



PHYSICAL ACTIVITY AND SPORT'S CONTRIBUTION TO WELLBEING, HEALTH, ECONOMIC RECOVERY AND GROWTH

Focus on Leicester, Leicestershire and Rutland

Here are the headline messages and recommendations from a short report commissioned by Active Together, formerly Leicester-Shire and Rutland Sport.

The report highlights the impact of physical activity & sport on health & wellbeing and, in turn, on the economy.

Date of publication: September 2021

PHYSICAL ACTIVITY AND SPORT'S CONTRIBUTION TO WELLBEING, HEALTH, ECONOMIC RECOVERY AND GROWTH

PRODUCTIVE

GVA, productivity and balanced growth

Taking part in physical activity & sport has major positive effects on people's physical and mental health & wellbeing, which in turn drives economic growth by reducing days lost to sickness, boosting workplace productivity and reduces economic disparities by increasing labour market participation.

£1bn
SOCIAL
VALUE

We estimate that physical activity & sport provides **£1.4bn in social value to Leicester and Leicestershire each year** due to its impact on health & wellbeing, productivity, educational attainment, crime reduction and communities.



Physical activity & sport can help to **shape the image of a city or region**, and to differentiate one location from another as a place to live, work, visit and invest in.



If the **labour market participation rate of Leicester City** residents could be raised in line with the national average, this would **generate an additional £370m GVA per year** to the Leicester & Leicestershire economy: raising it to the LLEP average would add £580m GVA to the economy.



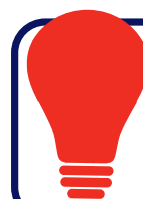
A reduction in the number of working days lost per year in Leicester & Leicestershire to two days per worker could add a **further £160m GVA per year to the Leicester & Leicestershire economy** due to productivity benefits.

INNOVATIVE

Innovation and adoption of new technologies

Physical activity & sport providers are increasingly **developing new innovative ways of participating** in groups and classes.

The huge interest in physical activity & sport provides a strong platform for business in the sector to play a **leading role in tackling the environmental, economic and social challenges presented by climate change**, and inspire and engage both businesses in other sectors to do the same.



Developing new
INNOVATIVE
ways of Participation

leading role in tackling the **environmental, economic and social challenges** by **climate change**

Engage



Inspire



INCLUSIVE

Workforce resilience and reduction in deprivation and inequalities

**30%
REDUCTION**

Regular participation in physical activity & sport is associated with 30% reduction in **depression** and **poor mental health**, and reduced **rates of obesity**, which helps prevention of many other **chronic diseases** and is **associated with 30% reduction in all-cause mortality**.

**REDUCE
700
PREVENTABLE
EARLY DEATHS
PER YEAR**

Improving rates of participation in physical activity & sport among residents in deprived areas could help to **reduce the estimated 700 preventable early deaths** that take place each year in Leicester & Leicestershire.

**REDUCE
YEARS
POOR
HEALTH
33%
OF PEOPLE'S
LIVES**

Improving rates of participation in physical activity & sport among residents in deprived areas could help to **reduce the amount of years people living in these areas spend in poor health, which currently stands at 33% of their lives**.



WITHOUT ACTION
COST OF
£200m
PER YEAR
BY 2050, OR
WIDER SOCIETY
£950m

Given current and projected obesity rates, **without action**, some 60% of men, 50% of women and 25% of children could be overweight or obese by 2050, at a **cost of around £200m per year to the NHS in Leicester & Leicestershire**, and wider costs to society of £950m.



Improving rates of participation in physical activity & sport among residents in deprived areas could help to **tackle the eight-year life expectancy gap between the LLEP area's least and most affluent areas**.



As the economy and society emerges from the pandemic, there is a need to make sure that more people can access and participate in online physical activity & sport, in what is rapidly becoming a **"digital by default"** world.

SUSTAINABLE

Environmental sustainability, shift to low carbon/net zero

Interventions that promote active travel (eg. encouraging walking, development of cycle/routes etc.), can help increase health and wellbeing, **drive investment in low carbon innovations and accelerate the shift to a low carbon economy**.

A return to pre-World War II levels of cycling could help **reduce carbon dioxide emissions** in Leicester & Leicestershire **by around 115,000 tonnes**.



Cycling and walking also fit into daily routines better than many other forms of exercise, because they can **double up as transport** to work, school, shops etc. which means that most people can readily incorporate them into their daily lives.

Moreover, if **physical activity becomes a routine** part of an individual's **day-to-day life**, it is easier for this to be maintained as a regular habit.



The Economic and Social Cost of inaction on rates of participation in Physical Activity & Sport are clear.

Doing Nothing is not an Option!

RECOMMENDATIONS

PRODUCTIVE

GVA, productivity and balanced growth

1. Active Together should work with the LLEP, local authorities and partners in the Integrated Care System to influence:

1.1. Businesses across the economy to provide opportunities for physical activity & sport in paid work time to generate productivity benefits and reduce absenteeism.

1.2. Organisations helping people to find work (including people who are more susceptible to mental health issues) to include physical activity & sport as part of the package of measures to help people into employment. This will help to increase labour market participation and in turn economic growth

2. Active Together should work with the LLEP and partners with a remit for boosting tourism and investment to:

2.1. Ensure that physical activity & sport is recognised as an important driver of the image of Leicester & Leicestershire; and is embedded in campaigns that seek to increase number of tourists and inward investment.

2.2. Carry out a nuanced market segmentation analysis to generate a more detailed evidence.



INNOVATIVE

Innovation and adoption of new technologies

3. Active Together should work with the LLEP and sports organisations to encourage take up of innovative technologies that are increasingly being utilised to promote physical activity & sport (eg. mobile device applications, health wearable devices, and active video games)

3.1. Active Together should work with the LLEP and Sport England to ensure that financial support is provided to sport freelancers and businesses to transform their business model and adopt digital solutions as part of how they deliver their services on a day-to-day basis.

3.2. Active Together should work with the LLEP and major professional sports club, who could act as “Low Carbon Ambassadors”, demonstrating what steps they are taking to tackling the challenges presented by climate change, and acting as exemplars for businesses in other sectors.

INCLUSIVE

Workforce resilience and reduction in deprivation and inequalities

4. Active Together, should work with the LLEP and partners with a social inclusion remit to ensure:

4.1. Digital inclusion/poverty strategies/plans/programmes include sports & physical activity and is co-produced with those who have lived experience of digital exclusion. Strategies must incorporate tailored approaches for meeting the needs of different groups.

4.2. Digital inclusion/poverty strategies/plans/programmes align with wider anti-poverty measures, including through physical activity & sport, demonstrating how this will contribute to anti-poverty targets.

4.3. Ownership of digital inclusion is shared among partners.

5. Active Together should work with the LLEP and partners in the Integrated Care System to ensure:

5.1 Strategies and initiatives to reduce health inequalities and incidence of poor physical and mental health should include physical activity & sport.



COLLABORATIVE

Supporting local partners

7. Active Together, and the LLEP should work with key partners to ensure that:

7.1. With the creation of Integrated Care Systems within the NHS and the wider partnerships being created through Health & Wellbeing groups across the entire system, physical activity & sport should be embedded as a key part of the solution both in economic recovery and also for its impact on the reduction of Health Inequalities. Joint action will

ensure maximum impact on health, employability and therefore economic recovery.

7.2. The value of physical activity and sport is recognised by partners to people in work, out of work, as part of prevention and treatment of diseases, the profile of place and the productivity and economic recovery and growth of the LLEP area.

SUSTAINABLE

Environmental sustainability, shift to low carbon/net zero

6. Active Together, should work with the LLEP and partners in the Integrated Care System to ensure:

6.1. Public health and transport/planning policies, strategies and guidance for Leicester & Leicestershire is mutually supportive in promoting and facilitating cycling and walking as active travel, and as a healthy and convenient means of transport and recreation that could easily be incorporated into the ordinary day-to-day activity of adults and children.

6.2. Directors of Public Health are able to leverage their position in local authorities to engage transport, town and spatial planning and other council departments (eg. leisure and tourism) more closely in promoting cycling as active travel and for recreation.

6.3. The NHS and its providers actively promote cycling and walking to their own employees, to the people in their care, and to the general public; and they should invest in measures to support it (eg. patient referral schemes, cycling facilities at sites as part of travel plans etc.).

6.4. Transport and planning decisions are 'health checked' to maximise the potential for positive impacts on active travel and minimise negative impacts. Tackling hostile road conditions is a priority because they put existing cyclists at risk and deter many others including children and young people.

6.5. Local partners continue to lobby central government so that local authorities should be given additional resources to improve the physical environment in neighbourhoods and leisure areas, creating safe spaces for outdoor activities, to enable people to fulfil government guidance on exercise.



The economic cost of inaction is clear. Doing nothing is not an option!

APPENDIX

Impact of Physical Activity & Sport on Wellbeing and Economic Growth & Recovery Productive - GVA, productivity and balanced growth

- Taking part in physical activity & sport has major positive effects on people's physical and mental health & wellbeing, which in turn drives economic growth by reducing days lost to sickness, boosting workplace productivity and reduces economic disparities by increasing labour market participation.
- We estimate that physical activity & sport provides £1.4bn in social value to Leicester & Leicestershire each year due to its impact on health & wellbeing, productivity, educational attainment, crime reduction and communities³².
- If the labour market participation rate of Leicester City residents could be raised in line with the national average, this would generate an additional £370m GVA per year to the Leicester & Leicestershire economy; raising it to the LLEP average would add £580m GVA to the economy³³.
- A reduction in the number of working days lost per year in Leicester & Leicestershire to two days per worker per year could add a further £160m GVA per year to the Leicester & Leicestershire economy due to productivity benefits³⁴.
- Physical activity & sport can help to shape the image of a city or region, and to differentiate one location from another as a place to live, work, visit and invest in.

Innovative - innovation and adoption of new technologies

- Physical activity & sport providers are increasingly developing new innovative ways of participating in groups and classes.
- The huge interest in physical activity & sport provides a strong platform for businesses in the sector to play a leading role in tackling the environmental, economic and social challenges presented by climate change, and inspire and engage both businesses in other sectors to do the same.

³² Based on national data contained in Sport England Measuring the Social and Economic Impact of Sport in England (2020), apportioned to LLEP area based on LLEP area population.

³³ Assuming GVA per worker of £48,700, as contained in the LLEP Economic Recovery Strategy Evidence Review (2021); local area labour market participation data from NOMIS.

³⁴ Based on national Labour Force Survey data (3.6 days working days lost per worker per year), apportioned to the LLEP area based on LLEP population data; productivity uplift based on GVA worker as in point 2 above; assumes 256 day working year.

Inclusive - workforce resilience and reduction in deprivation and inequalities

- Regular participation in physical activity & sport is associated with 30% reduction in depression and poor mental health, and reduced rates of obesity, which helps prevention of many other chronic diseases and is associated with a 30% reduction in all-cause mortality.
- We estimate that physical activity & sport provides £1.4bn in social value to Leicester & Leicestershire each year due to its impact on health & wellbeing, productivity, educational attainment, crime reduction and communities³².
- Improving rates of participation in physical activity & sport among residents in deprived areas could help to reduce the estimated 700 preventable early deaths that take place each year in Leicester & Leicestershire.
- Improving rate of participation in physical activity & sport among residents in deprived areas could help to reduce the amount of years people living in these areas spend in poor health, which currently stands at 33% of their lives.
- Given current and projected obesity rates, without action, some 60% of men, 50% of women and 25% of children could be overweight or obese by 2050, at a cost of around £200m per year to the NHS in Leicester & Leicestershire, and wider costs to society of £950m.
- Improving rates of participation in physical activity & sport among residents in deprived areas could help to tackle the eight-year life expectancy gap between the LLEP area's least and most affluent areas.

Sustainable - environmental sustainability, shift to low carbon/net zero

- Interventions that promote active travel (eg. encouraging walking, development of cycle lanes/routes etc.), can help increase health & wellbeing, drive investment in low carbon innovations and accelerate the shift to a low carbon economy

³⁵ World Health Organisation.

³⁶ Based on national data on avoidable mortality in the UK in 2019 (the most recent year for which data are available), apportioned to LLEP area based on LLEP area population.

³⁷ Public Health England data.

³⁸ Government Office for Science; NHS cost estimate calculated by apportioning estimated national cost to the NHS (£9.7bn) and wider costs to society (£49.7bn) to LLEP area based on LLEP area population.

³⁹ Cycling UK; based on net reduction of 7.7 million tonnes of carbon dioxide emissions per year in the UK, apportioned to LLEP area based on LLEP area population.