

DPH Annual Report [Extract]

1 Introduction

This report uses the experience and learning from the You've Got This (YGT) programme to better understand how we need to work together across agencies and communities to achieve the improvements in wellbeing articulated in the Mission-led Health and Wellbeing Strategy.

The learning also has broader application for all organisations in South Tees who are developing "transformation" programmes.

The fundamental argument is that to deliver the Missions we have to create a structure that inspires and supports new ways of working. This structure should consider as a minimum: leadership across the system; cross-agency collaboration built on insight and information sharing to build shared understanding; engaging communities; how to encourage calculated risk-taking, experimentation and development of innovative solutions; embracing a learning approach and the generation of new perspectives and new thinking.

A Mission-based approach requires a shift from a culture focussed on compliance and policing the boundaries to one of learning and continuously adapting; collectively embracing the complexity arising from a range of diverse projects, activities and initiatives designed for long-term transformation together with communities, people with lived experience and key actors in the system.

We need to consider how we **break silos and perverse incentives within and between agencies and coordinate action across programmes and agencies**. Complex organisational structures, with rigid formal processes, limit the flow of information, reduce openness and constrain creativity. If we want to achieve improvements in population-level wellbeing and reduce inequalities then we need to act and behave differently.

2 You've Got This – Background

YGT is a Sport England Place Partnership, with a vision of "**Active Lives as a Way of Life**" that aims to deliver Sport England's key outcomes: reducing inactivity, increasing activity, positive experiences for children and young people and tackling inequalities.

YGT has challenged traditional ways of working, taking a place-based systems approach driven by insight and learning, collaboration and distributed leadership, framed within the context of physical activity. Understanding the complex challenges of our place has shaped the approach to the work, and also built trust by aligning YGT to local challenges and describing how physical activity can help address them.

The YGT programme of work has three main themes:

- **Influencing Ways of Working:** positively challenging to influence change, developing more collaborative approaches, developing distributed leadership and creating a learning culture that sits across the whole programme.
- **Communities of Interest:** areas of work where physical activity can add value to existing work and boost health outcomes whilst also building a value of physical activity in the organisations themselves.
- **Community Focus Area,** four wards that are in the top 10% most disadvantaged in England: Grangetown, South Bank, North Ormesby, and Brambles & Thorntree; where a more community-led approach to embedding of physical activity could be tested.

2.1.1 **Influencing Ways of Working: Organisational Capacity Building**

Training professionals, empowering them to tackle patients' lack of motivation to be physically active through Motivational Interviewing techniques. Motivational Interviewing is a collaborative, goal-oriented communication style with particular attention to the language of change.

YGT has worked with **Social Prescribers** in Redcar and Cleveland to support them to shift the emphasis of their work from “fixing” to supporting patients to decide on their own choices, opening up opportunities to raise the value of physical activity.

Holiday Activities and Food (**HAF**) **Programme Physical Activity Training** was developed based on insights from the HAF staff team and Young Inspectors. Whilst food provision generally met School Food Standards, the quality of the physical activity offerings varied widely. YGT developed a programme to upskill HAF providers, resulting in a significant improvement in inclusive physical activity delivery quality.

Creating Active Schools (CAS) is supporting thirty schools over three years, with the more established schools acting as mentors for new schools. CAS embeds physical activity throughout the school agenda from a policy and governor level down to the playground and beyond the school day. Case Study 1 describes this work in greater depth.

Allied to CAS, **The Great Outdoors** focuses on embedding the importance and need around the capacity of outdoor activity and forest school provision with schools through the training and upskilling of school and community staff. It also develops plans for schools to enhance their open spaces to meet their physical activity needs.

2.1.2 **Influencing Ways of Working: Policy Development in Planning and Transport Planning**

YGT have worked to embed a revised Health and Wellbeing Policy into the Local Plan in Middlesbrough and co-designing their first Health Impact Assessment (HIA) toolkit, with an emphasis on physical activity. HIA is a process that identifies the health and well-being impacts of any plan or development project. The HIA will recommend measures to maximise positive impacts; minimise negative impacts; and reduce health inequalities.

YGT are moving on to Redcar and Cleveland Borough Council to incorporate into the forthcoming review of the Local Plan an emphasis on physical activity and health, with a particular focus on childhood obesity, and the creation of an equivalent HIA toolkit. This workstream is considered in detail in Case Study 2.

2.1.3 **Communities of Interest: Clinical Workstreams**

The Communities of Interest focussed on existing pieces of work where physical activity could add value and where those involved in the work could develop a greater value of physical activity, embedding it into the work and wider organisational setting. YGT focussed on engaging these organisational partners in understanding more about how different ways of working could impact their practice.

PREP-WELL was a partnership with James Cook University Hospital (JCUH) in Middlesbrough. The programme tested the importance of “prehabilitation” – supporting patients to get fit for surgery - and was the UK's first comprehensive supervised community-based service supporting patients to access progressive support for several pre-operative risk factors in a single setting in the months before surgery. YGT focussed on the physical activity offer, alongside other interventions, such as diet, mental well-being and alcohol consumption. The learning from PREP-WELL has also been applied to Waiting Well, a holistic programme funded by the NHS nationally to support the health and wellbeing of patients awaiting a range of operations and procedures to improve their well-being before treatment. Case Study 3 considers PREP-WELL in greater depth.

Type 2 Diabetes Remission programme aimed to develop a robust patient-centred physical activity offer alongside a nutritional element to enable patients living with Type 2 Diabetes to move into remission. Everyone Active provided personalised support to patients on physical activity, building on patients’ own interests rather than a standard pathway into Exercise on Referral. This both informed new physical activity decisions and ways of working for this service and shaped Everyone Active’s approach to activity provision for communities across everything they do regionally.

Active Hospitals is a programme that aims to support hospitals to become places that encourage and support physical activity. The programme is based on insight, including patient insight; staff culture around physical activity; and considers hospital policies and protocols around physical activity; and an Active Environmental Audit of the hospital. The insight will then be used to inform priority actions within JCUH.

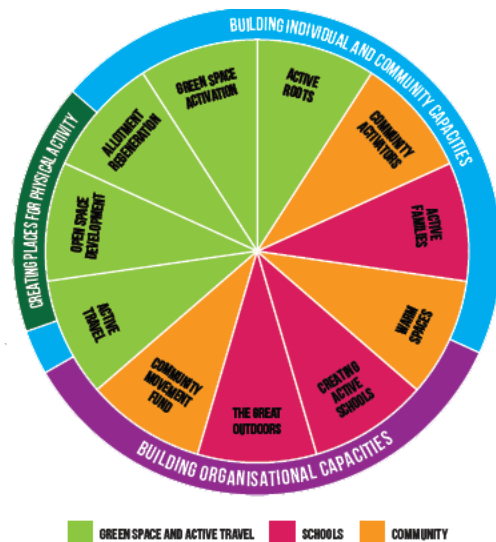
Flippin’ Pain has been developed to change the way people think about, talk about, and treat chronic pain – as perceptions of pain are a key barrier to physical activity. Flippin’ Pain engages and empowers communities to rethink pain, re-engage, recover and become more active. This work received national recognition when it was officially named the "Gold" winner of the Most Impactful Partnership in Preventative Healthcare at the HSJ Partnership Awards 2024. Case Study 4 considers Flippin’ Pain in more detail.

2.1.4 Community Focus Area

The Community Focus Area represents four wards, clustered around the boundary of the two boroughs where the challenges are even greater.

YGT understood that the ward boundaries need to be “leaky”, as communities access facilities such as schools, green spaces and shopping facilities beyond the bounds of the wards. This flex has also enabled the programme to engage meaningfully with other initiatives from a different geography.

For example, the Eston Town Deal, a significant capital and revenue initiative that extends across the whole of Greater Eston, including Grangetown and South Bank. The wheel below defines the principal work streams in the Community Focus Area.



Active Travel combines interventions aimed at individuals, such as cycle maintenance workshops, with more strategic measures, such as improving cycle security in venues. These measures are designed to ensure the safety and convenience of active travel. It links closely with the individual behaviour change work led by Sustrans in South Tees and a capital programme of work as part of Tees Valley Combined Authority (TVCA) and Levelling Up Fund (LUF).

Open Spaces Development addresses the complex issues of accessing open spaces across the CFA. It supports the Councils in developing their open spaces in our CFA in a community-led way, linking to capital developments to open spaces in Grangetown and South Bank through the Levelling Up Fund and Town Deal. This includes more detailed engagement around proposals for Eston Recreation Ground.

Allotment Regeneration involves mapping allotment sites and exploring opportunities to engage more diverse groups in them, including through capital investment.

3 Leadership

3.1 YGT Approach to Leadership

The YGT approach to leadership recognises that building the perceived value of physical activity alone, in a place with significant deep rooted structural issues, could not lever the change in levels of physical activity. Leadership is critical to set direction and build the conditions for change.

3.1.1 Distributed Leadership

The original model of distributing the core team across VCS partners was perhaps naïve as a vision of how leadership could be embedded, the movement of staff between partners and the Accountable Body (Redcar & Cleveland Council) were necessary explorations to achieve a workable model of influence and leadership.

Whilst VCS hosting provided tangible benefits, it was challenging to create deeper influence, reflecting a much broader issue of VCS influence across the system on other priorities in South Tees. Deeper embedding in a public sector accountable body placed the work of the programme closer to policy-level decision-making, for example, in areas such as Public Health and Planning.

In terms of distributing leadership, the Programme Director's and Creating Active and Healthy Places Lead's posts have driven significant change in ways of working, including the value placed on physical activity. The greatest benefits have been accrued through placing the Programme Director within Public Health South Tees. The Active and Healthy Places Lead has built direct rapport with Planners and Transport Planners within both authorities, which has developed a significant contribution to creating active environments by influencing policy development.

3.1.2 **Building Distributed Leadership Through the Exchange**

The development of The Exchange from a traditional Programme Delivery Partnership and the development of Ambassadors committed to a common purpose is potentially the most significant change in influencing our partner organisations (see section 6). The Exchange is now the mechanism for reaching out to and influencing the behaviour of partner organisations. It has enabled YGT to recognise the importance of what happens outside of the room, creating collaboration, and how The Exchange can be built as less of a meeting of partners and more as a "movement". The approach is also a significant part of the distributed leadership model.

The way of working through the Exchange demonstrates the programme's intention to recognise leadership across the system and cede elements of control to other organisations. The relationship with the Core Staff Team is relational, not transactional, so the nature of the leadership is transformed from a traditional approach focussed on accountability and builds capacity and leadership in partner organisations.

The Exchange working groups are supported but not led by YGT so that the leadership passes to and is distributed across Ambassadors. The creation of the exchange and the role of Ambassadors is described further in section 6.

3.1.3 **Building Distributed Leadership Through Collaborative Commissioning**

Competitive procurement processes were identified as a barrier to collaboration, pitting organisations in the Exchange against one another, rather than encouraging them to combine their strengths. Building on previous learning, an alternative Collaborative Commissioning Model was established with Redcar & Cleveland Borough Council's Procurement Team. This model facilitates a more collaborative approach within The Exchange for most commissions.

The **Collaborative Commissioning** Model has been a vital feature of the delivery approach. It is primarily a tool for maximising outcomes through a collaborative approach to commissioning (see section 6). However, it has also been a model to facilitate and develop distributed and shared leadership as part of the process.

4 **Learning Approach**

4.1 **YGT Approach to Learning**

As a Place Partnership, YGT have committed over the last six years to an ongoing process of insight gathering, learning and evaluation.

The YGT learning model is based across three areas:

- Developing and sharing a deep understanding of people and place (see section 5).
- Process evaluation of systemic change – building understanding of what works, for whom, in what contexts, in what respects and how
- Building learning and evaluation capacity and capability, working towards creating a learning culture – including Demonstrating Value.

4.1.1 Process Evaluation of Systemic Change

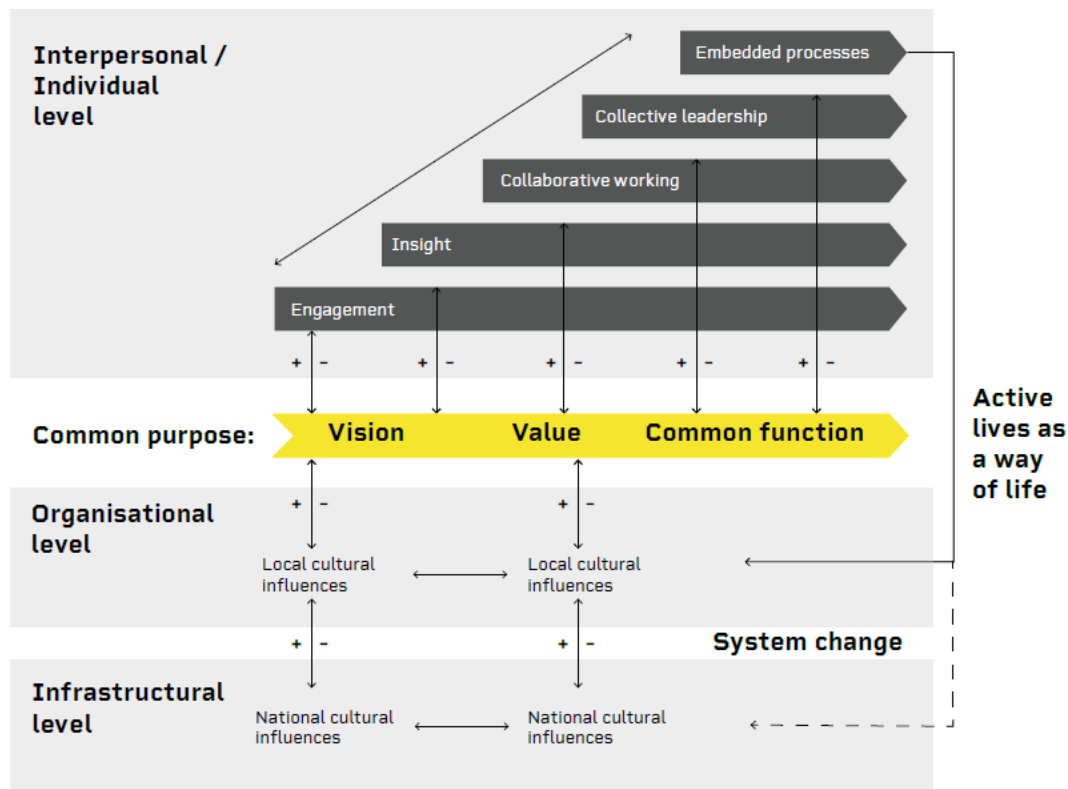
Sheffield Hallam University was commissioned to undertake continuous Process Evaluation and a full-time Researcher was fully embedded in the Core Team. Process evaluation aims to generate a detailed understanding the mechanisms through which an intervention produces change. Process evaluation can also explain why an intervention failed and indicate what might need to be redesigned. The Embedded Researcher has engaged with Exchange members, commissioned workstreams and other stakeholders to ensure that the learning is holistic, authentic and focussed on understanding the systemic changes that are taking place, how and why.

4.1.2 Reflective Practice

Reflective Practice has become increasingly embedded within the work of YGT, including with the YGT Core Team and the Process Evaluation Team and the Programme Management Office (PMO). The use of reflective practice has been extended and embedded within the Public Health South Tees Management Team by the YGT Programme Director.

4.1.3 Common Purpose Model

Whole systems change is overwhelmingly complex, often with ever-changing interconnections between different people in different roles and places. The Common Purpose Model provides a framework to guide working practices and learning, illustrating three key elements which are considered to sustain a common purpose: Vision, Value and Collective Function.



The initial activities of YGT were primarily aimed at influencing or connecting a wide range of people to engage with the vision, see its value and then act in line with it. Most of these activities described below operate at an individual or interpersonal level. People occupy many different roles within the system including senior leadership, policy makers, management, frontline workers across different specialisms and sectors as well as with individuals in the target wards. The core activities are defined as follows:

- **Engagement:** intended to start a relationship of some kind.
- **Insight:** to gain a deep understanding of (and empathy towards) someone else's situation. YGT used behaviour change frameworks to understand the lives of the people in the target wards as well as stakeholders working or influencing those people.
- **Collaborative working:** activities which bring skills, expertise, networks together on a project. This includes collaboration internally, as well as collaboration between partners brokered by YGT.
- **Collective leadership:** activities or actions where people are working together towards the same vision. This may differ from collaborative working in terms of the higher level of commitment, trust, shared power, shared responsibility for achieving the aim, shared accountability and shared successes.
- **Embedded processes:** formalising the new ways of working so that they can remain active beyond the individuals and relationships in YGT and the Exchange and create a legacy.

Individual behaviour and interpersonal relations are influenced by an individuals' skills, history of working together, characteristics and demography. The final elements of the model are the external influences that facilitate or constrain progress, separated into cultural influences and structural influences:

4.1.4 Theory of Change

The Theory of Change is based on the evolution of thinking, building on the combined learning over the last six years of the programme. The development of the Theory of Change has engaged with the Programme Management Office, key partners including Public Health South Tees and Tees Valley Sport, and The Exchange partnership.

Recognising the complexity of the issues impacting on individual behaviours, YGT are using a place-based whole system approach to create the conditions for people to build activity into their daily lives. Whilst ultimately individuals change their own behaviour, for this to take place at scale, the model recognises the need to inspire systemic change and empower change within organisations. Behavioural change models can be applied to organisations as well as individuals. For individuals, the three elements of behavioural change, capability, opportunity and motivation, are all vested in the one person; for organisations, these three elements may be held by different people.

Organisational behaviour change is more than about developing a value of physical activity within their work, it is equally about rethinking ways of working that enable change to happen. The new Theory of Change recognises that YGT and the broader system had a set of foundations in their own ways of working, for supporting and enabling change to happen:

- **Insight and learning** – a crafted combination of quantitative data and qualitative insight to dig deep into issues that influence physical activity behaviours and a recognition of the importance of all learning in shaping future work.

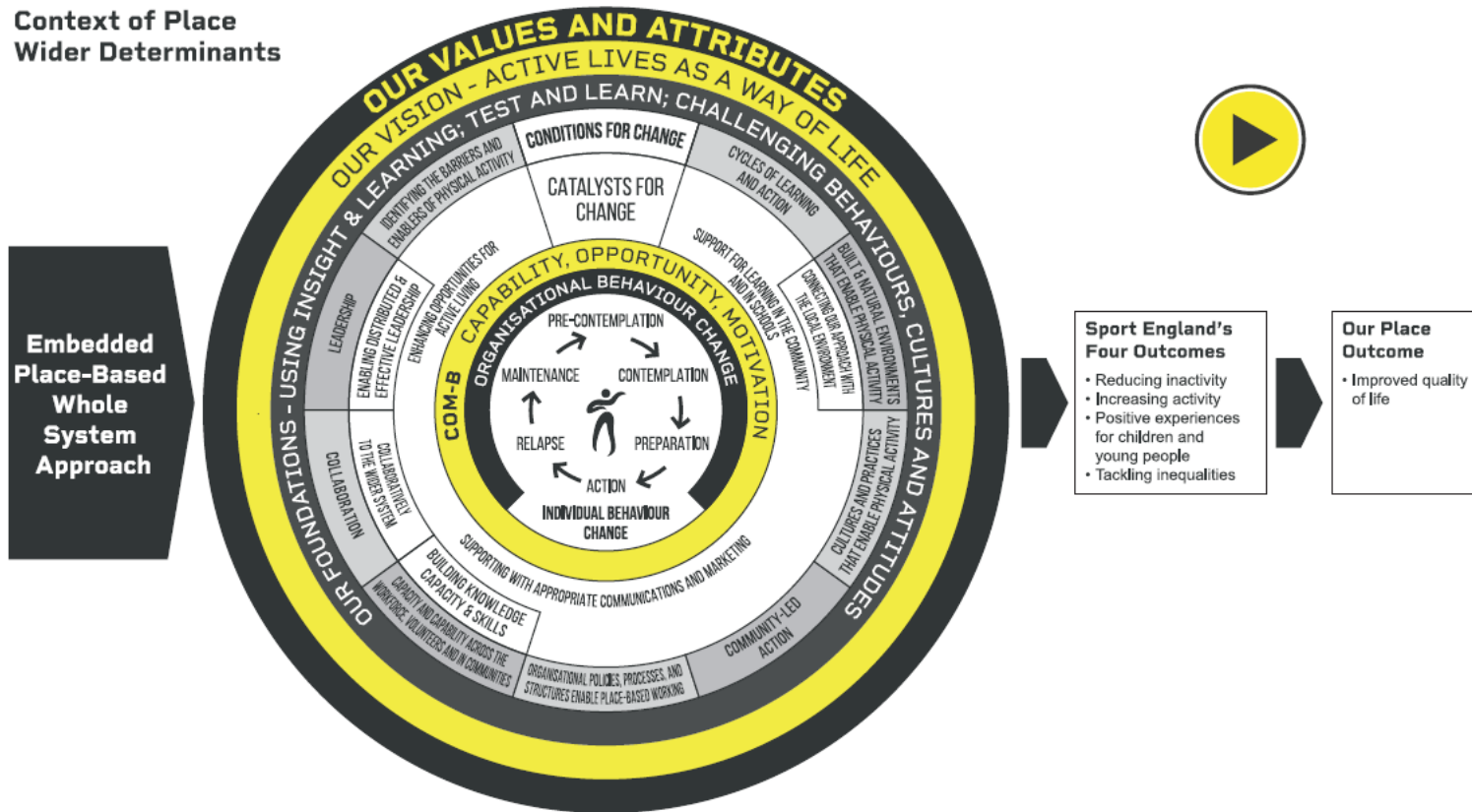
- **Test and learn** – open to exploring different approaches, learning from the findings and adapting and refining approaches in response.
- **Challenging behaviours, cultures and attitudes** – a positive process enabling partners to understand how their behaviours impact on people’s ability to be active and influencing and supporting their own journey of change.

YGT, with partners from The Exchange, have identified five conditions which will have the most impact in bringing about organisational change and working towards Sport England’s four outcomes and the place outcome (these are reflected in the “catalysts for change” ring):

- **Cycles of learning and action** – the demonstrable impact from commissioned work and our own behaviours as a programme of constantly testing, learning, and adapting the work in response to observed insight and learning.
- **Collaboration** – insight from The Exchange and commissioned workstreams of the benefits and opportunities of collaborative, rather, than transactional, approaches to the work.
- **Leadership** – impactful change through others taking the lead to either build a value of physical activity into their own work (for example HAF) or start to shift ways of working (for example, new approaches to Joint Strategic Needs Assessments).
- **Capacity and capability across the workforce, volunteers and in communities** – ensuring organisations have the capacity and capability for change, such as providing Motivational Interviewing training for partners and providing capacity building around physical activity for HAF providers.
- **Built and natural environments that enable physical activity** – creating quality spaces and addressing barriers such as ASB, linking closely with the Local Plan and Development Plan process.

Theory of Change

Context of Place
Wider Determinants



The consolidation of learning across all the Place Partnerships in the Sport England programme has developed **nine conditions for change** (described in the circle above). YGT have cross-referenced these against the foundations described above and catalysts for change and identified clear synergies between the two. This cross-referencing local learning with national learning is important to both reflect learning from elsewhere and ensure that the model is built on local learning.

5 Engaging Communities

5.1 Developing a Deep Understanding of People and Place

Developing and sharing a deep understanding of people and place is a fundamental element of the YGT learning model (see section 4 above). YGT recognised the need to add value to the “what” (quantitative) with the “why” and the “how” (qualitative). Although the quantitative data provided information on activity levels and social conditions, alone it wouldn’t support YGT to identify key audiences and understand their needs. The programme explored two methods to gather insight and provide learning through qualitative techniques: Storytelling and Social Listening.

5.1.1 Storytelling

Storytelling is a technique used to surface the outcomes from participants’ experiences and viewpoints by recording and analysing narratives. Storytelling provides meaningful information that highlights crucial learning points, including unintentional outcomes. It also adds value to quantitative data, giving a richer, more nuanced, complex narrative that more accurately reflects lived experience. Over five years, the small, locally based, and trusted Storytelling Team has collected insight and evaluated interventions from both local communities and professional audiences.

Storytelling has been widely adopted by organisations in place and YGT funded Storytelling training programmes for Ambassadors. Underpinning the development of understanding of place, are also the insight contributions from Ambassadors and YGT engagement with diverse partnerships and thematic groups in place.

5.1.2 Social Listening

Social Listening uses Artificial Intelligence to monitor social media channels to track trends, campaigns and engagement. YGT have worked with Word Nerds, a company that uses AI to analyse online conversations to build a platform to track how and what people are saying about physical activity and other determinants of health. Reviewing both the volume of conversations about a topic and the sentiment attached to the comment (positive, negative, or neutral). The platform first showed its value during the pandemic because YGT could see what issues and themes mattered most to communities.

5.1.3 Small Grants to Engage Community Groups

Another methodology to engage communities through community organisations has been the two small grant schemes, Your Active Living Fund (YALF) and Community Movement Fund (CMF). These schemes have dug deep into communities, with a particular focus on supporting projects and organisations where physical activity is not the primary focus. YALF has operated on a South Tees footprint, supporting 26 projects, whilst CMF has been restricted to the target wards, supporting 19 projects.

6 Collaboration

6.1 YGT Approach

At the outset of the work, YGT recognised that approaches to collaboration in place were often transactional, siloed and based on accountability. The YGT programme enabled an exploration of new ways of collaborating that were more relational and would play to the strengths of different partners.

6.1.1 Reimagining the Core Team

Maintaining a small Core Staff Team to guide the work enabled investment of additional commissioned resources within Ambassador organisations. This fostered co-creation and a move towards increasing capacity and sustainability, providing a clear statement of intent of the different approach.

An unexpected impact has been to shift power to the wider partnership. The leadership role of the Core Staff Team is reduced, as delivery staff are not from the Core Team, and there are more significant opportunities for the delivery collaborations to reimagine and reinvent the work creatively as they are specialists close to the work (see Case Study 1 - Creating Active Schools), where the delivery partnership significantly adapted the model through learning from initial engagement with schools to simplify the structure and ultimately create a more locally appropriate approach.

6.1.2 Rethinking Partnership Structure – Development of the Exchange

The YGT Process Learning has identified the development of The Exchange from a traditional Programme Delivery Partnership and the development of Ambassadors committed to a Common Purpose as potentially the most significant change in influencing our partner organisations.

The Exchange is now the mechanism for reaching out to and influencing the behaviour of partner organisations. It has enabled YGT to recognise the importance of what happens outside of the room, creating collaboration, and how The Exchange can be built as less of a meeting of partners and more as a movement.

Members of The Exchange are the YGT **Ambassadors**. They share a simple set of values, each making an annual pledge describing their contribution to the vision. Distributed leadership plays an important role, with Ambassadors encouraged to collaborate outside the room, developing relationships without direct involvement from YGT.

Rather than centralising power through a single organisation, this approach recognises that leadership can emerge from various levels and roles within the system, allowing a more flexible and inclusive approach to decision-making. It also empowers Ambassadors to take the initiative, contribute their expertise, and foster a sense of ownership in getting people active.

6.1.3 A New Approach to Commissioning

Competitive tendering processes were identified as a barrier to collaboration, pitting organisations against one another, rather than encouraging them to combine their strengths. Building on previous learning, an alternative Collaborative Commissioning Model was established with Redcar & Cleveland Borough Council's Procurement Team.

The interplay between The Exchange and Collaborative Commissioning has shifted ways of working and created impact:

- Encourages Exchange members to work together to develop workstreams based on insight rather than competitive commissioning around a tightly defined specification.
- Worked with the Council’s procurement and legal teams to develop an understanding of a loosely defined impact-led contracting approach that avoids simple output-driven measures.
- Bringing together organisations with complementary skills. The Warm Spaces commission, for example, brought together a range of delivery partners to create a diverse offer attractive to different community venues.
- Commissioning open to smaller organisations that would not normally be involved in procurement processes, broadening the skills within commissions and building capacity in the VCS.

7 What has the YGT Approach Achieved?

7.1 Reducing Inactivity and Increasing Activity

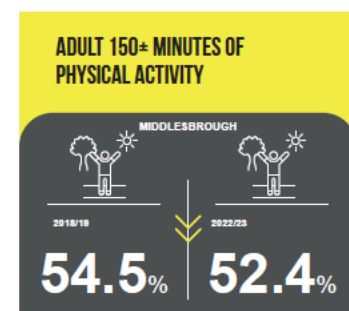
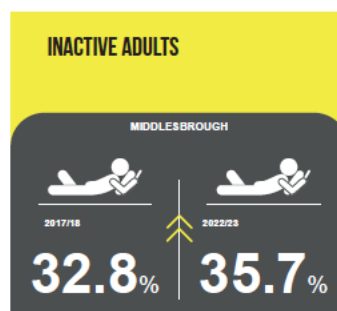
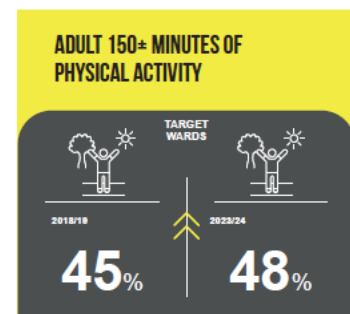
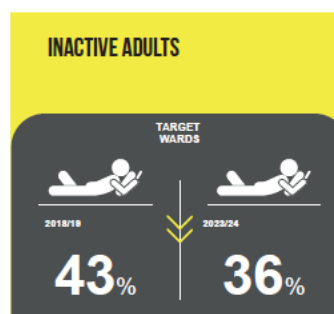
Given the significant levels of inactivity locally, YGT have prioritised the high-level Sport England outcome of **Reducing Inactivity**, alongside the closely allied **Tackling Inequalities**. This section considers Reducing Inactivity and Increasing Activity together, at a borough-wide level and within the target wards, as well as in one of the YGT clinical programmes, PREP-WELL.

Within the target wards between 2018/19 and 2023/24, we have demonstrated a decrease in **inactivity** of 7% in inactive adults, against a rise in an equivalent local area.

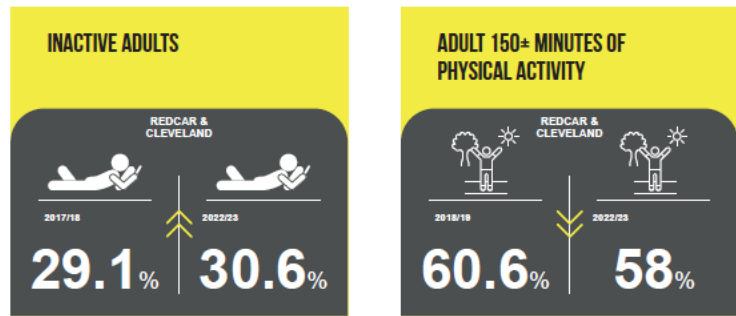
Concurrently, there has been an increase of 3% in **activity** rates in adults in the target wards in the same period, against a fall in an equivalent local area.

The positive picture in the Community Focus Area has not been replicated borough-wide, with increases in **inactivity** and decreases in **activity** in the adult population.

The figures for inactivity have increased slightly and the figures for physical activity have increased slightly in both Middlesbrough and



Redcar & Cleveland. The changes are greater for Middlesbrough.



These borough-wide data reflect some of the wider challenges facing South Tees, particularly Middlesbrough, related to deprivation and poverty. Whilst disappointing, they point to the need for further intervention particularly at a policy level to tackle to wider drivers of inequality alongside measures to tackle physical activity inequalities.

Within the Community Focus Area (CFA) [target wards in the graphic], YGT also measured changes in different aspects of physical activity. **Walking** increased in the CFA during COVID-19 and has since remained above borough levels and an equivalent local area. There has been a 10% increase in walking for travel or leisure in the CFA, against falling rates across both Boroughs over the same period.



8 Learning Points

1. Leadership is often considered in a hierarchical sense, with the value and importance of leadership perceived to increase as you move up the hierarchy. YGT have demonstrated that different types of leadership exist throughout organisations and in communities and influencing leadership much more broadly is necessary to achieve change within and across organisations.
2. Traditional Partnership models of delivery that focus on compliance and accountability can often exclude creativity and discovery and building shared ownership. These models may drive a transactional approach and miss the opportunity to develop relationships within and between people in organisations that can also influence behaviours beyond the immediate work. This in turn can open up new and different areas to progress the aspirations of the Partnership.

3. The processes we use to deliver the outcomes we want to achieve are important, but can often act against achieving those outcomes. Competitive procurement processes are often a barrier to collaboration, pitting potential partners against each other, rather than encouraging them to combine their strengths. Deeper consideration of these processes and organisational structures and their impact on achieving the desired outcomes is necessary to fully realise the benefits of partnership working.
4. How organisations invest in programmes of work and where resources are deployed is important to the development of broader coalitions, insight and influence across partners to achieve the outcomes.
5. VCS organisations hold expertise, insight and commitment for their communities, but their influence over policy development and decision making in Councils and the NHS is limited.
6. A clear vision, or Mission, is important, but not sufficient on it's own to drive Common Purpose across and within organisations.
7. The development of a learning approach should be based on a clear understanding of current ways of working that undervalue learning – with often a narrow focus on operational performance and thin single-agency metrics. A learning approach cannot flourish within a culture focussed on compliance, accountability and policing the boundaries between organisations.
8. Embedding practices into ways of working, such as reflective practice is important to building learning as part of an on-going approach rather than a series of set-piece events.
9. Systems change is complex, often with ever-changing interconnections between different people in different roles and places. Models (like the Common Purpose model and the Logic Model) can help to build understanding of how interventions and approaches are working (or not working).
10. Insight and understanding of how issues manifest themselves in communities and the opportunities and barriers to progress is critical to success. This requires investment, work and time to build trust in communities and with partner organisations.