associated with high levels of positivity before they first engaged with the Programme. Evidence indicates that workshop participants have become “Differently Positive” as a result of attendance, with their existing high levels of positivity about people with learning disability increasingly focusing on the skills and values they can bring.

Half of attendees are either already implementing, starting to implement, or planning implementation of change as a result of workshop attendance.

- **The General Public**

Public awareness of Learning Disability and of these athletes has been raised through a highly effective media campaign.

Organisers of community visits describe the athletes as 'Inspirational', 'Hugely positive', and 'Something a bit different'.

² A pledge made at workshops.

Across three key themes of delivery, the following activity and outcomes have been identified:

Promote	Educate	Enable
Workshop delivery completed with seven workshops delivered and an eighth delivered via webinar. Metrics around readership of articles exceeded with over 9.8 million readers achieved against a target of 1.5 million.	61% of athletes³ report that there has been a positive change in the perception of others compared to before the programme (against a target over the whole programme duration of 80%). Of the 39% that did not report such an increase, over half rated this at the maximum 10 out of 10 in their first interview. 90% of athletes report an increase in their self-confidence (attitude to themselves) compared with pre-programme (against a target over the whole programme duration of 80%). Local leaders attending workshops increasingly describe people with learning disability as 'valuable' and 'skilled'.	Athletes completing the programme feel more confident and able to speak out. 100% of athletes report this against a target of 80%. 97% of athletes report that they have developed new skills through the programme (target 80%).

³ 11 out of 18 to complete multiple self-assessment questionnaires across the Programme gave a higher result for the level of respect they perceived from people who don't know them in their final questionnaire than they did in their first. Of the remaining 7, 4 reported this at '10 out of 10' at the start of the Programme.

Recommendations

With a future bid for continuation funding from Spirit of 2012 in mind, Skyblue would suggest that the following approaches be taken under consideration:

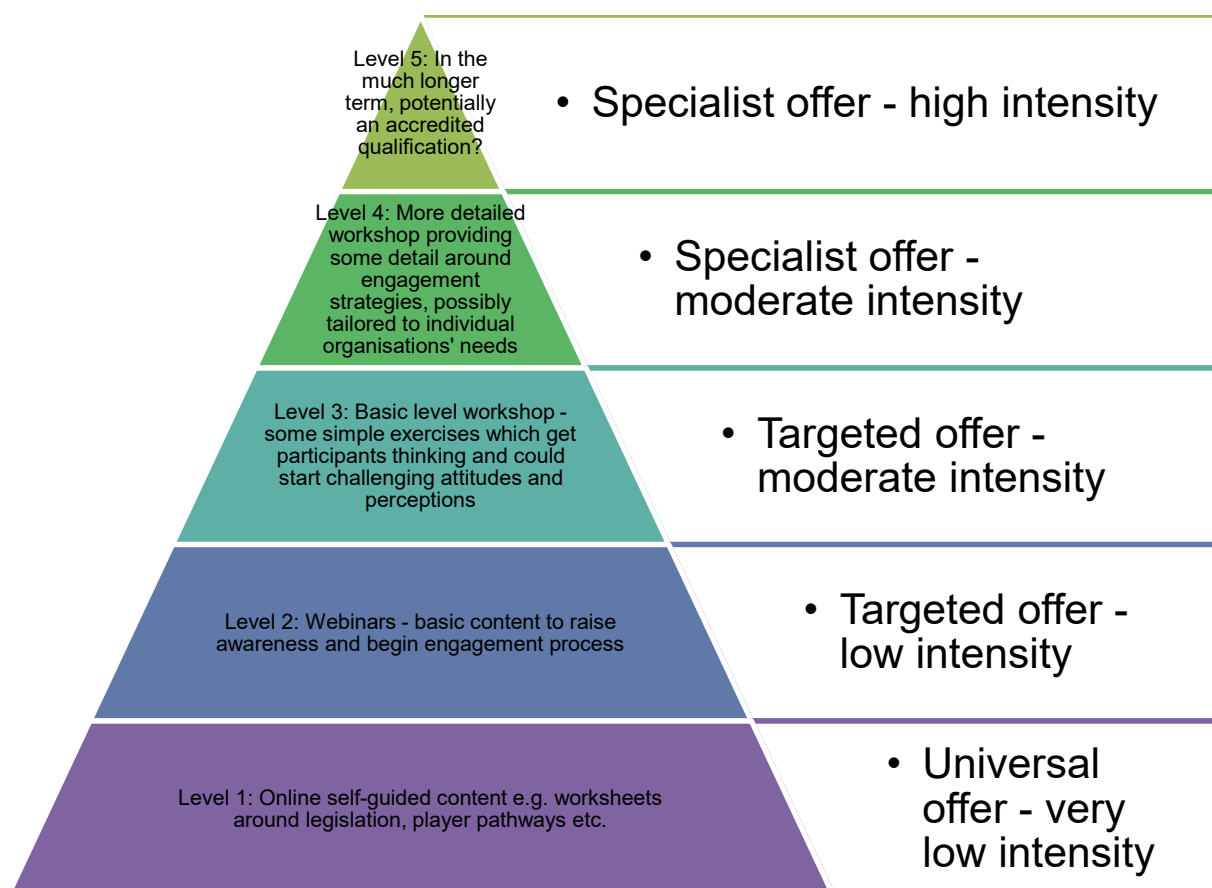
1: A three-tier Athlete system

An ambition of the Programme in the longer term is for the Athlete Reps to become Athlete Ambassadors in the future. Likewise there are Athlete Ambassadors who are keen, having developed (or enhanced existing skills) around their public speaking and ability to educate, to move on into coaching or public speaking and advocacy roles.

We would recommend a review of the existing Athlete personnel, with some Athlete Reps 'promoted' to the role of Ambassador, and some Athlete Ambassadors moved into a new mentoring role which does not prioritise public-facing delivery but instead focuses on supporting the development of the Ambassadors and Athlete Reps.

2: Content development

Feedback from workshop participants suggests that while quality of delivery is extremely high, to maximise outcomes there may be value in tailoring content more to different levels of participant. We would recommend developing future workshops in the context of an engagement pathway which enables a broader spectrum of individuals to be engaged with relatively low levels of resourcing, while also maximising the value gained by already-experienced and positive individuals. A potential model is outlined below:



This pyramid requires three further activities from the team:

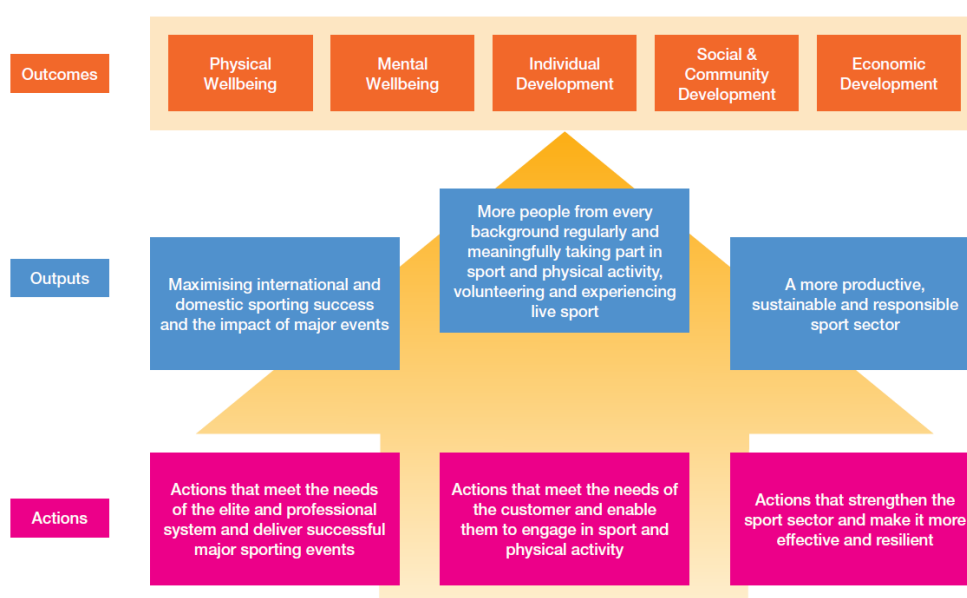
1. **Development of new materials:** At the very least at Levels 1 and 4 of this pyramid, further materials would need developing – potentially customised workshop design as well as some generic online support content.
2. **Commitment of resource to supporting this pipeline:** For this pipeline to be effective, it will require UKSA staff to be able to signpost prospective entrants to the appropriate level. This might in itself require the development of a short diagnostic tool to assess participants' level of need and interest to ensure that they are able to maximise the value they take from input (NB this will happen from Level 2 upwards).
3. **Tapping into existing contacts:** 2015-16 Engage! Workshop attendees are the first prospective audience for a future development at Level 4 in the pyramid and should be targeted when, and if, such content is made available.

Conscious that resources are likely to be increasingly limited in 2016-17, we would recommend that if necessary UKSA targets at most 1 or 2 levels of this pyramid for development this year. Selection of these levels would depend on whether it was more important to UKSA to focus on breadth of engagement (which would suggest a focus at Levels 1 and 2) or depth of engagement (focus on Levels 3 and 4).

3: Look wider for funding

Skyblue notes that at present the continuation funding bid to Spirit of 2012 proposes that Spirit will remain the sole funders of the Programme. We would recommend that UKSA looks at other potential additional sources of funding which would enable the sustaining and ideally expansion of the existing offer and resource. We note that the new government Sporting Future Strategy⁴ framework focuses increasingly on the outcomes that result from sporting participation and success, and in particular believe that strands around ‘a more productive, sustainable and responsible sport sector’ and outcomes associated with individual development and social & community development (see below) are highly relevant to the My Sport, My Voice Programme. It is as such increasingly likely that sources such as Sport England will have funding streams which align with the Programme’s aims. Similarly, organisations such as People’s Postcode Lottery target impacts around social value and community development which could align to the intentions of My Sport, My Voice.

The Framework for a new Sport Strategy



⁴ <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/sporting-future-a-new-strategy-for-an-active-nation>

Introduction

My Sport, My Voice! is a programme run by the UK Sports Association for People with Learning Disability (UKSA) supported by Spirit of 2012. Its stated aim is to “raise the profile of the UK’s elite athletes with learning disability by providing a platform to showcase their sporting achievements and inspire others to succeed.”⁵

Thirteen high performance athletes from a range of sports (athletics, cricket, football, swimming, table tennis, and tennis are all represented) have been selected as Athlete Ambassadors. They have received and continue to receive support and training from the UKSA and as part of the programme take part in a range of engagement activities to raise awareness of elite athletes with learning disability; these have included taking part in National Paralympic Day, presenting at awards ceremonies and attending events and meetings at the House of Lords. Ambassadors also take a lead role in the delivery of workshops to ‘Community Leaders’ – people drawn from sporting, disability, and business organisations – to raise awareness, change attitudes, and challenge them to “Change 1 Thing” about their practices to make them more accessible to people with learning disability. In this work, the Ambassadors are supported by 11 Athlete Reps, athletes who are described as ‘rising stars’ and seen as potential Ambassadors of the future.

The Scale of the Challenge

Activity funded by Spirit of 2012 has been designed to change perceptions and attitudes towards disability in the UK. In total, 30 community leaders that have taken part in 'Engage!' workshops as part of My Sport, My Voice! were surveyed between one and six months after their workshop experience. These leaders gave their views as to the levels of prejudice in the UK around disability and the scope for disabled people to lead as full a life as non-disabled people⁶:

- **47% of respondents** thought that there was a lot of prejudice in Britain against disabled people
- **A further 47%** thought there was a little prejudice
- **Just 7%** believed that there was 'hardly any' prejudice.
- **23% of respondents** thought that disabled people could lead as full a life as non-disabled people all of the time.
- **63%** thought they could do so most of the time.
- **The remaining 13%** thought that they could do so at least some of the time.

⁵ <http://www.uksportsassociation.org/mysportmyvoice/>

⁶ All % are rounded up and may not add up to 100%

My Sport, My Voice! Activity

Following their recruitment, videos were produced of Ambassadors and Athlete Reps describing their motivations and some of their key achievements. Ten of the 13 Ambassadors took part in a media training workshop in August which was designed to give them greater confidence and capability to engage with the media, particularly in the context of interviews. All Ambassadors have had 1:1 life skills coaching to support them in balancing the demands of competition with their My Sport, My Voice! role.

Between April and November 2015 My Sport, My Voice! Ambassadors were involved in 20 community visits across a range of audiences, including:

- INAS Sports Awards, Sheffield
- Learning Disability Today Conference, Sheffield
- 'Be Part of It' sports event, Edinburgh Scottish Disability Sport
- National Learning Disability and Autism Awards, ICC Birmingham
- Schools Day, The Oval Cricket Club
- Association of Colleges Sport Conference, Ricoh Arena, Coventry
- Jack Petchey Foundation Table Tennis England
- Inclusive Beach Sports Day
- Global Action to Combat Negative Attitudes to Intellectual Disability, UCL
- Kaleidoscope Investments
- National Paralympic Day
- Newdigate Cricket Club Summer Cricket Camp
- Youth Sport Trust Talent Inspiration Programme, Manchester
- Kidz Scotland Exhibition
- Speaking session at North Hertfordshire College
- Keeping the Spirit Alive event, House of Lords
- Disability Northern Ireland event "Teenage Kicks"
- Law in Sports Conference
- Macintyre Great Interactions
- In addition, Jonny Gale (Athlete Ambassadors) has attended a further event at the House of Commons as keynote speaker for the After Adoption charity.

In total, these events have been attended by approximately **38,000 people** including school teachers and pupils, representatives of charitable organisations, colleges, and businesses, and members of the public both with and without learning disability. A twenty-first event will take place before the end of June 2016, with the Chief Executive of UKSA and one of the Athlete Ambassadors delivering keynote speeches at the Disability Sport Conference taking place in Coventry on 28th June.

The Programme has also organised six workshops with community leaders in Glasgow, London, Burnley, Loughborough, Manchester and Swansea, and a seventh tailored workshop with staff of the Tennis Foundation. Additionally a webinar was organised with the intention of engaging with participants in Northern Ireland, though open to participants from other home nations as well. This was ultimately accessed by 21 individuals from Northern Ireland, the wider UK, and internationally. All of these workshops had significant input from the Athlete Ambassadors supported by the Athlete Reps, and have collectively been attended by 144 people who, in those workshops, were invited to make a pledge to 'Change 1 Thing' about their organisation's approach to make it more accessible to people with learning disability. This has been followed up after the workshops with personalised postcards sent out to every participant that made the pledge.

In all of this the programme has supported Ambassadors in engaging with the media, and as at June 2016, 74 articles had been produced by local and national disability organisations, local newspapers, social media, sports governing bodies and UKSA partners which promoted the programme and / or the people taking part in it⁷. These have engaged a readership estimated at just under 10 million.

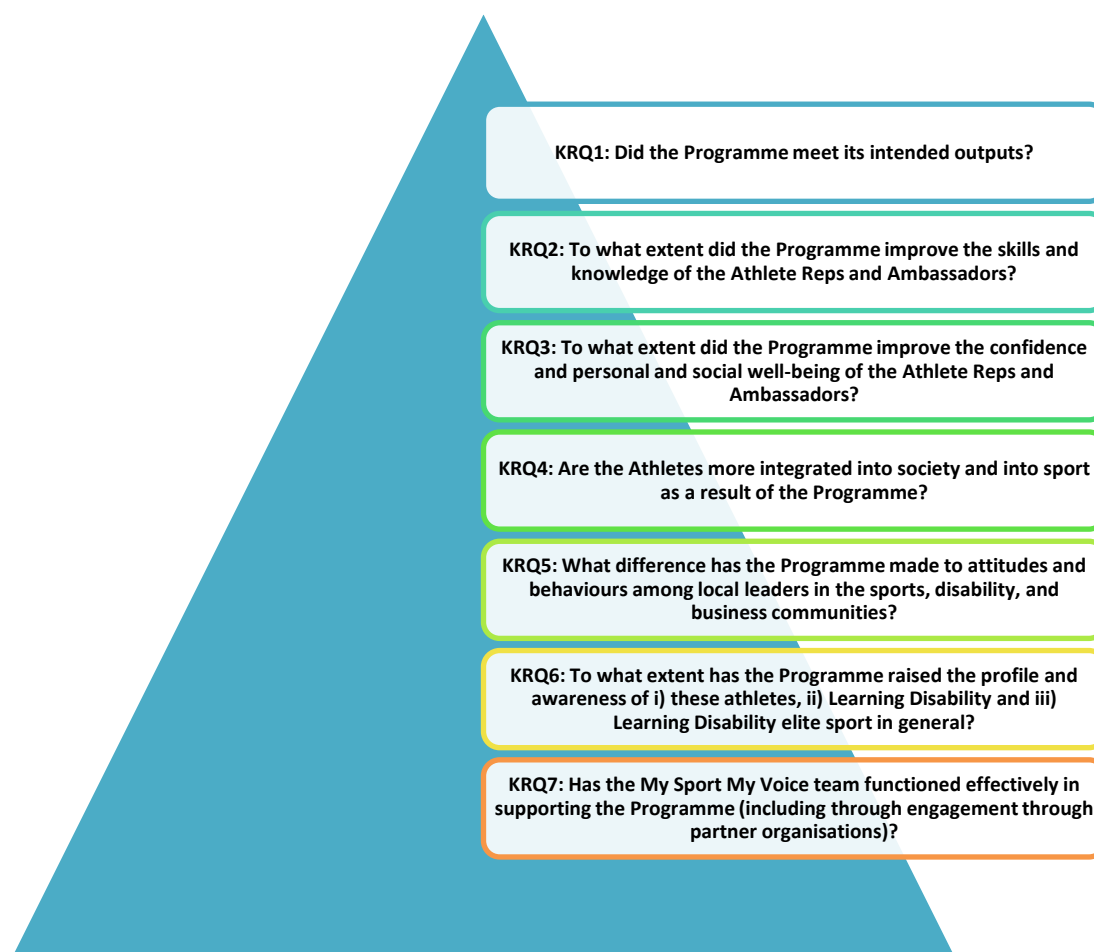
Key Point 1

The My Sport, My Voice! Programme has identified and enabled athletes to access a number of opportunities to raise their profile and inspire others and to participate in community visits which give the general public a chance to have their perceptions challenged and their awareness raised. More specifically, they have the opportunity to use the workshops to target community leaders and very directly inspire and catalyse change in the organisations those people represent.

⁷ Source: UKSA Data sent May 2016

Evaluation Methodology

Skyblue has worked collaboratively with the My Sport, My Voice! Programme and the UKSA team and advisory board to develop a logic chain and theory of change for the programme. These are attached in Appendices A and B of this report. Out of these, seven Key Research Questions have been developed which this evaluation will address. These are:



In addition there are three further questions which, while they are out of scope for this initial evaluation report as longer term impact questions, we would recommend remain at the heart of any future research into the difference this Programme has made beyond its lifespan. We note that the My Sport, My Voice! Team are in the process of submitting a bid for continuation funding to the Spirit of 2012 Trust and would suggest that evidence gathering should increasingly focus less on the delivery outputs and more on identifying these impacts:

- **KRQ8:** What impact has the Programme had on the influence athletes with learning disability have on their sports and sport in general?
- **KRQ9:** What difference has the Programme made to attitudes and behaviours among the general public?
- **KRQ10:** Are people with learning disability more accepted, appreciated and valued in society than they were before the project (at least in the communities where it has carried out activity)?

KRQ1: Did the Programme meet its intended outputs?

The following indicators of change have been identified as key for the Programme; against each we are able to track the extent to which the change has been achieved so far:

Measure	Target	Delivery
PROMOTE		
Increase in local and national coverage producing at least 60 items through different media mechanisms	60 items	74 (123% of target)
145 Local leaders across the UK from business, sport and disability sectors successfully complete and engage with Ambassadors led workshops.	145 participants in Engage workshops	144 participants (99%)
60 items through different mediums exposing 1.5 million people to stories around sport for people with learning disability	1.5 million people exposed	Approx. 9.8 million exposed (653%)
EDUCATE		
145 Local Leader and community visits show positive change in perceptions of disabled people.	80% report a positive change in perceptions	45% of participants report a change in their attitude after compared with before a workshop ⁸
Athletes engaged with project have a positive change in attitude to themselves and how others perceive them.	80% of athletes exposed to project show a positive change	75% report an increase in respect from people who don't know them

⁸ Based on % of participants who stated across all workshops that their perceptions were more positive after the event than before. In a more nuanced question asked in the final three workshops, 89% of participants stated that their attitudes had been made more positive to at least a slight degree. As will be seen, this reflects high levels of pre-workshop positivity on the part of participants.

ENABLE		
Athletes successfully complete the ambassador leadership programme and training.	90%	100% still on programme
Athletes completing the programme feel more confident and able to speak out.	80%	92% (100% of athletes report an increase in confidence, average rating of that increase is 9.2 / 10 agreement)
Athletes completing the programme have either enhanced, or learned new transferable skills.	80%	92% (based on athletes reporting development of new skills through the Programme)

There have been some small amendments to the original delivery plan for the Programme; for example, it was originally intended that each Ambassador should lead their own workshop and there would be 13 Engage! workshops delivered. This has, in agreement with Spirit of 2012, been adjusted to a total of 8 Engage workshops with Ambassadors working in pairs - this decision was made in large part to boost Ambassadors' confidence by ensuring they were not having to deliver 'solo'. Subsequent changes have also seen this reduced further to 7 face to face workshops and a webinar⁹. At all stages these amendments have been agreed with Spirit of 2012.

Key Point 2

If one considers three audiences for these targets, the Programme has to a great extent met its performance targets insofar as they relate to the Athlete Reps and Ambassadors, and has vastly exceeded its targets in terms of public exposure, reaching almost 10 million readers (compared with a target of 1.5 million). It has also to all intents and purposes reached its engagement target for workshop participation.

However, the extent to which the workshops have improved positive perceptions is more limited. In later sections of this report we will explore the reasons behind this.

⁹ The webinar approach was selected due to the unavailability of the only Northern Ireland-based Athlete Ambassador due to her Rio Paralympic Training Programme.

KRQ2: To what extent did the Programme improve the skills and knowledge of the Athlete Reps and Ambassadors?

Training and Development for Athlete Reps and Ambassadors has been ongoing throughout the programme. However, it is already possible to see ways in which their skills and knowledge are developing; on a scale of 1-10 across 7 athletes surveyed after their second meeting (Autumn 2015), they gave an average rating of over 8 out of 10 when asked the extent to which they felt they were developing new skills. By the time of their fourth meeting (Spring 2016) this level had risen to 9.7 out of 10. Likewise in this fourth meeting athletes rated the extent to which they were using their skills outside the Programme at almost 9 out of 10.

Examples Athletes gave of new skills included:



Four athletes provided examples of new skills which were in fact describing an increase in confidence; we will explore this theme more in KRQ3.

When asked by Skyblue about the improvement in their public speaking (see page 13 for graph), 7 Ambassadors and 3 Athlete Reps described a significant change, rating themselves at 4.75 out of 10 before the Programme and subsequently 8 out of 10 as at December 2015. Only one Ambassador did not describe such an improvement; this individual observed that he had received training in this area from his National Governing Body before engaging with the Programme and as such he was approaching it from a higher base than the others.

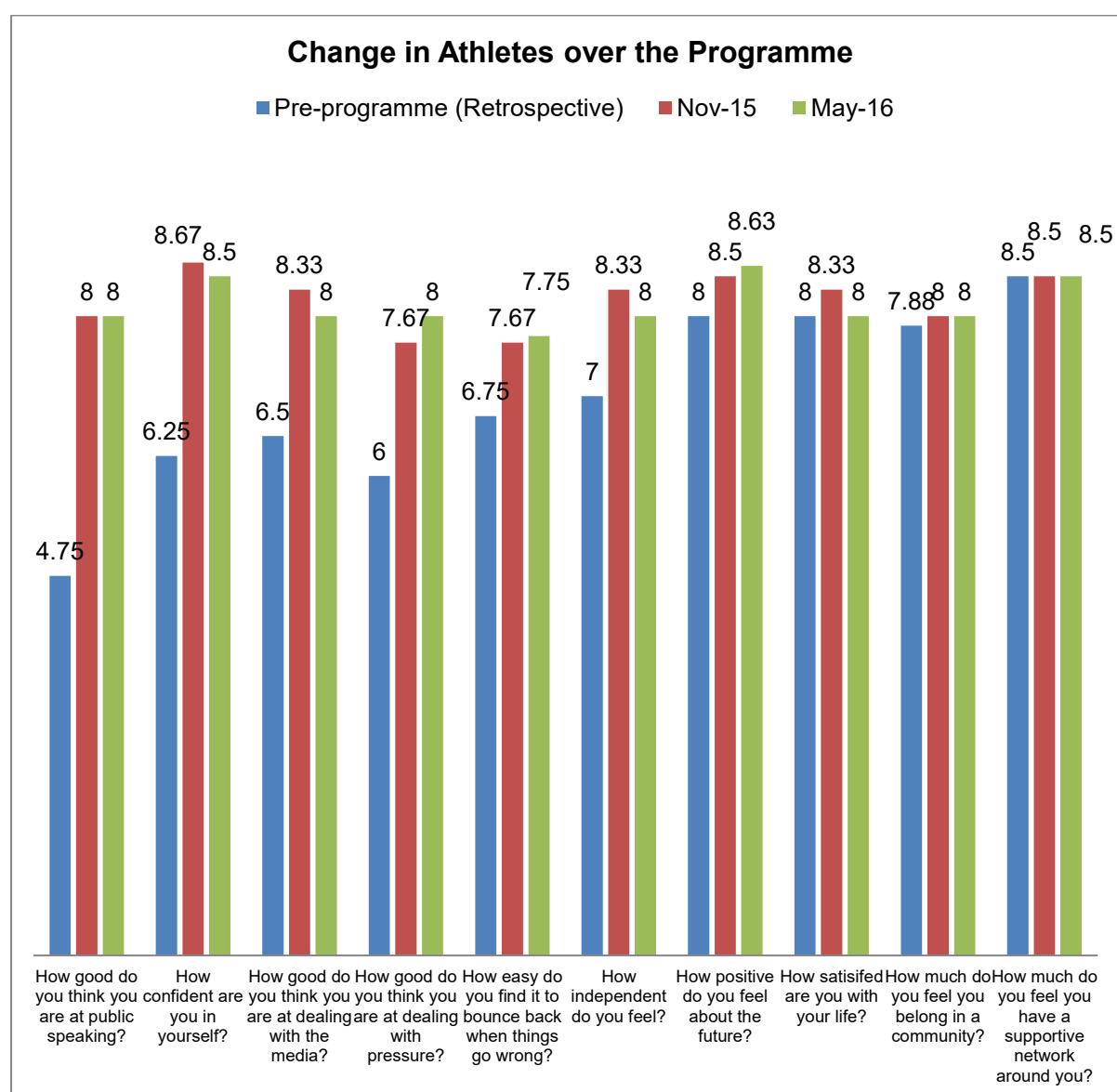
Athletes' reasons for getting involved in the Programme were varied, but common themes included a desire to promote themselves and their sports more effectively, and a commitment to giving something back and supporting others; it is interesting that many of these new skills tie in strongly to these original ambitions. A key explicit ambition of the Programme is to increase understanding and challenge perceptions of learning disability and it is therefore encouraging that promotion of their capabilities and experiences features so highly in their motivations.

Key Point 3

Athletes are able to describe different skills they have developed through the Programme, with self-presentation and organisation particularly commonly identified skills. These areas tie in strongly with the ways in which Athletes hoped to develop over the Programme.

KRQ3: To what extent did the Programme improve the confidence and personal and social well-being of the Athlete Reps and Ambassadors?

Every Athlete has been asked throughout the Programme about the positive effect their role has had on their confidence, and of 7 athletes surveyed 6 have rated this at 10 out of 10. Going into more detail, Skyblue has carried out interviews with 5 Athlete Ambassadors and 1 Athlete Rep in December 2015, and subsequently with 6 Athlete Ambassadors and 2 Athlete Reps in April 2016 which sought to identify the improvement in their broader personal and social well-being. In each Athlete's first interview with Skyblue they were also asked to retrospectively provide a baseline of where they think they were before the Programme started:



The biggest impacts on Athletes appear to have happened in the earlier stages of the Programme, when their Personal Development Plans were developed and the focus was most on their development in preparation for their delivery in workshops. Indeed since the Interim report in some areas there has been a small drop-off in some areas - around dealing with the media, confidence, independence, and life satisfaction. However, where there has already been significant change (around all but life satisfaction) the drop off has been small and certainly not back to pre-programme levels. A small drop-off at the end of the programme – post-intervention and after all training and development activity has been completed – is to be expected and the post-drop figure will hopefully become the Athletes' new 'baseline' capability (this would need to be tracked over a longer period of time post-programme).

The biggest change in Athletes' well-being was, unsurprisingly, around self-confidence – this is a key focus of the Programme and such change is a measure of its success. It is therefore encouraging to see a full three points of difference between Athletes' perceptions of their confidence pre-Programme and December 2015. There have also been significant improvements in Athletes' ability to deal with pressure, resilience, and independence. Around dealing with pressure, some Athletes were keen to stress that this related explicitly to dealing with pressure around non-sporting situations rather than in their sports, where they believed they were always strong. This view is echoed by parents and coaches of Athletes who believe that while there have been well-being benefits, they relate to life outside sport more than inside:

"He's always been really focused and confident on the track - however, he's now a much more confident speaker and when he's talking to people you can see in his body language that he's much more comfortable."

Athlete Ambassador's Parent

"I think it's given him a sense that he's more than an Athlete, he's also a talented individual and now a talented communicator. It's given him a much wider sense of self."

Athlete's Coach

Further qualitative insights from athletes and their parents are included in the Appendices of this report.

Where improvements are smaller, it relates less to where Athletes are now and more where they were before the start of the Programme; Athletes report self-ratings of around 8 out of 10 before the Programme around optimism for the future, life satisfaction, sense of belonging, and supportive relationships. In this context, with high levels of pre-Programme positivity, there is limited scope for the Programme to deliver improvements against these measures; in particular the Athletes interviewed all stated that they believed that their existing support networks were positive and supportive. However, what the Programme has done is delivered consistently high levels of well-being across all measures; from a range between 6.25 and 8.5 before the Programme, as of December 2015 the range of responses was between 7.75 and 8.63 – so the top response is only a third of a point higher than before the Programme, but the bottom response is a full 1.5 points higher. If all of these aspects of well-being are viewed as equally important, the overall improvement in Athletes' personal and social well-being across the programme is approximately 15%.

Key Point 4

Athletes report that the Programme has made a significant improvement to their confidence and personal well-being. While improvements to their social well-being are smaller¹⁰, this relates to high levels of existing positivity around this area leading to limited positive change being possible.

¹⁰ Personal well-being measures are around self-confidence, dealing with pressure, resilience, independence, positivity, and life satisfaction. Social well-being measures are around sense of belonging and supportive networks.

KRQ4: Are the Athletes more integrated into society and into sport as a result of the Programme?



The evidence of their survey responses is that Athletes feel exactly as supported by others around them as they have always done. However, tweets like the one above, and comments from one Athlete Ambassador to the effect that the Programme had given her a confidence to achieve which had driven up her academic performance, suggest that there are indications of the Programme having an influence beyond profile, confidence and skills enhancement.

Community visits and Engage! workshops have also provided Athletes with the opportunity to build networks and develop relationships, and over the course of the Programme we would expect to see these develop into greater opportunities not only for integration but indeed excellence both in their sports and in wider society. One athlete in particular suggests that his personal networks are much stronger than they were and that this has enabled him to develop his business within his community:

"They've put me in front of people which has given me a chance to make contacts, build networks and develop my business for the future."

Dan Pepper, Athlete Ambassador

Key Point 5

The ongoing increased integration of Athletes into society and into sport will develop further in future as the workshops and community visits develop an increased awareness and understanding around Learning Disability, but there is already evidence that Athletes have taken advantage of the opportunities the Programme has presented to enhance their personal networks and performance. Already Athletes on the Programme have moved into a mix of paid and unpaid employment in addition to the wider skills and well-being outcomes achieved, with an example being Josh Walne achieving a paid coaching role, plus Dan Pepper becoming an Advisory Group member for Kaleidoscope.

KRQ5: What difference has the Programme made to attitudes and behaviours among local leaders in the sports, disability, and business communities?

My Sport, My Voice! has organised workshops in seven different locations¹¹ which had significant input from the Athlete Ambassadors supported by the Athlete Reps; these have collectively been attended by 144 people who, in those workshops, were invited to make a pledge to 'Change 1 Thing' about their organisation's approach to make it more accessible to people with learning disability. This has been followed up after the workshops with personalised postcards sent out to every participant that made the pledge. As will be seen (under KRQ7), quality of the workshops has been seen as high.

Attitudinal change

Evidence from workshop surveys suggests a high level of pre-existing (self-reported) positivity about people with learning disability; attendees across the two workshops averaged just under 7 out of 10 in terms of their self-rating of their understanding of learning disability, and approximately 7.5 out of 10 in terms of their confidence in their engagements with people with learning disability. Their positivity was even higher – average ratings in terms of positivity of view of people with learning disability – were almost 9 out of 10 at the start of the seven workshops.

Participants had to select three words from a list of 20 that in their opinion best described people with learning disability¹². The incidence of words such as 'overlooked by society' (pre-workshop the single most popular response) suggests a pre-existing level of positivity and a sense of social injustice in the rooms before the workshops:



The words selected before the event suggest the positivity that participants describe; the arguably 'negative' words in the list (such as 'hard to work with', 'slow', 'unemployable', 'withdrawn' and 'hard to talk to') are barely used, if at all, and 1 in 6 participants selected 'capable' as one of their words before the event.

¹¹ Glasgow, London, Burnley, Loughborough, Manchester and Swansea, along with a second workshop in London specifically for representatives of the Tennis Federation.

¹² 20 words selected: Challenging, Easy to work with, Friendly, Easy to talk to, Overlooked by society, Useful, Slow, Capable, Valuable, Needing help, Skilled, Challenged, Happy, Unemployable, Hard to work with, Withdrawn, Underused, Hard to talk to, Unique, Effective

The top 5 responses, which together account for almost two thirds of all selections (65%) are:

- Overlooked by society (17% of all responses; 1 in 6 participants selected this option before the workshop)
- Capable (16% of all responses)
- Unique (14%)
- Friendly (10%)
- Valuable (8%)

The presence high up the list of terms such as ‘overlooked by society’ and ‘underused’ (the sixth-most used answer) suggest that participants do believe that people with learning disability are disadvantaged by society in some ways.

After the workshop, the words selected by participants to describe those with learning disability were slightly different; ‘valuable’ has joined ‘capable’ as one of the two most prevalent words while ‘overlooked’ has reduced in importance. Significantly, the word ‘friendly’ has declined in importance while the words ‘skilled’ and ‘effective’ are much more prevalent after the event. Overall this word cloud appears significantly more ‘definite’ than the first; if before the event the picture of people with learning disability is one of a nice group who maybe don’t get the chances they should from society, then after it is of a talented and effective group with a major contribution to make.



This assessment is even more clearly identified if we examine the three terms with the biggest positive and negative shifts between pre- and post-workshop responses:

Biggest Shift (Positive)	Biggest Shift (Negative)
Skilled (+20 incidences)	Overlooked by society (-22)
Valuable (+19)	Challenged (-11)
Effective (+10)	Unique (-10)

Key Point 6

Changes to local leaders' attitudes have been more nuanced than seismic – the participants that have attended were already overwhelmingly positive about people with learning disability. There is however substantial evidence that the workshops have improved their capability to engage with that community, and also signs that they increasingly view that community as one it would be beneficial for them to engage with.

After the event, participants' understanding of and confidence to engage with people with learning disability had increased from around 7 out of 10 to between 8 and 9 out of 10. Of 92 respondents to answer the question 'Would you say that the workshop today has caused you to have a different view of people with learning disability', just under half (45%) stated that it had; the remaining 55% either stated it had not, said they did not know, or did not respond at all. Of the participants that said it had not (48% of the total), some provided an explanation of the reason for their answer; these participants stated that the reason was that they already had a very positive attitude.

After the events, in surveys completed in May 2016 (so between one and six months after the workshops), 30 respondents gave their views. The pre-existing positivity of participants' attitudes towards people with learning disability goes some way to explaining why respondents describe the change in their attitude towards people with learning disability as relatively small:

Extent of improvement in...	Mean rating ¹³	Median rating ¹⁴	Modal rating ¹⁵	Range
Attitude towards people with learning disability	4.82	5	1	1-10
Base: 28 respondents (2 respondents 'did not know'). 1-10 scale				

Key Point 7

The evidence suggests that participants in Engage! Workshops have arrived with high levels of positivity about people with learning disability, and while the *level* of that positivity has not changed substantially, its *nature* has, as seen in the word clouds above. Participants are more likely to be 'differently positive', with their existing high levels of positivity about people with learning disability increasingly focusing on the skills and values they can bring.

¹³ Mean is the traditionally-described 'average' - calculated by adding all responses together and dividing by the number of respondents

¹⁴ Median is the 'middle rating' - the rating where half of all responses are above it and half are below it.

¹⁵ The Mode is the rating which is selected by the largest number of respondents.

Capability and Knowledge Change

Changes in the capability and knowledge of participants who gave their views after the event are highly variable; personal capability, skills and knowledge to work with people with learning disability have changed to some degree, as has the wider capability of respondents' organisations. As can be seen, however, there is a broad spread:

Extent of improvement in...	Mean rating	Median rating	Modal rating	Range
Personal capability	5.87	6	5	1-10
Skills	5.17	6	2	1-10
Knowledge	5.33	5.5	1 and 7	1-10
Organisational capability	5.23	6	1	1-10
Base: 30 respondents. 1-10 scale				

Key Point 8

It is worthy of note that around these four measures, three have a modal rating of 1 or 2 out of 10. This suggests that there is a core of respondents for whom the workshops have not led to enhanced capability, but much higher mean and median ratings suggests that there is a variability of experience. This is borne out by looking at the spread of responses; for every measure at least one respondent has given the lowest rating and at least one has given the highest. This suggests that increased tailoring of the workshop offer has the potential to deliver greater change.

Behavioural change

Workshop participants were encouraged to "Change 1 Thing" - to commit to making a change to their personal and / or organisational practices which would enable them to engage more effectively with people with learning disability. The majority of participants (based on observations by Skyblue personnel at the Glasgow, Manchester and Swansea workshops) did make this commitment and demonstrated it by taking part in a photoshoot with the Athlete Ambassadors and Athlete Reps.

After the event, respondents were asked the extent to which they have applied the learning from the workshop in their organisations; as with attitudinal and capability change, the responses were extremely variable:

	Mean rating	Median rating	Modal rating	Range
Extent to which workshop learning has been applied by learners within their organisations	4.47	5	2 and 6	1-9
Base: 30 respondents. 1-10 scale				

Participants also described potential types of changes to their behaviour as a result of attending the Workshop:

Type of Change	% that have already done this	% that have started to do this	% that intend to do this in future	% that don't intend to do this	% that do not see this as applicable to them
Changed approach to communication with people with learning disability	10%	30%	37%		23%
Re-connected with other participants in the workshop	13%	10%	33%	40%	3%
Recruited someone with a learning disability	23%	7%	20%		50%
Told anyone else about learning	53%	10%	10%	20%	7%
Done anything else not mentioned above	17%	17%	23%	27%	17%
30 respondents. % are rounded and may not add up to 100%					

Key Point 9

For every type of behavioural change described, at least 50% of respondents either have already started to implement them, or intend to. Of thirty respondents, twenty-eight (93%) stated that they either already had or intended to make at least one change. This suggests that the workshops have provided participants with the tools to at least begin looking at changes.

KRQ6: To what extent has the Programme raised the profile and awareness of i) these athletes, ii) learning disability and iii) learning disability elite sport in general?

The presence of 74 articles around these athletes and the Programme as a whole, with a combined readership approaching 10 million, suggests that profile has been raised, as does engagement opportunities with almost 40,000 people.

Key Point 10

The breadth of engagement by My Sport, My Voice! has raised the profile and awareness across the general public and this, coupled with the likelihood of change being implemented in the future by workshop participants, suggests that there will be longer term improvements in this area beyond the lifetime of the Programme.

KRQ7: Has the My Sport My Voice team functioned effectively in supporting the Programme (including via engagement through partner organisations)?

Quality of workshops

Feedback in the immediate aftermath of the workshops suggests that their quality is extremely high; out of a total of 657 ratings across 7 topics from 110 feedback surveys received, only 15 (just over 2%) were less than 'good':

- **100% of participants** rated the contribution of athletes to the workshop as good or excellent.
- **98%** rated communication prior to the workshop as good or excellent
- **97%** rated the booking process as good or excellent
- **95%** rated the style and delivery of the tutors as good or excellent
- **95%** rated the workshop overall as good or excellent.

Out of 110 feedback surveys, 108 (98%) thought that UKSA should run this type of workshop again.

Collectively, respondents after the event rated the overall learning experience from the workshops at just over 7 out of 10, with almost two thirds rating it as 8 or higher.

The Net Promoter Score (NPS) for the Engage! Workshops is +25%¹⁶; it is difficult to benchmark Net Promoter Scores which tend to be very sector-specific but expert advice suggests that an NPS of +30% or higher would typically be considered 'good' while one of +50% or higher would be 'great' or 'exceptional'¹⁷, while the average would fall between 5% and 10%.

Key Point 11

On the day of the workshop, participants describe the quality of the experience as excellent, with particular praise going to the contribution of the Athlete Ambassadors. Subsequent feedback suggests that the Net Promoter Score is above average but capable of being improved, while rating of the overall experience with the benefit of hindsight is again quite strong. Coupled with the suggestions for improvements outlined below, the implication is that content that is more tailored to participants' existing skills and knowledge would generate higher levels of promotion.

Suggested Workshop Improvements

Workshop participants offered a number of suggestions around improvements to the effectiveness of workshop delivery; some of these were logistical (four participants indicated that they would appreciate an extra comfort / coffee break over the course of the day), and others could be themed around the idea of "More" - such as *"It would be great to have even more people there to see and benefit from the day"* and *"I'd like there to be more athlete involvement"*.

Two key themes which emerged to impact on content were:

- Requests for the workshop to be more interactive and less 'led from the front':

"A bit more interactive and moving about."

"Less talking and more doing!"

¹⁶ Net Promoter Score is calculated from the responses to the question "How likely would you be to recommend this Workshop to friends or colleagues" and compares the percentage that definitely would (described as 'promoters', those that rate this at 9 or 10 out of 10) with the percentage of those that definitely would not (described as 'detractors', those giving a response of between 1 and 6 out of 10). The score will feature on a scale from -100% (i.e. every respondent is a detractor) to +100% (every respondent is a promoter). Scores of 7 or 8 out of 10 are described as 'passives' and not included in the score.

¹⁷ <https://www.quora.com/What-is-a-good-net-promoter-score-to-have>

- Suggestions that a more tailored approach which better reflected the existing knowledge and capabilities of participants would be more effective:

"More focus around the specifics of engagement with people with Learning Disability would be great"

"More knowledge around specific learning disabilities"

"Tailor to the audience. Pitch it at the right level. Detail why LD inhibits and focus on the real details to adapt."

"Structure the 'generic material' in light of other information available."

"Establish people's level of knowledge prior to the workshop."

Key Point 12

Feedback on quality and effectiveness of delivery by the My Sport, My Voice team is extremely positive overall; repeated requests for more tailored and / or detailed content suggests that there is a body of attendees who would benefit from a more advanced workshop and possibly further content needs to be developed to cater to this audience.

Athlete Development

The Athletes surveyed only have positive things to say about the My Sport, My Voice team; one comments that, *"I think the way the programme has been run has been first class, the events that I have attended so far have been a success."* They have built relationships with the team and this means that the Programme can be more effective, as Athletes trust the team to support them and help them to be as successful as possible.

Particular praise is reserved for the Athlete Support and Project Officer, the individual with whom athletes have had most engagement. They observe that *"He has been really supportive – he encourages you but he also gets you thinking about how things could have gone better."* One athlete notes that while he was approaching the project with a higher pre-existing level of confidence and capability than other Ambassadors, the team tailored their offer to be more relevant to his needs and wants:

"I had already had loads of media training and development and learning about public speaking through my National Governing Body but what I really wanted to do was develop my own business as a personal trainer. Marcus [the Athlete Support and Project Officer] was really helpful and did some work with me on business planning."

Dan Pepper, Athlete Ambassador

Key Point

This Programme could not be successful without trust between Athletes and the delivery team and it is clear from their feedback that that relationship is in place. This means that ‘first class’ delivery is a reality and the positive comments on quality of all participants are testimony to the fact that the team and Athletes, working together, have functioned effectively.

Staff View

In telephone interviews, the My Sport, My Voice Programme Manager and Athlete Support and Project Officer have separately given their views on what has worked well and what could be improved about the programme delivery. Strengths and areas for improvement based on these assessments are outlined below:

Strengths	Areas for improvement
Athlete engagement and development Workshop recruitment was seen as an area which improved over the course of the Programme. The webinar approach was seen as indicative of innovation and willingness to try new approaches The team were described as ‘close knit’ and effective at working together.	Earlier in the Programme, workshop recruitment was seen as extremely challenging. There are capacity challenges, in some cases associated with the Project Manager working only 2 days per week; the original profile of the role suggested that this should be a 3 day per week role. With reduced resource available from June 2016 onwards, it was seen as being particularly important in future to manage expectations internally in terms of a need to deliver in different, less resource intensive ways.

The Athlete Support and Project Officer suggested that there was an interesting nuance around outcomes delivery; while believing firmly that the Athlete-led approach to workshops was an effective way of educating and engaging participants, he felt that the Athletes that were likely to develop the highest levels of personal development outcome (i.e. those that travelled the furthest) were not necessarily the Athletes that would be the most effective workshop deliverers (who might be those that were approaching the Programme from a higher baseline in terms of their confidence and capability). This in many ways reflects the Programme’s own structure in terms of having an Athlete Ambassador team supported by a less capable Athlete Rep team who would develop over the lifetime of the Programme to become the Ambassadors of the future; to this structure the Athlete Support and Project Officer added the detail that some Ambassadors too had further to travel on their personal journeys than others. Both he and the Programme Manager felt that there were potentially future roles for some of the more ‘advanced’ Ambassadors as Athlete Mentors in any future iteration of the Programme.

Conclusions

This Programme has engaged with three different audience groups and delivered the following outcomes:

- **Athletes**

Athletes report increases to their skills, particularly around their public speaking and communication capabilities.

Athletes also report growing confidence and life satisfaction, along with resilience in their lives outside sport.

Athletes from the Programme have moved into a mix of paid and unpaid employment in addition to the wider skills and well-being outcomes achieved, with an example being Dan Pepper becoming an advisory group member for the UKSA.

- **Workshop Attendees**

Workshop attendees have enjoyed a positive experience and have been given the tools and inspiration to begin looking at ways to 'Change 1 Thing'¹⁸ within their organisations.

Changes in their attitudes and personal behaviours have been variable; associated with high levels of positivity before they first engaged with the Programme. Evidence indicates that workshop participants have become “Differently Positive” as a result of attendance, with their existing high levels of positivity about people with learning disability increasingly focusing on the skills and values they can bring.

Half of attendees are either already implementing, starting to implement, or planning implementation of change as a result of workshop attendance.

- **The General Public**

Public awareness of Learning Disability and of these athletes has been raised through a highly effective media campaign.

Organisers of community visits describe the athletes as 'Inspirational', 'Hugely positive', and 'Something a bit different'.

¹⁸ A pledge made at workshops.

Across three key themes of delivery, the following activity and outcomes have been identified:

Promote	Educate	Enable
Workshop delivery completed with seven workshops delivered and an eighth delivered via webinar. Metrics around readership of articles exceeded with over 9.8 million readers achieved against a target of 1.5 million.	61% of athletes¹⁹ report that there has been a positive change in the perception of others compared to before the programme (against a target over the whole programme duration of 80%). Of the 39% that did not report such an increase, over half rated this at the maximum 10 out of 10 in their first interview. 90% of athletes report an increase in their self-confidence (attitude to themselves) compared with pre-programme (against a target over the whole programme duration of 80%). Local leaders attending workshops increasingly describe people with learning disability as 'valuable' and 'skilled'.	Athletes completing the programme feel more confident and able to speak out. 100% of athletes report this against a target of 80%. 97% of athletes report that they have developed new skills through the programme (target 80%).

¹⁹ 11 out of 18 to complete multiple self-assessment questionnaires across the Programme gave a higher result for the level of respect they perceived from people who don't know them in their final questionnaire than they did in their first. Of the remaining 7, 4 reported this at '10 out of 10' at the start of the Programme.

Recommendations

With a future bid for continuation funding from Spirit of 2012 in mind, Skyblue would suggest that the following approaches be taken under consideration:

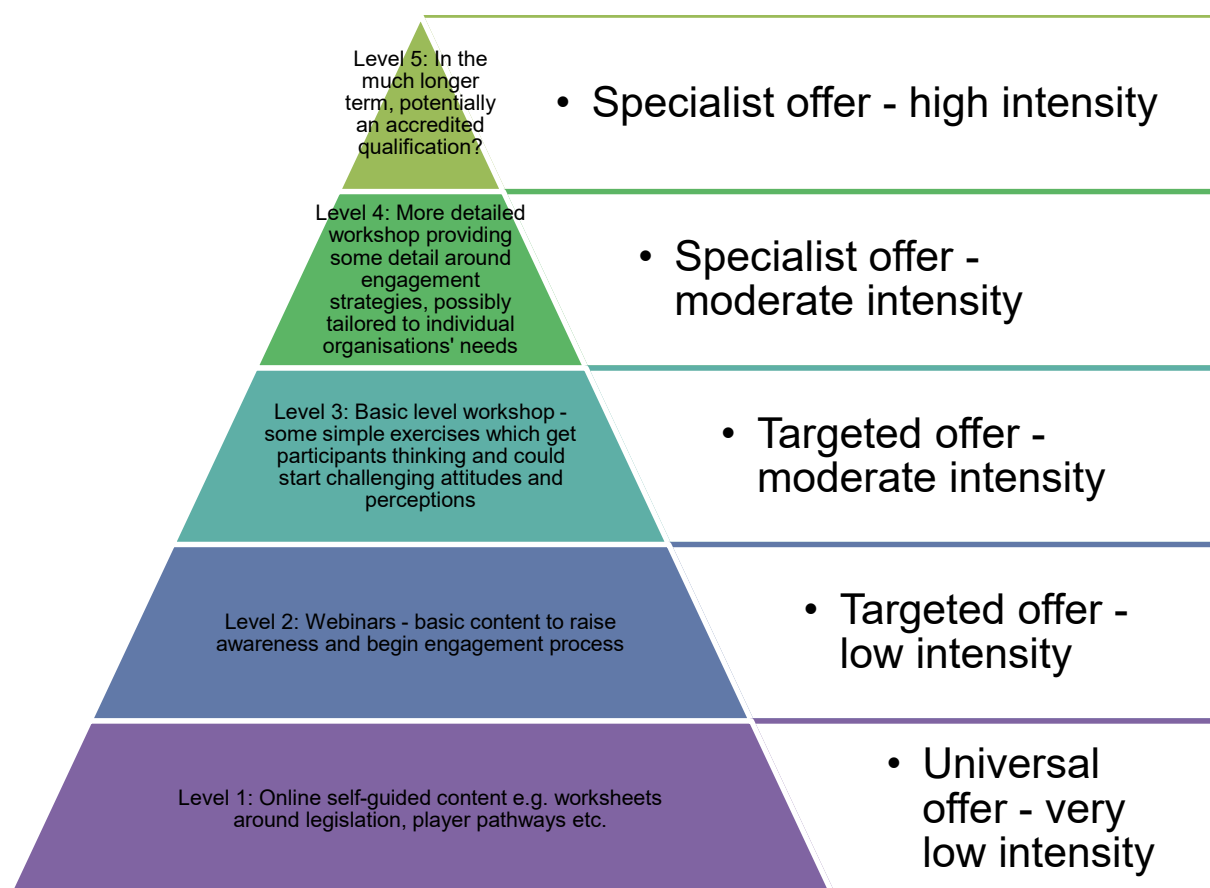
1: A three-tier Athlete system

An ambition of the Programme in the longer term is for the Athlete Reps to become Athlete Ambassadors in the future. Likewise there are Athlete Ambassadors who are keen, having developed (or enhanced existing skills) around their public speaking and ability to educate, to move on into coaching or public speaking and advocacy roles.

We would recommend a review of the existing Athlete personnel, with some Athlete Reps 'promoted' to the role of Ambassador, and some Athlete Ambassadors moved into a new mentoring role which does not prioritise public-facing delivery but instead focuses on supporting the development of the Ambassadors and Athlete Reps.

2: Content development

Feedback from workshop participants suggests that while quality of delivery is extremely high, to maximise outcomes there may be value in tailoring content more to different levels of participant. We would recommend developing future workshops in the context of an engagement pathway which enables a broader spectrum of individuals to be engaged with relatively low levels of resourcing, while also maximising the value gained by already-experienced and positive individuals. A potential model is outlined below:



This pyramid requires three further activities from the team:

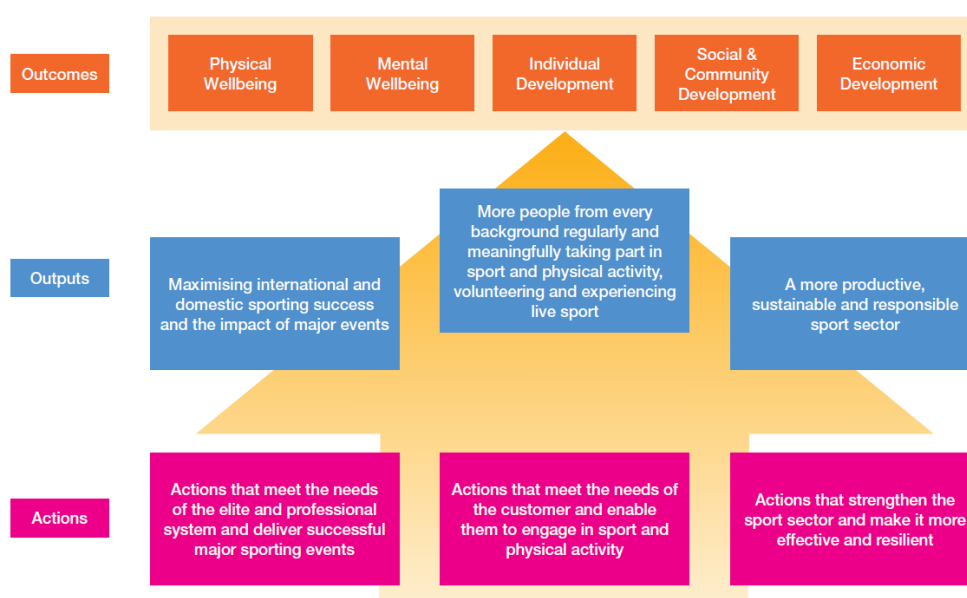
4. **Development of new materials:** At the very least at Levels 1 and 4 of this pyramid, further materials would need developing – potentially customised workshop design as well as some generic online support content.
5. **Commitment of resource to supporting this pipeline:** For this pipeline to be effective, it will require UKSA staff to be able to signpost prospective entrants to the appropriate level. This might in itself require the development of a short diagnostic tool to assess participants' level of need and interest to ensure that they are able to maximise the value they take from input (NB this will happen from Level 2 upwards).
6. **Tapping into existing contacts:** 2015-16 Engage! Workshop attendees are the first prospective audience for a future development at Level 4 in the pyramid and should be targeted when, and if, such content is made available.

Conscious that resources are likely to be increasingly limited in 2016-17, we would recommend that if necessary UKSA targets at most 1 or 2 levels of this pyramid for development this year. Selection of these levels would depend on whether it was more important to UKSA to focus on breadth of engagement (which would suggest a focus at Levels 1 and 2) or depth of engagement (focus on Levels 3 and 4).

3: Look wider for funding

Skyblue notes that at present the continuation funding bid to Spirit of 2012 proposes that Spirit will remain the sole funders of the Programme. We would recommend that UKSA looks at other potential additional sources of funding which would enable the sustaining and ideally expansion of the existing offer and resource. We note that the new government Sporting Future Strategy²⁰ framework focuses increasingly on the outcomes that result from sporting participation and success, and in particular believe that strands around ‘a more productive, sustainable and responsible sport sector’ and outcomes associated with individual development and social & community development (see below) are highly relevant to the My Sport, My Voice Programme. It is as such increasingly likely that sources such as Sport England will have funding streams which align with the Programme’s aims. Similarly, organisations such as People’s Postcode Lottery target impacts around social value and community development which could align to the intentions of My Sport, My Voice.

The Framework for a new Sport Strategy



²⁰ <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/sporting-future-a-new-strategy-for-an-active-nation>

Rationale

To demonstrate that people with learning disabilities can excel and achieve

Appendix A: Logic Chain for My Sport, My Voice!

Challenges

Perceptions – stereotypical misconceptions that people with learning disabilities are less able, less intelligent, people have to do things for them

Parents want to protect them

Self-perception – position of low confidence

Ignorance

Not seen in the disability bracket – 'Hidden Disability'.

Paralympics not the only measure of elite success – competing at the highest level available for that sport.

Opportunities

Paralympics have raised public awareness of disability and disability sport more generally – but see above, not the only performance measure!

Massive potential audience for athletes' mind-blowing achievements

2012 Games provide a strong platform – degree of acceptance around disability sport higher than it has ever been.

Assumptions

That the current funding picture for athletes etc. will be maintained; that existing commitments will be at least met. That families will continue to provide support – they can be both our biggest ally and biggest challenge!

Inputs

£335k over period
April 2014-June 2016

c.4 FTE Staff

FT Athlete support and project office

FT Comms and PR Manager

PT Project Manager

PT Project Support

Chief Exec Time – c. 20%

PT Intern function

Admin support

Athletes Board

Partners

Advisory Group

Activities

PR / Comms

Create a branding for the project and develop a website to host profiles of athletes and details of the project. Engage with various forms of social media to promote the project. Use the partnerships and networks gained throughout the project to disseminate learning and good practice

Build and maintain media and public interest through the website, social media, implementation of Ambassador media plans, and continued engagement with local and national media

Recruitment

Recruitment process seeking 36 young talented athletes resulting in 13 Ambassadors and 11 support athletes

Communications and Awareness Workshops

Audit and map 145 local providers working with people with learning disability in the Ambassador's areas

Design and develop a communication toolkit that is specific to learning disability that can be delivered as training to delegates at the workshops

Connect the disability, local business and sport sector by ensuring each is represented at workshops, and that follow up research around their engagement with the project is conducted

Advise and signpost delegate attendees to opportunities to enhance their own organisations and inclusive approach to people with learning disability

Deliver 13 workshops (1 per Ambassador) across the UK to local business leaders, policymakers and those involved in providing services to people with learning disability both within and outside of the sport industry

Monitoring and Evaluation

Monitor the progress, successes and challenges throughout the project against monitoring and evaluation plans, culminating in a final report that reflects on the findings of the project and how its strengths and weaknesses may inform learning and good practice in the future

Athlete Support

Create an individual detailed media plan for 13 Ambassadors over the course of the project

Co-ordinate up to 5 community visits for each Ambassador

Provide ambassador and athlete training in group sessions to ensure that they are fully prepared to co-deliver an effective workshop to delegates (OS)

Build and maintain profiles for the 13 Ambassadors and chart their successes and achievements as they engage with their local communities in anticipation of competing at international events including the 2015 INAS Global Games and 2016 Paralympics

Deliver up to four 1:1 life skills sessions for each Ambassador and up to two for each Rap, to ensure that they are well supported to carry out their role in the project and

Output Measures

90% project completion for athletes

Column inches / stories generated

Web hits

Attendance registers

Outputs

145 local leaders

Attending 13 workshops

13 ambassadors

11 athlete reps

60 items of news in a variety of media

Exposing 1.5 million people to stories

Comms toolkit

Documented recruitment process

Athlete support package

Intelligence base

Outcome Measures

Athlete self-assessment of confidence and skills

Family assessment of changing attitudes of theirs, towards athletes, of society

Local leaders self-reporting changing knowledge, attitudes, behaviours

Outcomes

(short and medium term)

Athletes

Confidence

Raised profile

Skills – managing expectations, dealing with pressure, speaking out, public speaking, presentation, decision making, independence, IT skills, media skills

Attitudes to volunteering improved

Empowerment to create and catalyse change

Life satisfaction – positive feelings, absence of negative feelings, feeling of engagement

Local Leaders

Good experience

Inspiration

Engagement

New knowledge – how to communicate, what a learning disability is, opportunities available, UKSA expertise to support

New attitudes – see people with learning disabilities as people. Perceptions changing.

Barrier removal

'I can' attitude to adaptations

Families

CHANGING PERCEPTIONS OF SPORTS SECTOR

FEELING LESS ISOLATED

CIRCLE OF SUPPORT

General Public

Changing attitudes and perceptions

Athletes

Links to business sector, finding sponsorship

Recognition as a performance athlete

Better performance

Credible CVs leading to paid employment

Ownership of strategy – governing bodies, UKSA.

Skillset grows organically through higher profile

Local Leaders

Implementing best practice

Better communication techniques

Communities

Better connections between people and activities at local level

Increased quality and quantity of volunteering catalysed

Parents

Less active involvement in managing children

Other people with learning disabilities

Inspired to do more and better

Impact Measures

% of workforce with a learning disability

Athlete with LD representation on commissions / committees

% of people with LD reporting improved perceptions and access

Impact

(long term)

More businesses doing more business with people with learning disabilities

Better recruitment processes

Athletes on BPA Commission, INAS committee, IPC Athletes Commission

Voice in performance sport

Changing hearts and minds

Improving people with learning disabilities' ability to access the world – integration and involvement

Changing policy

Shaping the business sector

Reduced negative and increased positive perceptions

External Factors

Athletes' background context and support structures outwith the Programme

Disability rights – bigger societal issues outside sport

Activities

PR / Comms

Create a branding for the project and develop a website to host profiles of athletes and details of the project. Engage with various forms of social media to promote the project.

Use the partnerships and networks gained throughout the project to disseminate learning and good practice

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Outcomes (short and medium term)

Athletes

Confidence

Raised profile

Skills – managing expectations, dealing with pressure, speaking out, public speaking, presentation, decision making, independence, IT skills, media skills

Attitudes to volunteering improved

Empowerment to create and catalyse change

Life satisfaction – positive feelings, absence of negative feelings, feeling of engagement

Local Leaders

Good experience

Inspiration

Engagement

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New attitudes – see people with learning disabilities as people

Barrier removal

'I can' attitude to adaptations

Families

Changing perceptions of sports sector

Feeling less isolated

Circle of Support

General Public

Changing attitudes and perceptions

Athletes

Links to business sector

Finding sponsorship

Recognition as a performance athlete

Better performance

Credible Cvs leading to paid employment

Ownership of strategy – governing bodies, UKSA.

Skillset grows organically through higher profile

Local Leaders

Implementing best practice

Better communication techniques

Communities

Better connections between people and activities at local level

Increased quality and quantity of volunteering catalysed

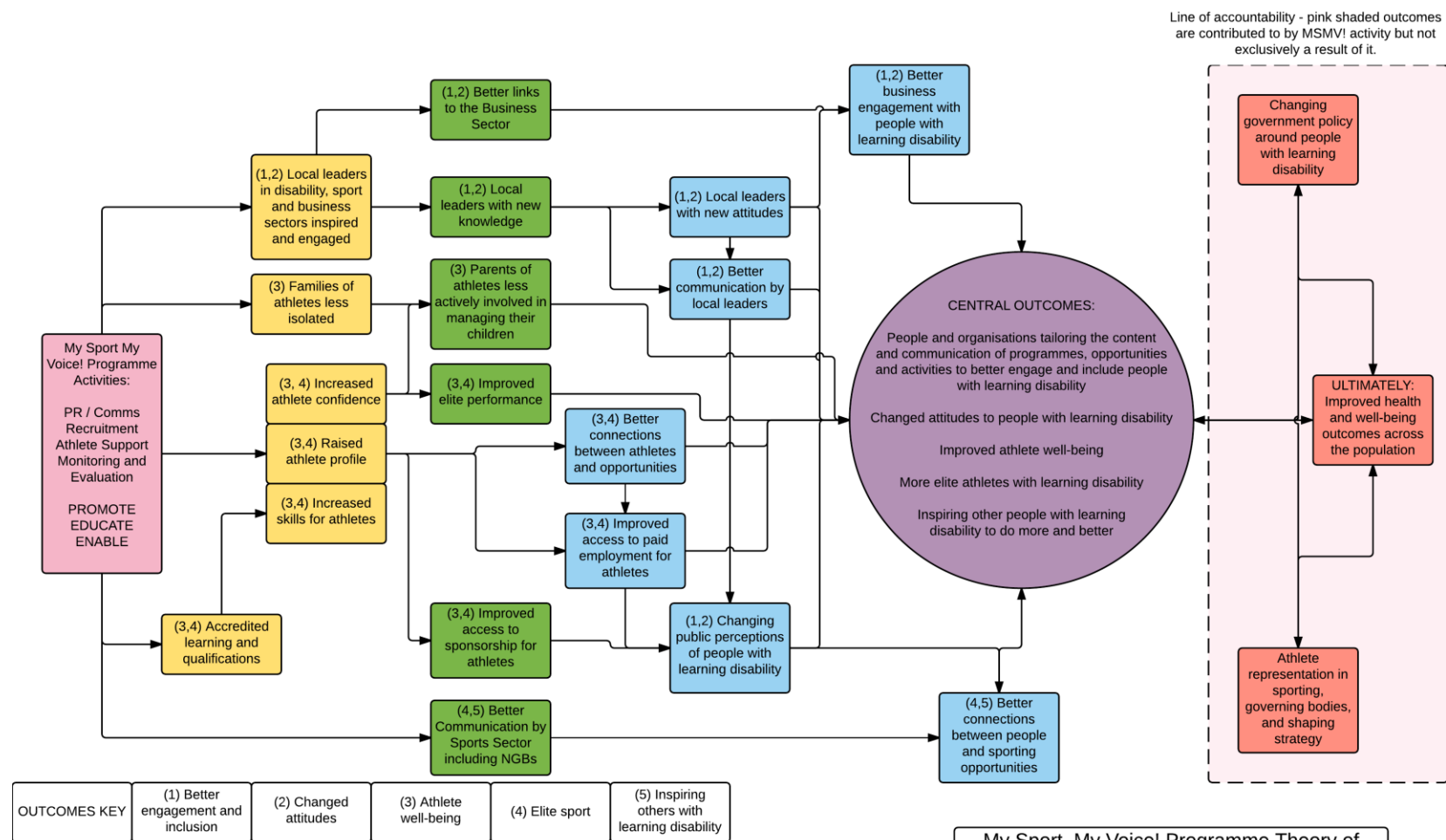
Parents

Less active involvement in managing children

Other people with learning disabilities

Inspired to do more and better

Appendix B: Draft My Sport, My Voice! Theory of Change



By describing the link between the work that you do (your outputs) and the changes that it creates for individuals (your outcomes) and for society more widely (your impact), you are setting out how and why your organisation plans to make a difference. This is also known as developing your theory of change – creating a story or narrative about the changes that you want to create through your work.

As well as spelling out how you think your work creates changes for beneficiaries, your theory of change document will guide your decisions about what information you might need to collect in order to evidence the extent to which this narrative is correct.